

# VARSITY

Friday January 23rd 2009

The Independent Cambridge Student Newspaper since 1947

Issue no 687 | varsity.co.uk

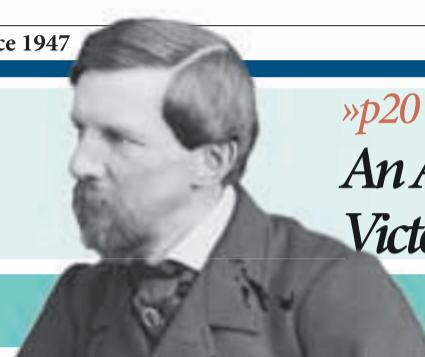
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**Alison Richard speaks**



»Special pull-out

**It's here: the Procter & Gamble Varsity 100 2009**



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**An American in Victorian Cambridge**

## From dumpster-diving to raucous revels



» Varsity survey reveals large disparity in wealth of Cambridge students, with spending budgets ranging from £20 to £400 a week

**Caedmon Tunstall-Behrens**

A Varsity survey has exposed the huge disparity in spending levels among Cambridge students. While some students are living a Brideshead-style existence, spending £400 a week, others are surviving on just £20.

The findings illustrate the radically different experiences rich and poor students have at Cambridge. While some drink Cindies dry of Bollinger, others are joining the 'freegan' movement, rummaging through supermarket bins for food to get by. Some students can only afford to spend £2.87 a day, according to the results.

"I'm on a fairly tight budget, and getting food from supermarket bins has re-

ally helped me to keep down my weekly spending," said a second-year bin-raider who wished to remain anonymous.

Five and a half per cent of students said they lived on under £30 a week, according to Varsity's online survey of 783 students. At the opposite end of the scale, twelve per cent of Cambridge students claimed to live on over £200 a week. These figures exclude rent, but include all other expenditure.

"I have noticed there is a significant social divide in Cambridge between those who are wealthy and the less well off – the gap formed early on as freshers," said a third year English student at Caius.

History of Art students are the most spendthrift group, spending an aver-

age of £181 per week compared to the Cambridge average of £112 per week. Their parents have the highest income as well, earning an average of £117,500 a year. Management and Land Economy students were also amongst the highest rollers.

"There are some really rich people studying History of Art. It's seems a very public school subject, possibly because not many state schools offer it at A-level," said Megan Cooper, a first-year History of Art undergraduate at Churchill.

While some stereotypes were confirmed by the survey, others were dashed. The parents of students at St John's earned considerably less than those at King's. John's parents earn an

average of £64,000 a year, compared to those at King's who earn £75,000.

62 per cent of students at King's admitted they regularly received money from their parents, compared to 40 per cent at St John's. "To be honest at King's we're not really bothered about money, there are more important things in life," said a second-year English student at King's.

A gender divide in spending levels was found to exist within the University. On average, men spend £126 per week compared to women who spend £99. "In the end men have to spend money on women or they won't pull," suggested one undergraduate at Homerton as a possible explanation for this difference.

*Continued on page 5*

## £112

Average weekly spending by respondents

## £74k

Average earnings of respondents' parents

## China's prime minister to deliver prestigious Cambridge lecture

**Andrew Bellis**

China's prime minister, Wen Jiabao, is to deliver a lecture in Cambridge.

Mr Wen will give the prestigious Rede Lecture on Monday February 2nd. The title has yet to be announced.

The lecture is open to all members of

the University, but tickets will be allocated after an online application process. The lecture, which will take place in the West Road Concert Hall, is already heavily oversubscribed, although the deadline for applications is not until midday on Monday. All 350 tickets will be allocated after that time, with all

applications being treated equally.

Mr Wen, 67, has been premier of the People's Republic of China since 2003 and is third in the Communist Party's hierarchy, behind the president, Hu Jintao, and the senior speaker in the country's legislature.

Mr Wen's lecture will coincide with a

week-long visit to Europe, when he will visit Britain, Spain, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland.

The Sir Robert Rede's Lectureship is named after a Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in the sixteenth century who left an endowment to establish a lectureship at the University.

Since 1858, when the lecture was re-established, the Vice-Chancellor has appointed a speaker to deliver the annual lecture. Previous speakers have included the Duke of Edinburgh and John Betjeman.

To apply for a ticket, visit [www.admin.cam.ac.uk/redelecture2009](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/redelecture2009).

# VARSITY

The Procter & Gamble Varsity 100 2009 can be found as a special pull-out within this week's centrefold.

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## Get involved

Weekly meetings are held for anyone interested in writing for Varsity.

**News**  
Sunday, 4pm in the Maypole (Portugal Place)

**Comment**  
Monday, 1pm in the Maypole

**Magazine**  
Wednesday, 5.30pm in the Maypole

**Sport**  
Sunday, 7pm in the Baron of Beef (Bridge St.)

## Us and them: the institutional divide

If you read the *Reporter*, the University's official record of business, you will find a world far removed from the concerns of students. It is a world of Graces of the Regent House, of the endowment of Chairs, and the appointment of Pro-Proctors and their colleagues. It is not, however, the arcane language which may alienate students from the dealings of the University's top brass, but the fact that those who run this institution have such different priorities to the students.

The University's administrators are focused on fundraising and public relations. Their top priorities of recent months, for example, have been the Festival of Ideas and the University's '800' campaign; neither of these is of much importance at all to students. As the Vice-Chancellor tells *Varsity*, she feels that students have a part to play; but it is never quite clear what that part is. She claims not to feel "removed" from students, but most of us would surely disagree. This is not a personal criticism – Alison Richard is wonderfully good at what she does – but an institutional one.

Perhaps we should count our blessings. The collegiate and supervision systems, and our unusually high ratio of academics to students, means that we have much more contact with dons than do students at most other universities. However, there still seems to be a fundamental disconnection between the top of the University and the students who make up the bulk of its population.

It is hard to see a way out of this confusion. The University is inherently fragmented: we all make our own Cambridge – from our College, our faculty, our leisure activities and our friends – and that is not a bad thing. However, all the members of the University should feel united in a common purpose, and that seems at the moment not always to be the case.

The University's ruling body would probably argue that everything they do benefits students indirectly in the long run. Yet if this is the case, why do they not tell students so? There seems to be little effort to make junior members feel a part of the University as a whole, or to explain exactly how disputes in the Senate House may one day affect us. It is not that the central administration does not care about students; just that they are very bad at showing it.

## Count your blessings: the wealth divide

To many, it may come as little surprise to learn that there is a certain amount of wealth disparity among Cambridge students. However, the idea that some students can spend only £20 a week, while others have £400, is still faintly shocking, even while bearing in mind the usual *caveats* over the reliability of voluntary surveys. When you further consider the fact that 63 per cent of students will emerge with over £20,000 of debt, while 20 per cent will have none at all, it is further brought home how much variation there is between our wallets. There is no easy way out – mass redistribution of wealth is not the answer, and a plurality of us is (rightly) satisfied with the University's financial provision – but the richer among us should bear in mind that not everyone is so lucky, even within Cambridge's storied walls.

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 Ben Towse of Churchill College.

### Loosen term limits

Dear Sirs,

In your editorial on January 16th [issue 686], you argued that cramming intense workloads into short terms "encourag[es] the idea that Cambridge...[is] exceptional, and require[s] higher standards than



other universities". Frankly, we are in a sad place if Cambridge's claim to superiority is focused on mere intensity of workload rather than advanced material and depth of thought. *Varsity* exalts the University's research reputation, but if we are committed to de-

veloping and hosting the best minds to tackle the most important scientific, political, philosophical, historical and cultural challenges, we should be more concerned with our ability to give demanding material full and deep consideration than our ability to run manically in the hamster wheel of an eight-week term. However, boasting about withstanding stress whilst doing arbitrarily large amounts of work in arbitrarily short amounts of time is an appropriate priority if we think the purpose of an elite university is to churn out, factory-like, glowing CVs for the financial sector and similar industries.

Yours faithfully,

Ben Towse  
Churchill College

### Maltby's magic ball

Sirs,

With the government stake in RBS set to rise to 70%, your columnist Ed Maltby's call (at the time roundly ridiculed) for the nationalisation of the city in last January's article [issue 668, January 18th 2008] now seems eminently prophetic. Where do we go from here?

Yours faithfully,

Jack Gillett

### Correction

Last week [issue 686, January 16th] we incorrectly reported the name of Homerton's Principal as Kate Perry. It is in fact Kate Pretty; Katie Perry is a notorious pop singer. Apologies.

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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# Vice-Chancellor: 'I don't feel removed from students'

» Alison Richard 'had no idea who the Vice-Chancellor was' when she was an undergraduate  
» She tells *Varsity* she is unconcerned about her legacy

Hugo Gye & Michael Stothard

The Vice-Chancellor is a busy woman. *Varsity* waited three months to carve out time from her schedule, and met with her just two days after her return from India, where she has been promoting the University's 800th anniversary celebrations. She relates with pride how she convinced cathedrals in Calcutta, Delhi and Bangalore to ring their bells in Cambridge's honour last Saturday, and how she swung a hand-bell before dinner in Mumbai that night, all as part of the global event marked in Cambridge with a light-show on the Senate House (which she missed).

Alison Richard has been understandably preoccupied with the 800th, which will take her round the world in a series of trips this year. Much of her work is to do with soliciting donations from "alumni and friends of the University", as well as "corporate giving". However, she is adamant that students have a part to play in the celebrations as well. "We wanted students to be substantively involved," she claims, saying that it is students' "creativity and activities" which are the best way to contribute to festivities, primarily through the 2009 Fund, which has paid out money to wide range of student societies (as well as Colleges and departments).

Yet despite describing students as part of "the fabric of collegiate Cam-

bridge", it seems clear that most of the activities are not directed at the University's junior members. Prof. Richard points instead to the presence of local residents at events such as the light-show as evidence that another of the anniversary's aims, to "reaffirm the fact that we are a part of the city of Cambridge", is working. She talks also

of efforts to involve University staff in the celebrations, highlighting the staff garden party set to take place this summer.

Some might argue that this lack of emphasis on students is indicative of a certain disconnect between undergraduates and the central University administration, to the extent that many

students do not even know the name of the Vice-Chancellor, and in a *Varsity* survey last year only 23 per cent of students could recognise her photograph. Prof. Richard appears unworried by this, admitting that when she was an undergraduate she "had no idea who the Vice-Chancellor was". Having spent much of her career teaching, she admits, "I miss seeing more of students, but I don't feel removed from them."

She thinks that "the collegiate system pushes the Vice-Chancellor further back from contact with the students", although she believes that "it's worth it, because it's a great system". Indeed, she says it is the Colleges which "provide a genius of scale, which is what lets Cambridge be this big place and this small place at the same time". She regards the main role of the central University as a strategic one, emphasising the grand scale of projects such as the current celebrations and the development of West Cambridge.

Despite the strengths of the Cambridge's relative decentralisation, Prof. Richard hopes that more students will come to appreciate the value of the central administration. "I would like to think that over time students will come to know the name of their Vice-Chancellor," she says, "because I think there's a leadership role for the Vice-Chancellor: when I'm speaking I speak on behalf of all of Cambridge... I would like the students to know that there is this person, this is who she is and this is what she does." She seems to know that students feel separated from her and her work, but despite wanting to remedy this, concludes "Do I lie awake worrying about it? No."

The Vice-Chancellor leaves office next year, but she claims not to be fixated on how she will be remembered, saying, "I don't think about legacies... I focus my attention on the institution, not on how I'm thought of." Her only hope is that on her departure Cambridge will remain with "its ambitions high, its confidence intact, its flags flying," and "continuing to be recognised as one of a handful of the finest universities in the world". This aim will doubtless be fulfilled; whether students will feel part of this mission remains to be seen.



Alison Richard gives a speech in Delhi earlier this month

## Alison Richard in brief

On March 1st, 1948, Alison Fettes Richard was born in Kent. After studying at Newnham and King's College, London, she joined the faculty of Yale University in 1972, and chaired the Department of Anthropology from 1986 to 1990. She was appointed Provost of Yale in April 1994, a post she held until 2002. In 2003, she succeeded Alec Broers as Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge, the first woman to hold the post since it became a full-time role. Her seven-year term comes to an end in October 2010. The University this week announced the composition of the committee that will appoint her successor.

# Downing turns to Cindies as ball sponsor

» Financial climate forces May Ball to look away from traditional City backing

Varsity News

Cambridge nightclub Ballare has been announced as a sponsor of Downing May Ball.

The Downing May Ball Committee approached the club after the more usual corporate firms showed a lack of interest in providing financial support for its event.

Danuka Amirthalingam, in charge of obtaining sponsorship for the ball, said, "I've been in touch with over 120 law firms, but only one of them has agreed to provide funding."

Downing May Ball president Chris Hughes blamed the reluctance of businesses to sponsor the ball on the recession. He said that the current economic situation had made securing corporate sponsorship a "challenge".

A spokesperson for the club confirmed that Ballare will provide the drinks and a DJ for Downing's event, as well as "a few other bits and pieces". It will also host the ball's launch party next week.

The club was keen to emphasise that it sponsors four or five balls a year. A spokesperson said that it was unfair to

blame the recession for Colleges' interest in its sponsorship.

"Downing did mention that they were having difficulty securing financial support this year, but we've done deals with them in the past and are planning to continue to do so in the future. I don't think it's directly linked to the recession," he said.

The spokesperson said that Ballare has provided several Colleges with sponsorship for their May Balls in recent years, including St John's, Trinity, Magdalene, Peterhouse and Trinity Hall. So far Downing is the only Col-

lege to have officially confirmed a deal for this year.

Hughes is keen to point out that the difficulties the committee have so far experienced in obtaining sponsorship will in no way be reflected in the May Ball itself. He said that the event's funding is managed in such a way that the ball is not "dependent on sponsorship in order to produce a successful evening".

The ball, which will be held on the evening of June 16th, will have 'Neverland' as its theme. Its launch party is to be hosted by Ballare next week.

## In Brief

### CUP cuts 133 jobs

Cambridge University Press has announced that it is cutting 133 jobs. The decision by CUP, the world's oldest printing business, comes despite revenues increasing by 40 per cent in six years. 80 per cent of the firm's business takes place abroad, and the firm wants more of its printing to happen overseas. Chief executive Stephen Bourne said: "We know that this is an incredibly difficult time for those staff that are affected, and we will be doing all we can to support them through these changes. This has been a very hard decision to make but we believe it is the right one to safeguard the long-term future of our business, given the current economic and technological climate."

### LBGT night announced

CUSU Ents are introducing a new LBGT club night, just a week after pulling out of Thrust. The new night, Rendezvous, will be at Vodka Revolution on Tuesdays. Last week CUSU announced that it was ending its relationship with the Thrust night at The Place, which will continue to take place on Tuesdays, after its relationship with Thrust Promotions, the event's co-promoters, broke down irreparably. Mat Morgan, CUSU's ents manager, described the new night as providing an opportunity for a "clean break". Rendezvous will launch next Tuesday, during CUSU's alcohol awareness week, and will be providing free alcohol. CUSU's Welfare Officer, Andrea Walko, condemned the decision as "irresponsible".

### NUS backs radical reforms

Members of the National Union of Students voted in favour of radical organisational reform at its extraordinary conference in Wolverhampton on Tuesday. The proposals will prompt the introduction of a governing board comprised of students, officers and trustees with expertise in areas such as law and financial management. It will be overseen by a National Executive Council of student representatives, who will provide the political leadership of the NUS, debate policy and dictate spending priorities, whilst the board would deal with the particulars of budget, staffing and liability. The debate was overshadowed, however, when a group of pro-Palestinian protesters stormed the stage and refused to leave. NUS president Wes Streeting (ex-President of CUSU) allowed them to give a five-minute speech if they would leave afterwards. He later apologised for the protest, saying that he was ashamed that the NUS was not "inclusive for all".

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## In Brief

### Grafton's £15m refurb

The Grafton shopping centre has announced plans for a £15 million pound refurbishment programme. The plan, if approved, aims to update the 25 year old look of the centre by providing a cosmetic revamp and supplying additional places for eating within the Grafton. While the size of the centre and the number of shops will remain largely the same there will be major changes to the main Fitzroy Street entrance. The current entrance will be completely replaced with a wall of glass rising two storeys and a new glass roof extending above the mall beyond the main entrance, "creating a welcoming, light and airy space for shoppers" while "opening up the shop front to a better view", the centre says.

Laura Jones

### Tesco to open new store

Cambridge City Council has given planning permission for Tesco to open a new store in Cambridge Leisure Park on Clifton Road, despite a 200-signature petition against the proposal. The supermarket was twice refused permission from the council for a new store on Mill Road last autumn following campaigning from residents concerned about the impact on independent traders and increased congestion in the area. However, the East Area Committee approved the latest application for the Tesco Express on January 15. Councillor Lewis Herbert said the two cases were "totally different" because there was a "lack of grocery provision" in the area compared with Mill Road.

Louise Thomson

### Students say "go greener"

On the day Cambridge University began to celebrate its 800th birthday, students took to the streets to demand greater action from University authorities in the fight against climate change. Students stood on the King's Parade wall spelling out the words: "We demand climate leadership from Cambridge University". The protest was part of CUSU's 'Go Greener!' campaign, launched in October 2007, which aims to make the University a model of "low-carbon development and environmental responsibility" and 'to raise awareness amongst the student body'. The protest attracted attention from the hundreds of tourists in Cambridge, many of whom had come to witness the 800th anniversary celebrations.

### Plants don't change climate

Cambridge scientists have shown that plants do not produce millions of tonnes of greenhouse gases, as had previously been thought. The study found that plants instead merely transport methane from the soil. These new findings contradict an earlier study which suggested that plants were producing significant quantities of methane and releasing it into the atmosphere. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas and a major contributor to global warming. The discovery, which researcher Dr Ellen Nisbet described as "a relief", may help scientists to accurately estimate methane production and so combat global warming.

## WEALTH SURVEY



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# Supermarket sweep

These disparity between the daily food budgets of the richest and poorest Cambridge students, according to our survey, is illustrated by the shopping baskets to the left. A student living on £400 a week can spend £57.63 a day (top), compared to a student getting by with £20 a week, whose budget is only £2.85 a day (bottom).

Our poorer student must stick firmly to Sainsbury's basics range, buying only the cheapest items; our richer shopper can afford to splash out with Taste the Difference and SO Organic products. The money-conscious buyer will be tucking into instant chicken noodles

(only 10p), while our well-off student can push the boat out with a couple of £5 steaks and some £4 organic salmon.

The big-spender can afford a punnet of Taste the Difference raspberries (£3) and a £2 packet of Taste the Difference Camembert; our cheaper basket must stick to just savoury items. Whereas the only drink in our low-budget basket is a 45p pint of milk, our richer student's smoothie (£3) costs more than the entire daily spend for the poorer student. And, with almost £60 a week to spend, our wealthy student can wash his meal down with a spot of bubbly – a nice Moët – a snip at just £26.

## Colleges

	Average weekly budget	Average parental income
Churchill	£179	£72,500
Robinson	£153	£79,200
Girton	£149	£69,900
Clare	£147	£85,100
Jesus	£136	£68,000
Trinity	£136	£82,800
Peterhouse	£134	£54,800
Corpus	£122	£78,500
Downing	£119	£77,900
Caius	£112	£96,100
St John's	£108	£63,900
Murray Edwards	£108	£108k
Trinity Hall	£107	£69,800
Magdalene	£103	£75,800
Emmanuel	£102	£82,400
Sidney Sussex	£101	£67,100
King's	£101	£75,500
Queens'	£100	£68,800
Homerton	£99	£55,100
Pembroke	£90	£80,600
St Catharine's	£88	£58,500
Newnham	£85	£66,800
Christ's	£82	£70,900
Selwyn	£75	£77,900
Fitzwilliam	£72	£64,500

## Subjects

	Average weekly budget	Average parental income
History of Art	£182	£118k
Management	£171	£67,500
Architecture	£155	£83,100
Land Economy	£153	£74,000
Geography	£148	£104k
Classics	£137	£84,600
Economics	£137	£117k
Maths	£134	£78,000
Philosophy	£129	£57,700
Computer Science	£127	£50,900
Oriental Studies	£125	£87,800
English	£122	£61,200
SPS	£119	£77,600
Law	£112	£80,000
Music	£107	£80,000
MML	£106	£62,200
History	£106	£74,800
ASNaC	£104	£63,300
Theology	£103	£74,900
Engineering	£92	£68,100
Natural Sciences	£90	£64,600
Arch & Anth	£89	£52,200
Medicine	£86	£62,300
Education	£78	£46,500
Vet. Medicine	£76	£64,600

## Survey in detail

Average amount of money a student spends per week in Cambridge	£112
Average amount a male student spends per week	£126
Average amount a female student spends per week	£99
Percentage of respondents who receive both a tuition fee loan and a maintenance loan	62%
Percentage of respondents who receive no student loan	20%
Percentage of respondents who do paid work in their holidays	60%
Percentage of students who do paid work during term-time	10%
Percentage of respondents living in the EU whose parents earn more than £75,000	37%
Percentage of respondents living outside the EU whose parents earn more than £75,000	52%
Percentage of respondents who pay for their term-time accommodation themselves	56%
Percentage of respondents who think that financial support from the government and University is sufficient	44%
Percentage of respondents who think that the economic recession has affected their financial situation	34%
Percentage of respondents whose parents give them money regularly	66%
Average number of times respondents eat out per week	2
Percentage of respondents who receive a bursary for their studies	25%
Average income of respondents' parents	£74k
Percentage of respondents' parents earning less than £25,000	8%

## WEALTH SURVEY

# Large wealth disparities exposed

- » Survey suggests little correlation between parents' earnings and students' expenditure
- » Only 56% pay for their own accommodation as 66% regularly receive money from their parents
- » 25% of students call for abolition of tuition fees, 32% want to see them lowered

Continued from front page

Ten per cent of students admitted undertaking paid employment during term time, with 60% working in the holidays. Although rules about working differ from college to college, normally colleges only allow students to work for four hours a week.

Most students responded that they wanted to either abolish or reduce university fees. Eighty per cent of students have a student loan.

The data reveals that Churchill students spend the most, with an average weekly expenditure of £179. Megan Cooper said, "Churchill is very sociable – people seem to go out more than other Colleges."

The thriftiest College was found to be Fitzwilliam, spending an average of £71 a week. "We're far from town, the cash machine is far away, and we're closer to Aldi than Sainsbury's" said Ayo Awe, a first-year Law student. Another said: "We're not a pretentious college: we don't flash our cash and we're far removed from the temptations of town. We can't just easily pop into Ta Bouche or a restaurant to eat out."

A first-year lawyer at Fitzwilliam said: "Compared to other Colleges like Trinity and St. John's, we probably have poorer backgrounds, so we will spend less."

There was no correlation between parental earnings and stu-

dent expenditure. Despite spending an average of £180 a week, parents of Churchill students had a middle-ranking income of £72,500 per annum on average.

A second-year vet student from Robinson, which came second on the weekly spending table at £153, said: "Generally people at Robinson go out more, and don't tend to come back in the daytime." The third in the list was Girton at £149. These results suggest that those at Colleges further from the city centre spend more than if they lived closer to town. Murray Edwards was also relatively high on the list.

Among the 'richer' colleges, as determined by the amount students spend per week, the proportion of those receiving student loans was relatively high. At Churchill, 50 per cent took both available loans and 30 per cent were given bursaries by the government and the university. At Girton, 63 per cent of students signed up for both loans and 20 per cent claimed not to receive a loan at all.

Medics were relatively low on the table for weekly budgets at £86 per week, but ranked higher on the termly budget at £1,532. This could be attributed to the fact that they have to buy expensive text and anatomy books before coming up to Cambridge at the beginning of term.

One third-year medic at Magdalene said: "I bought most of my textbooks

because the College libraries don't have that many copies. I also pay a subscription fee to MedSoc and the British Medical Association, which is free for first-years, but I wouldn't include that in my weekly expenditure."

A CUSU spokesperson said: "If any students are worried about finances or budgeting then I strongly encourage them to speak to the students' union or to their tutor. The worst scenario would be for students to suffer in silence, and there are often many sources of funding available that students aren't aware of."

# 27%

Percentage of respondents unhappy with their financial situation

# 34%

Percentage of respondents who think the recession has affected their finances



## Cash-strapped vs ostentatious spender



"I'm on a fairly tight budget and getting food from supermarket bins has really helped me to keep down my weekly spending, as I don't have to buy most of the food I eat. I've been doing it since mid-way through my first term at Cambridge, when a guy in College told me about it.

"If you find the right time and the right bins, and leave them in a good condition, then security tend to turn a blind eye.

"You can get all the basics: cheese, pasta, soup, yoghurts and so on still in packaging, but meat is generally a rarity. Because supermarkets are so sensitive to sell-by dates and mark them well before you can actually eat the products, everything you find there is edible, though I do play it by ear for some things. If it has previously been reduced, is well past its 'Use by' date, or the packaging is a bit dodgy, I avoid taking it.

"There are days when either I don't

find anything or the security is too tight, so I do have to subsidise it on occasion with actual food shopping.

"I do sometimes worry about my health. Meats and products which need refrigeration are a concern for me, so I only eat it if I'm sure.

"People generally look down on me for doing it; they think it's a bit skanky. What I take would just be going to land-fill sites and it's not affecting anyone, so I don't see it as a problem."

**Ellie, Clare, 2nd Year**



"During term time I tend to spend between £300-£400 a week, excluding fees and accommodation. It probably sounds like a lot to some people, but it's not as if I spend excessive amounts of money on large purchases or unnecessary luxuries – that's just how much my everyday lifestyle costs. A typical week involves spending money on eating out, clothes and shoe shopping, alcohol, taxis to supervisions, going to the gym, tickets to gigs and the theatre and going out to clubs, pubs and bars, as well as all the necessary things like food shopping (M&S not Sainsbury's) laundry, and so on – it all adds up.

"A lot of it goes on food: College food is fairly unappetising and I'm

a terrible cook so end up eating out nearly all the time – at least one meal a day, if not two. And since most of my friends are outside College anyway it means we eat out a lot as a way of socialising.

"I also go out a lot – almost every night of the week – and although club entry is so cheap, getting VIP treatment or a table obviously involves expenditure. I quite frequently buy VK Apples in units of 24 for my fellow students. Impressing girls and seeing my friends having a good time makes spending that much money worth it. I quite frequently buy VK Apples in batches of 24 for my fellow students. And if I'm drunk, I never really notice how much I'm spending, or remember

lending money to people or whatever.

"I feel as if being at Cambridge justifies spending a lot of money, because I work so hard that I deserve it. One way to reward myself after finishing an essay or a working for the whole day in the library is to spend money – whether by going shopping, treating oneself to a spa day at Glassworks, or dinner out with some good wine and three courses.

"Last term I splashed out on an impromptu overnight trip to Paris for dinner. Things like that are just a way of making term more bearable.

"I've never felt alienated from others here because of my expenditure, but then again I'm very picky about my friends."

**Quentin, Corpus Christi, 3rd Year**

## From the Archives



**Week 2: February 17th 1951**  
Money has been a perennial student worry. This was our take on it during the rationing years.

The probable living expenses of an undergraduate in residence at the present time are officially outlined to the freshman in the current "Students' Handbook." In round figures, they are placed at £230-245 a year, this sum being taken to include travel to and from Cambridge, board and lodgings, books, clothes and personal expenses, but not the fees levied by the University and College for teaching and administration. With these, the total expenditure is placed at £300 a year. An overseas student living in this country is advised to ensure for himself or herself an annual income of at least £500 to include lodging and a certain amount of travel in Britain during the vacation.

The expenses which a student is called upon to meet before first coming into residence vary widely, from £4 at Emmanuel to £66 at Queens' (£86 for a foreign student), though much of the latter consists of caution money (£40) and compulsory advance payment of fees (£45). It must be remembered that these sums have to be paid before most students have received their first grants, and that that part of the money which is returnable is only in a few cases released before graduation, three years later. Degree expenses vary with degrees and colleges. Degree fees are from the usual £3 for a B.A. to £10 for a graduate in medicine and £25 for any doctorate. College graduation fees rarely exceed £2.

Under a rule which holds for all colleges, winners of any awards are allowed to forfeit their financial benefits if they wish to do so, the money being devoted to helping poor students. In this connection, most Colleges and also Fitzwilliam House operate gift funds to help "undergraduates in straitened circumstances".

Two Colleges, Selwyn and Emmanuel, and also Fitzwilliam House, do not demand caution money on admission, though at Selwyn all fees are to be paid in advance, and £54-56 (varying with the rent of the rooms occupied) has to be paid towards the first term's bill. The caution money varies from £12 at Trinity to £40 at Peterhouse, and at the former, as at five other colleges, the money is returned at the end of the first term. St. John's and Trinity Hall demand advance payment of the University Matriculation Fee of five guineas. Fitzwilliam House and Selwyn are unique in that they have no Registration or Admission Fees (several colleges have both) though in both these cases fees are paid in advance. At some of the Colleges where, in theory, fees are paid at the end of each term or during the subsequent vacation, it is usual for the payment in fact to be demanded a term late.

# Cambridge could triple in size by 2031, say planners

» Report names city as development hotspot

Gemma Oke & Aditi Rao

A new settlement study has caused alarm by suggesting that the population of Cambridge could treble by 2031.

The study, published by the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) last week, highlights Cambridge as one of three cities in the region with high potential for population and economic growth. Development within the city itself is expected to be limited, but the proposals have caused surprise among residents and workers in Cambridge, with concerns for the possible impact of expansion upon infrastructure and the environment.

The chairman of the EERA Planning Panel, Cllr Derrick Ashley, says that the study published a projection of long term growth and development to be considered in conjunction with other evidence and a 12-week public consultation period. A spokesman for the assembly emphasised the provisional nature of the proposals: "the report does not mean that Cambridge should double in size," Simon Meecham said.

"The study is one set of information for the EERA to consider, alongside reports from groups like the Forestry Commission and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs."

Commenting on the potential environmental consequences of imple-

menting the proposals, Meecham said: "Although development is not ever without any pain, new-build homes will make use of carbon negative technology to help reduce the effect of communities on the environment."

The report recommends that new developments should be sustainable with a view to securing the long term economic stability of the region, capitalising on the "Cambridge phenomenon" that has seen knowledge-based and technological industries cluster around the wider Cambridgeshire region, in part due to the University of Cambridge's reputation as a world-leading centre of academic research and teaching.

Opponents of the study's suggestions cite underdeveloped infrastructure and the potential for overcrowding as "highly undesirable".

Cllr Allan Crystal, the Liberal Democrat EERA Planning Panel leader, spoke of the danger of "pressurising existing towns" and the possible consequences of a lower standard of living for the residents and workers of Cambridge if healthcare, education and transport facilities are unable to be adequately expanded.

Cllr Crystal suggested that sustainability and regeneration could be better achieved by building designated eco-towns afresh that are inherently self-sufficient rather than creating "unsustainable pepper-pot developments" peripheral to a busy city centre.



## Hundreds protest against Israeli aggression in Gaza

Around 500 people took the streets of Cambridge on Saturday to protest against the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Shouting slogans such as "Occupation is a crime, Israel out of Palestine," the demonstration, organised by the Stop the War Coalition, took place only hours before Hamas announced a week-long ceasefire in Gaza. The protesters collected signatures calling for the Israeli ambassador to be expelled from the UK and demanding an immediate halt to arms' sales to Israel. The group marched through the city centre before returning to hear speeches from the Cambridge University Islamic Society, among others.

## Varsity Profile

» Week 2: Christopher McGeever, magician and Trinity third-year

**4**  
The age Chris first performed a trick

**15**  
minutes for an audition to join the Magic Circle

**40**  
minutes of practice every day

**7**  
May Balls where Chris performed last year

Chris McGeever has just retrieved my card, the ten of spades, from the middle of a deck of cards, just by clicking his fingers. He even bends the card before replacing it in the pack, and it still appears on the top: as soon as he clicks, the top card bends crisply in the middle. Close-up magic surely doesn't get more impressive than this.

Except that the ten of spades, which I signed with a permanent marker so that it couldn't be switched, is now crunched up in the heel of his shoe. Chris smiles and signs the card too. "If I become famous one day," he laughs, "you can sell it on eBay and make a fortune."

Chris has been performing magic for 16 years. He started, aged four, with a cup-and-balls trick – "it's the oldest magic trick in the world" – from a Paul Daniel's magic set. It wasn't until he was 15 that he joined the Young Magicians' Club, the youth branch of the prestigious Magic Circle. At 18, the minimum age to join the Circle proper, Chris was accepted as a member. Most applicants are turned down, either after an initial interview or after their 15-minute audition in front of a panel of professionals. At the end of Chris' audition his application was unanimously approved. At 20 he is still one of the organisation's youngest members.

So how does Chris learn his tricks? Partially, he says, through the Magic Circle's teaching programme – it holds weekly "lectures" in London, where magicians show off their latest tricks

and walk through how to perform them. (He also reports on these classes for the in-house magazine, the *Magic Circular*.) But what he learns from most is his own practice. He tries to spend "a minimum" of 40 minutes every day practising, just to "keep sharp". The key, he says, is "playing around" to find new ways of making his tricks more impressive.

His "first love" was close-up magic – cards, coins and the like – with a small audience, but he's now focussing more on stage magic. "There's a lot more adrenaline pumping," he says of his bigger performances, though he regrets the fact that you "lose a bit of impact" because the audience is less involved.

While in Cambridge, Chris performs about once a fortnight, squeezing his magic in around the last year of his law degree at Trinity. Next month he is performing a big solo stage show for Cancer Research. But he really comes into his element during May Week: last year, he performed at a different ball each night.

After his finals this summer, he will take a year out, though he doesn't know what he wants to do afterwards "I don't want magic to be a career," he says. With just a hint of a smile, he continues: "But I think magic will probably be with me for the rest of my life."

**Andrew Bellis**  
Chris is performing a show in aid of Cancer Research UK on Friday, February 6th at Anglia Ruskin. Tickets on sale from the box office: 0845 196 2320



SEAN JONES

## St John's offers students wine-tasting after Formal row

Nat Sokolova

St John's has offered a series of concessions to students after complaints about its controversial restrictions on wine at Formal Hall.

The JCR will also propose further changes in its meeting with the Master on Tuesday.

The College will now offer a wine-tasting sessions for students, promising to buy the most popular wines to serve in Hall. The move comes after a

series of complaints about the quality of wine served.

The College has already let students choose between red and white wine, though it sometimes still runs out of red during a meal.

Some students don't find this compromise satisfying. Stuart Moore, a postgraduate at the College, wrote an open letter to the Master, saying that he would not pay his Kitchen Fixed Charge while the restrictions continued. He asked the JCR to initiate

another boycott, but was outvoted by students who are happy with St John's purchasing and serving the wine and only demand the practical issues to be dealt with.

The JCR will suggest to the Master that two different menus are issued for each night, one with the wine option and without it, which the students will receive in exchange for their ticket upon entering Hall. This way, "stealing wine from peers," as some students have called it, will be made more dif-

ficult.

The JCR President, Tom Chigbo, said that St John's had studied similar changes made in other Colleges, particularly at Churchill, and were trying hard to avoid making the same mistakes. Chigbo suggested that the reforms at John's could form a blueprint for changes to other Colleges' Formals.

"If the changes in St John's prove to be successful, other Colleges are very likely to follow," he said.

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## Cambridge Spies



### Homerton

#### Breaking and exiting

On returning for one night only from his year abroad, a young gent attended his long-lost drinking society's weekly swap, this week with the holiest and most chaste of female societies. The location was the newly acquired drinking den affiliated to another fine eating establishment. The surprise he made to his fraternity brothers on turning up unannounced obviously wasn't long lived for during a trip to the urinating facilities, his friends went on to greener pastures, unaware that he was still inside. When at 3, our fine fellow finally awoke next to the bowl, he found that the doors were locked, blocking any means of escape. Acting on a whim, he picked up a chair and broke through one of the windows. In his rush to get to a taxi to transport him bedwards, he bore a wound to his hand. Quite alarmed, the innocent taxi driver called the medical services, who in turn called the authorities. It was deemed that he was not breaking in, but out, and he was thus cleared of all charges.

### Pugilism

#### 'Not tonight, mate'

After a packed Corn Exchange audience was treated to a soiree of wit and bonhomie from one of the country's best-known - and scariest-looking - prizefighters, said hitman made the (surely correct) decision to head to Cambridge's most notoriously cheesy club for an evening of carousing. Imagine his shock, therefore, when he was denied entrance due to his lack of academic qualifications. He was squaring up to the unfortunate antipodean doorman when said guardian's colleagues leapt in to the rescue, leading our warrior to a roped-off area of the 'VIP lounge' (which could thus be correctly referred to that night, for the first time in its history). A horde of sportsmen queued up for an audience, but were left disappointed, as their hero was only interested in Cambridge's beauties. Said one source, "It was a wonderful night to be alive."

### Journos

#### Fairly unbalanced

Which Editor of *Varsity* has been limping around the office after taking a tumble down the ADC stairs following an epic night out?

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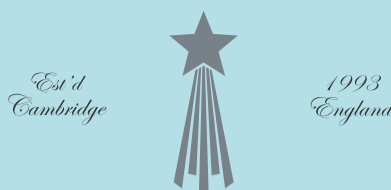
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# The Essay



## Why Darwin Matters Jonathan Birch

Cambridge alumnus Charles Darwin is regularly regarded as the father of biology and one of the greatest scientists of all time. 2009 is the bicentenary of his birth, and Jonathan Birch questions whether his ideas are really the most important thing about him.

Historians don't consider themselves in the business of hero-worship, but for Charles Darwin they almost make an exception.

In the 150 years since the publication of the *Origin of Species*, academia's 'Darwin industry' has spawned libraries full of biographical detail and textual interpretation. Elements of Darwin's biography have reached the status of legend in the popular imagination: the Beagle voyage, the Galapagos finches, the 20-year wait before publishing, the religious wran-

gling over the implications of his theory: if you aren't tired of hearing the story yet, you will be by the end of the year, when Cambridge's celebrations will have reached their apotheosis and Paul Bettany will be re-enacting Darwin's life in cinemas. Darwin is the 'father' of biology, the exemplary 'great scientist'. But what did one man do to earn such epithets?

Individuals vary. Their traits are heritable. Some individuals reproduce more successfully than others, and the traits of these individuals are better represented in the next generation. Over millions of years, by means of 'natural selection', or "the preservation of favoured races in the struggle for life", species evolve. This is Charles Darwin's big idea, but, increasingly, it is our idea too: in the hands of a century of popularisers from T.H. Huxley to Richard Dawkins, it has been held aloft as the crowning glory of the Western scientific enterprise, and our best explanation for why we exist.

Russian biologist Theodosius Dobzhansky's slogan that "nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution" has become a catchphrase for the contemporary study of life; and this shows how the impact of evolutionary theory extends outside the textbooks: it embodies an ideology of science, the belief that, through constructing mechanistic accounts of the causal history of living things, we shed light on the secrets of the world. In a culture in which the spirit of Enlightenment is tainted with the guilt over what followed, in which science is associated as much with atom bombs and CFCs as with human progress, Darwin's theory is the case for the defence.

But it would be misleading to think Darwin's status derives entirely from his

idea. Indeed, it's arguably misleading to call evolutionary theory *his* idea, though his causal contribution to modern biology is not in doubt. Darwin grew up in a culture where evolution was, so to speak, in the air. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, Britain's genteel community of wealthy scientific enthusiasts dedicated much time and ink to combating the radical French evolutionism of Lamarck and Geoffroy. In 1844, evolutionary controversy exploded in Britain with the anonymous publication of *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*, an ambitious speculation telling of the progression of life up a chain of being from spontaneously generated simple organisms through to mankind.

The growing fossil evidence of extinct life forms needed an explanation, and such theories filled a niche. Darwin did for the study of life what Charles Lyell, his friend and inspiration, had done for geology. Lyell proposed the 'uniformitarian principle': that the geology we see today is best explained by small, currently-active forces acting over staggeringly long periods of time. When Darwin set off on the Beagle, filled with Romantic dreams of finding unifying laws of nature after reading Alexander von Humboldt's travelogues, he took Lyell's book along with him, and took his principle to heart.

Darwin's theoretical innovation was a not the idea of evolution but a new mechanism for its occurrence. A very speculative mechanism, of course, and scientific objections to his theory were warranted and widespread. Why should advantageous traits spread through the population? Wouldn't they end up diluted, swamped by the prevailing disadvantageous traits? How did these traits arise at all? And could complex traits really develop like this? The twentieth century culture of laboratory testing and mathematical modelling expanded, quantified and reinforced Darwin's ideas to answer such questions; it is largely through the work of 1930s scientists such as J.B.S. Haldane and R.A. Fisher that today's 'modern synthesis' theory

was born. Darwin is not the author of modern evolutionary theory, and to credit theories to the first person to contribute 'significant' work is a dubious practice. So is he really the 'father' of biology?

I think so – but not because of his idea.



Darwin was venerated long before the notion of natural selection had acquired the widespread acceptance it enjoys today. He was given a state funeral, celebrated as a genius, venerated on his first centenary, largely by people who judged his central hypothesis to be wrong. It was his personal virtues, his fatherly qualities no less, that earned him the reverence he continues to receive. Darwin is portrayed as the iconic 'gentleman of science': wise, moral, conscientious, companionable and modest. And no amount of industrial historical research has disproved the hypothesis that really did live up to these attributes.

When allies like Ernst Haeckel defended natural selection through brash confrontation, Darwin advised them against it. While Huxley, 'Darwin's Bulldog', forcefully took the argument for evolution to its critics, Darwin (for reasons of health and modesty) confined himself to his home at Down, Kent, where he lived with his devoutly Unitarian wife, Emma. When correspondents asked Darwin if his theory was incompatible with Creationism and other Christian beliefs, he gave guarded replies, professing to be "muddled" by the matter. Despite his doubts on questions of religious doctrine, he continued to support his local parish church—and though appearing

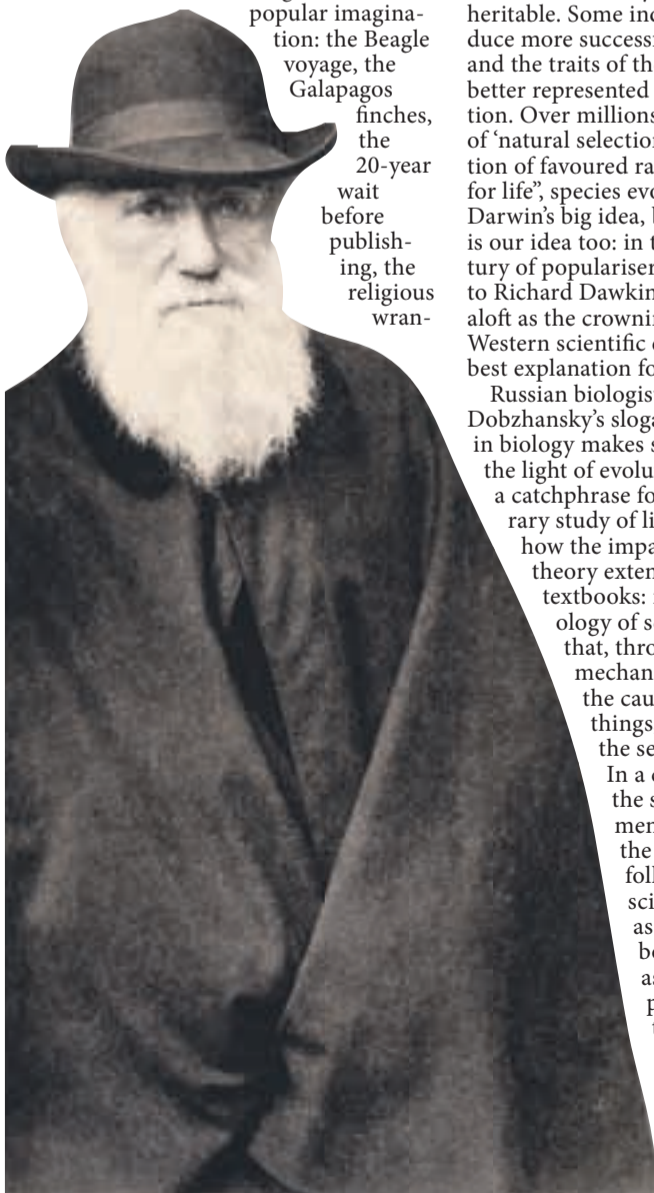
increasingly to withhold belief in God in later life, he preferred the neologism "agnostic" to the more confrontational "atheist".

Darwin's work is a testament to the value of perseverance and painstaking effort. Lucky enough to have the inherited wealth necessary to avoid paid work, he filled his time with science. He was a careful and gifted writer, and his bewildering

attention to detail in the study of barnacles, of botany, of domesticated animals, and of fancy pigeons in the groundwork for the *Origin* upheld his overt commitment to the 'inductive method'. In the code of nineteenth century men of science, this amounted to the imperative that obsessive fact collection must come before speculative theorizing.

In later life, he mentored countless botanists through correspondence. Down became the hub of an international network of botanical knowledge. Darwin's enterprise was truly collective, and the many friends he made in scientific circles ensured his immaculate reputation. Darwin's theory of evolution was the first deemed respectable by the genteel scientific community because the man behind it was respected. The virtues that earned him this status continue to impress and inspire his disciples today.

Jonathan Birch is a postgraduate researcher at the Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Cambridge.



## Foreign Correspondence

Cambridge goes all over the world in a riot of semi-imperialist journalism



### Week 2: Israel/Lebanon

News of the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas will not only give relief to those in Israel and Palestine, but also those in the surrounding region. News of rocket fire from the South of Lebanon into Israel was a terrifying reminder of the fragility of Israel's neighbours and the ease with which the violence could spread.

During the summer of 2008 I spent two months learning Arabic in Beirut, despite the Foreign Office's official advice against travel there. There were still signs of the 2006 July War, when Israel bombed Lebanon following the capture of two of its soldiers by Hezbollah. The deafening noise of the construction sites woke me up each morning long before I wanted, and the accompanying dust made wearing flip-flops a nightmare.

For breakfast on my first morning, my grandfather and I went to buy some eggs. After purchasing them through a small shop window, my grandfather announced with a grin that the vendor was "the father of a Hezbollah warlord. Good eggs though." It took me a while to reconcile my perceptions of Hezbollah as a purely militant and terrorist group with the reality of their integration into everyday life.

I also had to get used to the omnipresence of the military. My language course accommodation was near a prominent politician's headquarters, so I passed four armed men in khaki on the way to class each morning, and suffered searches of all my bags of freshly purchased fruit every time I went shopping. By the end of my stay, however, one had decided that he wanted to help me with my Arabic language learning and seemed unwilling to accept that I did not have a phone number. He couldn't have been much older than twenty-three.

Following the Euro 2008 Final, my classmates and I realised that those bangs we were hearing were gunshots, and not fireworks. The next morning our teacher laughed and explained that celebratory gunshots were "how some people celebrate around here".

During my time in Beirut I met few with warm attitudes towards Israel, although there was a strong war-weariness and a suspicion of Hezbollah. My teachers simply wanted to get on with their lives, after having experienced years of civil war, invasions and assassinations. Surely they have enough to recover from without being drawn into a war on two fronts with Israel.

Soumaya Keynes

## Charlotte Runcie



## Fishy Terminology

The latest 'animal rights' stunt is the most absurd yet

I was eating salmon in Queens' buttery when I heard about PETA's (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) decision that fish need a name change.

According to their website, "when your name can also be used as a verb that means driving a hook through your head, it's time for a serious image makeover." What do they suggest as a replacement? 'Sea Kitten'. Because, apparently, "who could possibly want to put a hook through a sea kitten?"

The first time I read about this I thought that PETA had *finally* mastered irony. I thought they were saying that it doesn't make sense to project emotions and characteristics onto some animals and not onto others, and that to use some animals as pets and others for eating is hypocritical. But this analysis collapses fast when you find out more about their campaign and realise that they don't think anthropomorphising house pets is bad. They just want us to do it to fish too. I should have known.

For years PETA has kept busy making itself look stupid and giving intelligent vegetarians a bad name. This most recent campaign should really be taken with a pinch of sea salt, given the fact that, previously, PETA has memorably exhibited a naked pregnant woman in a cage to highlight the plight of farmed pigs. On Mother's Day. Spotting the logic in that one is a challenge in itself, but that's nothing compared to the time they compared eating meat to the Holocaust.

PETA thinks in a different way from

the rest of the world. They think that all animals, from the tiny ant to the elephant, are exactly the same as humans, with the same thought processes, feelings, and aspirations. They think *Bambi* was a documentary. So, while these campaigns make perfect sense to PETA, the rest of us have a mental block that stops us being persuaded by this recurring line of argument.

Most of us think that animal welfare is secondary to human welfare, and realise that given half a chance a lot of animals would have us for breakfast. Calling a grizzly bear a 'forest puppy' wouldn't make it any less likely to rip off your legs, just as calling a shark a 'sea kitten' won't make it any safer to go back in the water.

PETA even has a little Flash game on their website where you can play with different kinds of Disney-style cartoon fish in an attempt to make you see them as cute and cuddly instead of slithery and weird. You choose a type of fish and dress it up with dinky clothes and accessories. These include some generic items like a leather jacket, make-up, and a tiara, and then some more specific ones: whiskers, cat ears, a ball of wool, and a litter tray.

When I was playing this game, I noticed two things. Firstly, the more you try and make a fish look like a cat, the more of a freakish inter-species mutant you create, and the more you have the urge to put it out of its misery. Secondly, I noticed the cartoon sea kitten's eyes followed my mouse around the screen in a way that bordered on the predatory. Before I'd even finished

making my aqua-pussy I had to close the browser window in case I got nightmares. PETA, you made me fish-phobic.

Since I started researching those adorable sea kittens, I've learned that when fish aren't smelling your blood and dragging you out with the tide, they're bullying, mutilating, and eating each other.

I've learned that the most complex mental processes a fish has are those concerning exclusion. If we do have something in common with them, it's certainly not unconditional love or a fondness for long walks. Yet PETA persists: they want us to think it's as inexcusable to eat caviar as it is to torture a hamster. But their argument deletes itself; you can't tell people that fish are worth valuing, and then remove all their fishy characteristics to replace them with features from a different, cuter animal. PETA is doing fish just as much of a disservice, in a different way.

Of course, making fun of PETA is like shooting fish in a barrel (ha). They've lost a lot of sympathy for their ever more absurd and offensive campaigns, and I'm willing



to bet that as a result of this latest one people are much more likely to go 'sea kittening' of a weekend than they ever were to go angling. If PETA want to be taken seriously, they need to fire their PR guy. I reckon we should do them a favour and rebrand them 'land sharks'. Maybe it'll endow them with some pelagic brains.

## Julie Chan



## Voices from Gaza

But how do we hear them?

The written word is a powerful thing. It's how great ideas continue their journey through time to reach us. Anything published in a respectable journal has the potential to inform and transform the world it enters. And when crafted with a measure of skill, a piece of writing becomes so much more than just the content it contains.

We like to believe that the informative and artistic strength of a written work stem from the convictions of the person that wrote it. Convictions are how a pamphlet by an unexceptional priest like Emmanuel Sieyès could spark the French revolution, or how Siegfried Sassoon opened the public's eyes to the hypocrisy of the Great War.

While keeping up with the Israeli invasion of Gaza, however, I've come to realise that all we have is a very flat idea, a romantic caricature, of the writing process. Writers aren't always trying to weave their beliefs and their reality into poetry. A lot of the time, they have to represent other people. And the problem with other people is that you hardly ever agree with them.

The recent events in the Gaza Strip have horrified us with their brutality. Nonetheless, there is something else going on, something which has been going on ever since journalists' pens started being the voices for those on the other side. The article that really got me

thinking about this was Jeffrey Goldberg's commentary in the *International Herald Tribune*.

His main point was clear: Hamas is not going to be de-radicalised by bombing them into submission, nor will they suddenly recognise Israel's right to exist just because they say please. He supports his argument with his previous experience of interviewing key Hamas

polemic and idiosyncratic understanding of economics in order to find the relevant bits in his thought so that I can finish my essay. True, Marx does say that the social class I belong to will inevitably be blasted into oblivion. But I am writing about a dead guy who has been proven wrong, from the comfort of my bourgeois room in Cambridge. Goldberg regularly faces radicals who

lacking real vision. Palestinians are angry because the Israelis have systematically evicted, starved and trapped them in a few narrow corridors of land. Hamas is sincere and cannot be cowed into an unequal peace just because the Israelis have strength of numbers and firepower. It is only by suspending his ethnic identity that Goldberg can bring another opinion into a living room far, far away.

However, we mustn't forget the kind of manipulation that such writers have to perform. Goldberg asks questions that produces the reactions that he wants. He slyly poses the question to a Hamas leader, "Hezbollah is doing very well against Israel, don't you think?" in order to get a rise out of his interviewee. He knows Hamas bristles at comparisons with Hezbollah's perceived success and wants to record their irritation.

This kind of writing is a mad and complex process. A lot of the time, you've got to put your own convictions aside, no matter how strong they are and no matter how much the other guy offends you. Writing that changes the world, even by a little bit, doesn't just come from people arguing for themselves in a pretty-sounding way. We've got to remember that the eyes of every man, woman and child see a little bit of truth. Messy, chaotic, unbelievably complicated, truth.

*"I am writing about a dead guy who has been proven wrong."*

leaders. It is in these interviews that you see a not inconsiderable degree of schizophrenia.

Goldberg is an ex-Israeli Army prison officer, but he has had to talk to so many people bent on the destruction of a people that he identifies with. It must be very trying maintaining your professionalism with someone who does not hesitate to say to your face that he thinks you and your people should die.

How can you remain objective when you disagree with your subject on such a fundamental level? It's easy for me to complain about having to sift through Marx's overlong sentences, excited

want Jews dead and take serious action to achieve their goals.

I suppose it takes a rock-solid belief that no matter how far apart your convictions are on the spectrum of opinion, they are based on a chaotic but undeniable reality. That's one reason why writers are so important: they do all the research, a lot of it risky and unpleasant, and then extract the truth that we cannot see.

For example, how we cannot deny that the Palestinians are an angry people because they are a wronged people. Or that we cannot trivialise Hamas by calling them crazy, indiscriminate and



## Spk yr brains

The Wit and Wisdom of the World  
Wide Web



### Week 2: Bank Bailout #2

Its another world, who am I to say  
other than I dont care Captilism  
stinks  
*shaun, stoke on trent*

There is one one man capable  
and skilled enough to take Britain  
through this recession and the  
timing is right for "Gordon  
Brown"

We must not underestimate this  
highly complex task and his ex-  
perience and intelligence to deal  
with the economic challenges we  
now face.  
*Elloura Coupe, London*

What is the old saying again?

In the land of the blind the one  
eyed man is king ... or in this case  
PM  
*Tony, Wirral*

Can someone tell me if this is  
deflation all dressed up?  
*jeff, watford*

is it ok for the government to use  
my stake rbs to advertise in sports  
especially f1 (william) than reduc-  
ing my taxes  
*tightteeny23*

I heard an expression last Friday  
"four meals then a riot". As much  
as I hate to say this, this govt had  
to go-ahead with today's plan of  
action. Because if it did not, can  
you imagine the mayhem. I know  
that most areas of our society,  
particulary over the past 12-years  
under new labour has already  
done so anyway.  
*pcpilot London*

It's political correctness gone  
mad. First they comne for Prince  
Harry and now for the bankers.  
Its not fair on anyone, particularly  
the children who will suffer ass a  
result of the huge debt they will  
inherit.

Pedofiles will be ten timesmaybe  
even twenty times more likely to  
touch children if they know they  
are saddled with debt. It makes  
me sick to my stomach to see  
what this country is coming 2.  
And to think we once had an  
Empire...  
*honesttaxpayer, bedford*

I was interested to hear Gordon  
Brown's answer to the Arch-  
bishop. Answer: "I do not pass by  
on the other side". No Gordon but  
your father should have also told  
you... You do not build a house on  
sand. You need good solid found-  
ations to build your house.  
*Jean, UK*

Robert  
Stagg



## Happy Birthday Cambridge!

Now stop the celebrations – they're a pointless embarrassment

Last week, the editors of this handsome organ bubbled over with the milk of human kindness. In their tribute to CUSU's book celebrating the octocentennial of Cambridge University, they used words like "disgrace", "puff", "embarrassing" and even the lacerating phrase "easy money". Well, I'd rather like to take that ball on the fly and compose a variation on their theme. The University's commemorative agenda is even worse.

It used to be said of the historian Hugh Trevor-Roper's reviewing style that he would so demolish a book that he left people wondering why anyone would write, publish or read it in the first place. Likewise, somebody is required to tear down and rip up the University's range of "colourful streetlight banners". Like the tinpot face of a regular dictator, they're ubiquitous. And they scream out the most ghastly and vulgar things. '800 Years of Engagement' – engagement with what? (The slogan doesn't even beg a question.) '800 Years of Inspiration' – inspiring whom? '800 Years of Innovation' – at this point, one might as well note that the campaign has become self-discrediting. The real award-winner, though, is 'Transforming Tomorrow' with the alliterative hat-tip to its own cleverness. All of these – you must have seen them – are accompanied by a selection of fashionably blurred (and often incongruous) images.

But, as Randy Bachman once sang, you ain't seen nothing yet. Just wait around for the University's introduction of 'Octo'. Dispensing my own mammalian sweetness, I'll let [www.cam.ac.uk/800](http://www.cam.ac.uk/800) explain:

"Octo is the unofficial mascot for the 800th Anniversary Year. We will be using Octo in a variety of printed and online materials throughout the year. Octo

has already been photographed at the Fitzwilliam Museum, at the Mathematical Bridge of Queens' College, inside a measuring cylinder in the Department of Chemistry, and on the brim of a Porter's hat at Gonville and Caius College."

Lucky Octo. In case all the semi-literate breathlessness and excitement has piqued your interest, Octo is a polystyrene representation of the number '800'. '800 Years of Innovation' and a plastic number is our unofficial mascot? I need say no more.

Actually, Octo might as well be the official representative of the University's terribly excited and engaging campaign. Because, since all considerations of taste and intellect have been defenestrated, we might as well accept the foamy embrace of this adorably enumerated critter.

Very little mention has been made of King's College Chapel, Cambridge's most frail and numinous building. The Fitzwilliam seems largely ignored, except in a froth of 'outreach' exercises. The Parker Library, unstinting in its inspirations, is to be unsung. However, the Footlights – since they produced Stephen Fry (everyone's favourite plagiarist of Oscar Wilde, who is in turn everyone's favourite plagiarist of Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater) and that bloke off *House* – will be given a magnificent airing.

History isn't exactly being rewritten. That sounds too

impersonal, too final. But it is being re-authored. Do look up the University's official chronology, 'accessible' to everyone on its website. Much grand material, all genuinely innovative and inspiring and engaging, is furnished. And then, somewhere in the 1990s, we instead get a long and tedious list of various development projects funded by various rich and important people.

Anything seamy is carefully obviated. The thickos with thicker wallets who used to populate the University aren't addressed. Patronage and favours and slaps on the back appear never to have existed. Craven submissions to royal dictates are left unmentioned. (Some of these were entirely worthwhile – the enforced abolition of 'scholastic philosophy', for example, or the demolition

of housing to make way for King's College Chapel. Nevertheless, they're all a little too complicated to appear in an official chronology, dontchathink?) Today's sterile and beige focus on examinations and stress and inclusiveness are made to seem cardinal and vibrant and interesting. The pocket-book endorsement of dubious business interests, including the arms trade, is left unsaid.

Cambridge University has never been much good at celebrating itself. (In a strong field, William Wordsworth's worst poem is 'Ode on the Installation of HRH Prince Albert as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge' – "Albert, in thy race we cherish/A Nation's strength that will not perish.") This, by the way, is a good thing. For this University is an institution, and any institution that venerates its own existence is simply undergirding the most essential fact about itself: it doesn't matter. Its students could and would simply go elsewhere if necessary. It has no value except that conferred on it by its members, present and past. The great men and women of yesteryear were not furnished and fitted with their intellectual headgear by the University. Indeed, the octocentennial masturbations have to acknowledge this in every dreadful press release: Newton went here, Hawking went here, Tennyson went here. The proliferation of impressive alumni-lists from all British universities underscores the lack of distinctive difference between them. There is no magic in the Cantabrigian air. If the University were to decline and fall tomorrow, people would remember a day when something slightly unusual happened. And then they would recall: Newton went there, Hawking went there, Tennyson went there. Inspiring indeed.



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*The Mays* is seeking the best and most exciting new writing and visual art in Cambridge and Oxford. All types of prose, poetry and visual art submissions are welcome; so whether you compose and illustrate on paper, write your love poems and stories on beer mats, or graffiti your visions on bus windows, we want to hear from you, and see what you have to offer. Chances are your work will find a home in *The Mays 17*.

You can submit up to three pieces of previously unpublished work. Writing submissions should be no longer than three thousand words. Please email us at [mays@varsity.co.uk](mailto:mays@varsity.co.uk) with 'submission' in the subject line.

Whether you have been published before or not, this is your opportunity to see your work in print.

Go on then, show us what you've got.

**Deadline for submissions Friday 13 March 2009.**

## CALL FOR EDITORS

*The Mays* is also looking for students to join a committed editorial team of prose and poetry readers, copy editors and general support staff. We want an enthusiastic, imaginative team of editors who we can work closely with to select the best new writing and visual art from Cambridge and Oxford.

This is a great opportunity to be involved in the production of Oxbridge's premier literary journal, so if you are at all interested please email us at [mays@varsity.co.uk](mailto:mays@varsity.co.uk) with your contact information, the position you are interested in and a brief paragraph detailing why you want to be involved.

# adc theatre

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Potential applicants should contact the current post-holder, James Baggaley, on [james@adctheatre.com](mailto:james@adctheatre.com) or 01223 359 547, for more information or to apply.

**Deadline: 12pm, 9th February 2009**

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We would like to receive applications from individuals and drama groups: previous productions have been successfully staged by both college drama societies and University-wide drama groups. Previous experience is not necessary.

If you have any ideas you would like to discuss, or would like further information or an application form, please contact:

Claire Butcher, Production Manager  
[claire@adctheatre.com](mailto:claire@adctheatre.com)  
01223 359 547

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# MAGAZINE

THIS WEEK IN THE MAGAZINE: ROBIN CORMACK, OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY, ON BYZANTIUM  
BUN SHOP'S BACK / MYSTERIOUS GIRLS / PENGUIN BOOKS / VICTORIAN CAMBRIDGE / JAN STEEN



## Photograph of the week by *Charlotte Runcie*



"It was drizzling and the visibility wasn't great, so instead of the view over the city the really striking thing was the rain-soaked turrets and carvings near enough to touch. I like the darkness of the intricate stone seen up close, and how strong and permanent the building looks against the blank clouds - in a way you're walled in, but still open to the elements. We're so used to seeing the chapel from the Backs or King's Parade, but here it feels like you're right at the top of Cambridge, with one of the most famous landmarks in the world under your feet."

If you have a potential Photo of the Week, send it (along with a brief description) to [features@varsity.co.uk](mailto:features@varsity.co.uk).



## My week by Chronophage, the Corpus Clock\*

### Thursday

Disaster, absolute bloody disaster. Reading my weekly copy of *Varsity* this morning, I found out that the clever little Born Again Christians at Nibirupedia have discovered my true identity. I followed up the story, and when no tourists were looking at me, whipped out my laptop, logged onto YouTube and typed in 'Corpus Christi Chronophage - Mark of the Beast'.

Sure enough, they have me pinned down. Nibirupedia are now aware that I am not a grasshopper, I am in fact

a locust. But not any old locust, no. I am the winged locust of the book of Revelations, and also a UFO, here to send a message to all of the rich and all of the Freemasons that they are about to lose everything, as per the Book of Revelations. Not good news. People are going to start realising the end of the world is nigh. I'm in trouble.

### Friday

Having slept on the bad news and had a good hard think about it, I decided the best thing to do would be to ignore it. A mass of gawping tourists still came and pointed their loathsome cameras at me, and blasé students walked past untroubled by my new-found apocalyptic status, so I figured it was no biggie.

### Saturday

It's been a stressful forty-eight hours. They ticked past so slowly it was like I was counting every second. I decided I needed to cut loose, so I had a couple of cheeky double vodkas and Red Bull. It was still too early to go out, so I sped up time a little to 11pm. By now, everyone in the centre of town was sufficiently pissed not to notice me go, so I hopped out my cage and bounced along to Soul Tree.

The night was going well, moving my wings on the dance floor, busting some shapes; I was buzzing. But then I came over a bit morose, and hopped back to my little cage. It's just not fun being alone when you are a locust; we prefer to go out in swarms.

### Monday

I think people are starting to catch on to the fact that I am a UFO locust, here to herald the second coming of Christ. In the morning, a little girl visiting Cambridge burst into hysterical tears at the sight of me. I don't know whether it was my googly eyes, or my sharp teeth, or the fact that I have the seal of God on my head and am heralding the apocalypse, but something was not right. A bunch of Freemasons walked past doing a secret handshake, and scowling at me. I think they are aware that soon I shall round them up and send them packing to the eternal furnace of hell, presided over by my close friend Beelzebub. But they carried on walking.

### Wednesday

People are catching on, this is a disaster. Everyone is running past me in terror. I give Beelzebub a call and tell him the apocalypse is now or never. He tells me he'll send the fallen angels forthwith. Devilishly efficient bloke.

Little do the unsuspecting people of Cambridge know, they are entering their eleventh hour. I looked on at the silly students with a mixture of hatred and sorrow. As the bloke on YouTube says, they are sheep and I am a ravenous wolf in sheep's clothing. It's time to meet your maker: in your case God, in my case Dr John Taylor. I wonder how many of their fathers are Freemasons?

\*As told to Rob Peal

# Ed at large

EDITOR-AT-LARGE ED CUMMING EMBRACES THE REOPENED AND REVITALISED BUN SHOP WITH A FLOOZY AND A LOT OF BOTTLE

I am writing this very shortly after watching President Obama's inauguration, and so am filled with ideas of renewal and regeneration, not to mention the thought that were I to swear a very short, simple oath to become leader of the free world in front of a television audience of two billion, I might make the time to learn the words off by heart. Or

in certain sexual diseases, things recur. They go away and come back again. A few of these are Good Things: the sunrise, for instance, and Marcus Trescothick. But they blanch in comparison to the returns which, like taking your trousers off on the train, seem like a good idea at the time but really end up being a bit sad and disappointing for

KATY KING



at least have a quick run-through with the accompanist beforehand. I recall that even in my Grade 3 violin exam I had a quick run-through with my accompanist beforehand, and that was only in front of one person, and not to become leader of the free world, (and as it turned out not even to pass my Grade 3 violin exam).

Anyway. Back to the piece. In life, as

everyone involved. Take That, Halley's Comet and May Week all spring to mind in this regard.

And as is so often the case, inner-Cambridge public houses are great reflections of life. So as it is with the phoenix and Keith Richards, so it is with the Bun Shop: it is back from the dead. That once-great dolmen of Cambridge

underlife, after its tragic closure (due to the fact that the Cambridge underlife are many things but not particularly big spenders), has risen majestically from the ashes.

This is all the more ironic since it has been hauled from these metaphorical ashes by d'Arry's, the restaurant opposite which has recently hoisted itself from much more literal ashes. These ashes were caused by a fire, the flames of which are advertised, with a self-deprecating hubris largely unfamiliar to Cambridgeshire diners, on its outer wall in a manner which slightly conjures the image of a new Titanic being launched with a gigantic drawing of an iceberg on its side. It is the restaurant artwork which dares to say "whoops, we never learn!"; and should be commended all the more for it.

But enough about d'Arry's. In the olden days the Bun Shop was frequented by unpleasant old men and herd-like groups of sluts and yobbos stumbling around under the inaccurate banner of 'formal swaps', which despite their name offer little in the way of officiated exchange but a significant amount of legitimised date-rape and recherché misogyny. It was a thoroughly unpleasant place, to my mind, and I can't have been the only one to let out a little cheer every time I heard of a student being thrown through its window by his society tie.

Not being one to let prior incarnations spoil my judgment, I decided to give the Bun Shop's new incarnation the benefit

of the doubt, and arranged to meet a floozy for a drink.

I hoped this might lead to the doing of snogs on her, and it started brightly. I found a pleasing mixture of odd-looking single people, a token old bloke and a young couple engaged in sparkling, flirtatious conversation.

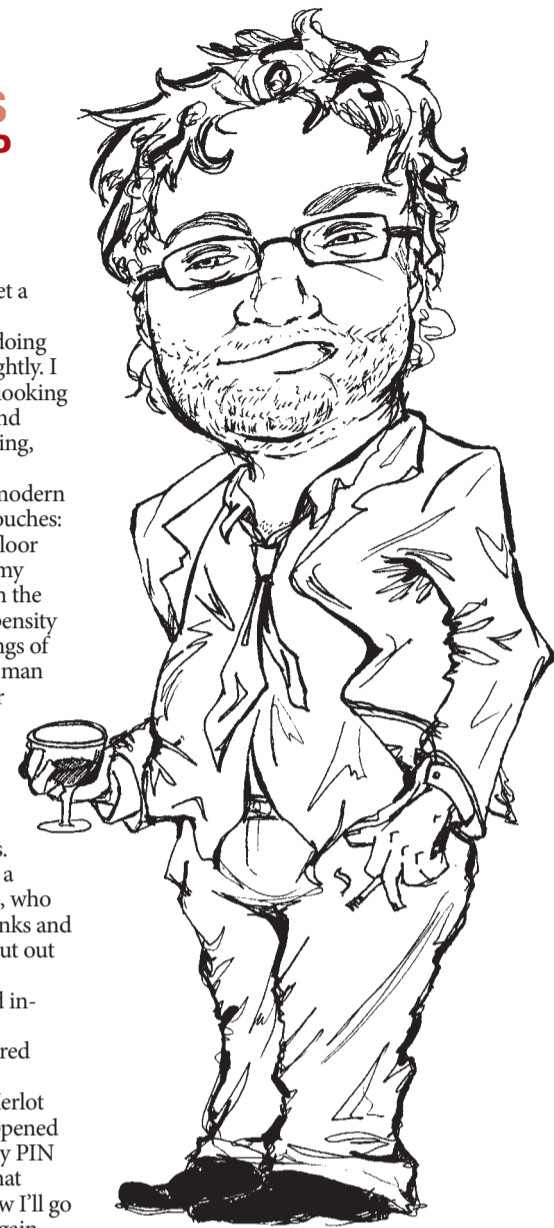
The interior is a mishmash of modern efficiency and pleasing old-pub touches: a bar billiards table, a sawdusted floor and a jukebox all score highly in my pub aesthetic handbook, although the jukebox was let down by the propensity of its users to select the recent Kings of Leon hit 'Sex on Fire', which for a man on a date somewhere whose sister business recently burned to a crisp sets an uncomfortably alarmist tone.

After a few minutes of taking in the ambiance, I searched for my floozy amongst the customers. She was sitting with the manager, a smooth young man named Jamie, who had already sorted her out for drinks and who, if I'm honest, seemed a bit put out by my arrival.

"I'm from Varsity," I mentioned innocuously.

"Here's the wine menu," he offered immediately.

Then there was the sound of Merlot splashing in glass, and then it happened again, and then I was asked for my PIN number. I don't recall much of what happened after that. But I do know I'll go back there, and I would do it all again.



# Supermarket Swept

IS THERE LIFE BEYOND SAINSBURY'S? STUDENTS IN THE KNOW SHARE THEIR TIPS FOR SHOPPING OUTSIDE OF THE 'BIG S', BE IT PLUSH MARKET STALLS, AROMATIC ARAB STORES OR ROOTING IN THE DUSTBINS.

Despite having some of the most attractive staff in Cambridge, Sainsbury's has its downsides. Boring selections, a monopoly on prices, and almost fetishistic delight in telling you what's wrong with its produce. (Imagine if we all did this. Hook-nosed, but just as tasty.) Marks & Spencer is worse, charging the price of a small car for a packet of crisps and confusing shortness of breath with 'sexy advertising'. Having heard the numerous options for supermarket shopping Cambridge offers rubbished, where do we turn to? There's no need to panic, concerned reader. This week we're taking a lesson from Jamie O, before he sold out. **Richard Dorrell** shows us the delights of Al-Amin supermarket on Mill Road, **Matilda Bathurst** and **Mark Crawford** go foraging for treats in Market Square, and **our correspondent in the bins** shows that food can be got for free by those in the know.

## Al-Amin, Mill Rd

To shop at Al-Amin is capriciously enlightening, dangerous, erotic. It is an instinctive experience, and not well presented by print. You will therefore now walk over, article in hand, and navigate with me. Go!

On the left, fruits and vegetables. Stubbles of vermilion turmeric root, for a sharp coconut soup; robustly

sweet spinach; yams and eddoes; fresh curry leaf for potatoes; fresh mangoes, unadulterated. Chutneys. I recommend the gongura pickle, fermented Andhradi style. The rice 'n' spice den, with packets of instant sambhar that expand the sinuses, and the good (Keralan) black pepper; opposite, the addictive sour cherry jam. The rear contains a delicatessen and halal butchery; the other, aisles, an array of Iranian, Malay, Ghanaian food.

On the way out, try some kulfu; compact orgasms, sitting by the ice-cream. Your wallet will be lighter – prices hover between Sainsbury's and M&S – but you will be smiling broadly, this article possibly left, absentmindedly, at the bottom of a shopping basket.

## Market Square

Once a supermarket has provided you with the essentials, Market Square is the best place to go for a touch of local flavour. The prices for good quality fish, cheese and fresh bread are comparatively cheap, due to lower overheads for the stalls. There is also an advantage for eco-friendly shoppers, as the stalls use far less packaging.

Although you might prefer to buy staples at a supermarket, extras such as fresh dates (£1.99, 1/2 pound), Peruvian asparagus (£3.50 for a bunch)

and bags of hazelnuts (£2.50 a pound) are perfect additions to a meal. They also taste fresher than something sitting on the supermarket shelf for a week.

The Cheese Stall has more variety than any cheese fan could wish for. Pasta dishes are improved with the Glastonbury farm cheddar (£1.38, 100g) which is less bland than mass



produced versions. For a more sophisticated option, the pepper and nut covered Gruth Dhur cream cheese (£1.78, 100g) are best eaten French-style with bread, especially the crusty pain à l'ancienne (£3.95 a loaf) from the bread stall. What's more, the proprietor of the Cheese Stall has offered a 10 per cent discount to anyone who comes to his stall with this article.

For a high effort, but high kudos meal, choose the sea bream (£13.11 a kilo) from the fish stall and cook with garlic, ginger and spring onions.

Market Square should be a port of call for all Cambridge gourmants and those who want to gain respect from their more discriminating peers.

## Dumpster diving

Feeling peckish but poor? Has your overdraft been eaten away, or are you ethically minded and disgusted by the idea of food shopping? Either way, there is an answer: check out your local bins. Recent hauls include fresh bread, ready meals, and even fruit and veg. On an average night a simple root through the bins can yield at least three days' worth of food.

And in all seriousness, the surplus of the shops is phenomenal. There is enough in a couple of bins to feed all the homeless in Cambridge as well as any particularly adventurous students.

Perhaps more needs to be done to distribute this huge amount of waste. Perhaps Freeganism is the creed of the future? For anyone particularly daring there are always the Marks and Sparks bins which require a rather epic climb (I myself have never had the guts). Otherwise, look out for fresh bread, coming soon to a dumpster near you.



## Tofu Stir-Fry

Oil for cooking – ideally groundnut  
100g tofu – cubed  
1 tbsp shao shing rice wine  
1 tbsp light soy sauce  
Root ginger – a thumb-sized knob  
Couple of spring onions  
Clove of garlic  
Savoy cabbage, or curly kale  
Rice noodles

Give it a marinade, and tofu goes from bland to blazin'. With this promise in mind, combine the rice wine and soy sauce, pour it over the cubed tofu, and set aside. Next step, veggie prep. Chop the ginger into matchsticks, the spring onion into strips, and the garlic into teeny bits. Rinse the veg and slice it into stir-fry friendly strips. Finally, cook the noodles according to packet instructions.

And now to the wok. Take a deep breath before going any further. Get wok smoking hot, and pour in 1 tbsp oil. Add the tofu, reserving the left-over marinade. Cook for a few minutes, until brown. Remove tofu and set aside. Remove crusty bits on wok bottom, then put on heat and coat wok with more oil. Add the ginger and spring onion, then the garlic, stirring continuously. When aromatic, add the greens. Cook for a few minutes. Now add reserved marinade, and then the cooked noodles and tofu. KEEP STIRRING until warmed through. If you're feeling flush, finish the dish with a sprinkle of sesame oil, or some toasted cashew nuts for crunch.

# Shedding Spam in Cam

FOR THOSE OF YOU STILL FEELING AS BLUBBERY AS A YOUNG SEAL PUP, CLEMENTINE STOTT IS HERE TO HELP YOU SHED THOSE EXCESS FESTIVE POUNDS

## Do go punting

Working that pole's great for the quads, deltoids and abs, you know. Soon you'll be doing it topless and immortalised in endless tourists' photo albums.

## Do cycle

Turn that daily cycle ride to the Sidgwick Site into a high-octane resistance workout: whack the gears up as high as they'll go, load your basket and panniers with heavy objects and power your way over Orgasm Bridge. Repeat x20.

## Do go to the library

Put those weighty tomes on your shelf to good use. Stack a selection of your heaviest volumes on

the lower arm in order to perform impromptu bicep curls, building to sets of ten. Books: not just for brainiacs.

## Do goad the homeless

Transform a gentle jog round Parker's Piece into interval training. Find a good-humoured tramp on a nearby bench, nick his can of Special Brew and sprint 300 yards. Repeat x10.

## Do be late

Set your alarm half an hour later in the morning. You're really going to have to bust a gut getting to that supervision on time.

## Do Dance

Rev up your dull dance moves by cunningly incorporating a series of high-intensity squats and lunges into the repertoire. So Wednesday night at Cindies, a packed dance floor and you, ripping it up and toning that tush.

## Don't Snack

You will risk emerging from intense concentration to find desk and self liberally sprinkled with crisp crumbs and half-masticated jammy dodgers. Unpleasant.

## Don't wear full lycra regalia

This applies even if you're really fit. Especially if you're really fit, in fact; no one likes a show-off.

## Don't believe the hype

Swimming is an overrated form of exercise. It's pricey, there is nowhere to hide the unexercised body and children wee in that water, and probably worse.

## Don't forget the iPod

Listening to music whilst exercising can drown out the 'ow ow stop' voices in your head. For high impact exercise, anything with 135-165 beats per minute is ideal. Something called 'Harda Flava' by someone called Mudblood comes highly recommended by fitness experts, apparently.

## Don't panic

Consider the wisdom of Epictetus, who recommended we "conduct ourselves in life as at a feast". And Bernard Shaw: "There is no love sincerer than the love of food." Temper with the sage advice of Miss Piggy, "never eat more than you can lift," and you'll be just fine.



# THE CAMBRIDGE INVADER

MISSION: TO DELVE INTO CAMBRIDGE'S SECRET ORIFICES.

WEEK 2: THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION

Not so long ago, I found myself ensconced in the bar of the Cambridge Union. As I embarked on my quest to fuck myself senseless through the ingestion of Bombay Sapphire, I awaited some unwitting companions. Not friends, as such; rather, the drunken aftermath of a Cambridge University Conservative Association dinner.

Why, you might ask? You would, it will later become apparent, be entirely wise to do so. Curiosity. Curiosity and a bet. Some friends of mine recently challenged my long held belief that the Young Tories could ever be anything but slimy Union hacks sliding their way up the greasiest pole to a uniquely bigoted summit. So, we went to find a proving ground for our argument. They to a meeting, I to where posters dotted around the Union indicated they might be drunk. Drunks are more honest.

First came the vanguard. Enter the clowns. Penguin-suited public-schoolers, blotto to the eyeballs on port and bawling for more tumbled in and dived for strutting space. A swarm of slick young things milled at the bar, slurring their way through a stream of vapid sneers. Two huffed their way past my table as if it weren't there. Said one in white tie to another in black, "You look like you went

to a state school, yah know?"

Worse was to come. Towering over the cluster of chortling minions round the bar came the big beasts of the herd; more waddling penguins with silver bells and tankards and swagger sticks. This stampede was making me feel twitchy. Time for a drink, and a mingle.

Amidst the sticks and the snobs, the port and the prats, lumbered one very special reason for that drink. Fat and red, covered in flabby walrus blubber masked only by a voluminous cape and chain, a man of advancing years wobbled into view, beads trickling down his expansive forehead. Undergrads in flowing crepe dresses and stained dress shirts billowed around him, clamouring to be squinted at myopically through the monocle crammed comically into one eye.

Who was this fiend? Why was he dressed in that outlandish manner? Why was he perspiring into my gin?

I launched myself at one of the billowing dresses. Its occupant will remain nameless; but for the curious... second year, Newnham, sits on some committee or other, badly faked southern accent. Ignoring the pained smile of one who clearly doesn't want to be seen with the sort of plebeian who wears a shirt without even a cravat, I pressed my ques-

tions. Namely: who?

"Oh, don't you know?" The pained smile became a frosty smile.

"No. I know I seem like I belong here, but this all took me rather by surprise. I was only here for a drink..."

"He's the Earl of Onslow."

That explained a lot. Suffice to say: when they abolished the hereditary peers, he stayed. And, it seems, developed a cracking new sideline in educating the impressionable about just how the country should be run. By him, I think the gist was.

I stumbled outside to drag on a cigarette and find some calm. Instead, I found a pair of red faces wreathed in plumes of cigar smoke. A drawl sounded from within this pall, to the effect that one of the faces felt the Americans were in for a terrible shock if they thought Obama would do any good. Fancy that, ever hoping for change? Why, it'd never be any good unless they bloody well got off their fat arses and did some work instead of chewing burgers all day.

The other face agreed.

It was too much. I didn't even bother to protest, just wandered off into the night. When the revolution comes around...

...I'll show them what change means.



## Competition ~~and theatre~~

Each week we set a different creative writing exercise. The person who submits the winning entrance has their story printed in the next week's *Varsity*, and is rewarded with two free tickets to an ADC Theatre show.

**Week 2: Villanelle.** A villanelle is a nineteenth-century French form divided into 5 stanzas of 3 lines each, rhyming ABA, and a final quartet rhyming BBAA. It must have two repeated lines. The same line of verse is used for lines 1, 6, 12 and 18. Another line is repeated at lines 3, 9, 15 and 19. The repeated lines should rhyme with each other.

### Winner:

#### Tridentine Villanelle

Between the sky, the hills, the lanes and hell  
Are slim, sloped layers: between those humans hear  
Songs and warnings, a single chapel bell.

Heavy brazen clappers on brass curves tell  
Twelve wights walk in, one black robe at the rear –  
Between the sky, the hills, the lanes and hell

Stalls make a wooden corridor; a shell  
Of old pink stones, thin windows, tries to steer  
Songs and warnings, a single chapel bell.

Most here stay quiet, still: they cannot tell  
When to mumble or kneel: gone is the fear  
Between the sky, the hills, the lanes and hell,

Which in dead centuries before He fell,  
Taught them the signals, the saint's hymned career:  
Songs and warnings, a single chapel bell,

The baffling solitude of Living Well,  
Vile body starving, holding his soul near  
Between the sky, the hills, the lanes and hell,  
Songs and warnings, a single chapel bell.

Hugh Burling

### Runner-up:

#### Villanelle

This is the time to turn around, to try –  
He didn't want to hear that once he'd grown,  
He realised it was possible to lie.

In younger days he stole advice with pride  
He swelled at being included and he thought,  
"This is the time to turn around, to try"

Stole coins for the girl from passers-by  
(When caught at last – "I'm sorry, but 'cos I..."  
He realised it was possible to lie).

What cracked him eight years on was a goodbye  
When Emma (first one ever) changed her mind:  
"This is the time to turn around, to try

to meet another, try a different kind  
of way of living" / "True" was his reply –  
He realised it was possible to lie.

So now he lies, wet eyes, and wonders how  
If every time's the same, you know that now  
This is the time to turn around, to try?  
He realised it was possible to lie.

Stephanie Davin

**Next week's competition:** Take a piece of art as the starting point for a short story of about 600 words. Go to Kettle's Yard or the Fitzwilliam Museum, and find a picture or sculpture that fascinates you. Might its characters have a story which could be expressed in words, or does it evoke an atmosphere you'd like to recreate? Send submissions to Colette Sensier at [literary@varsity.co.uk](mailto:literary@varsity.co.uk) by 9am on Monday 26th for the chance to win two tickets to the following week's ADC main show, and see your work printed in our next issue.

# FOLLOW SUIT



Alexandra wears trousers, Ark Vintage; jacket, loafers, both Topshop.  
Opposite page: Phoebe wears harem pants, Zara; loafers, bowler hat, both Topshop; jacket, stylist's own.  
Make-up by Bobbi Brown, John Lewis, Cambridge.  
Styling by Alice Newell-Hanson & Kate Womersley.  
Photography by Katy King.





# THE VARSITY WEEK

## THE COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS.

### Theatre

#### Friday 23rd & Saturday 24th

**Ongoing:**  
*Così Fan Tutte*  
*Suitcase Cabaret*  
*Beauty*  
Read reviews for *Beauty* and *Suitcase Cabaret* on p24-5.

**Henri Oguike Dance Company**  
Arts Theatre: Friday only, 7.45pm (£10-22.50)  
This anniversary performance will showcase some of the best material of the last ten years by award-winning choreographer Henri Oguike.

#### Tuesday 27th

**Orfeo**  
ADC: 7.45pm, Saturday matinee 2.30pm (£7-£12)  
See POTW.

#### Footlights Smoker

ADC: 11pm (£5-£6)  
With last term's Smokers producing such crackers as "Why does Karl Marx drink green tea? Because proper tea is theft", this is one not to miss: book hugely early to avoid huge disappointment.

#### Protein Dance

The Junction: 8pm (£6-£12)  
Energetic physical theatre, comedy, and satirical comment all collide in this evocative exploration of human nature.

#### Wednesday 28th

**Breakfast at Night**  
ADC: 11pm (£4-£6)  
Tune in to Channel YES for *Breakfast at Night*, the morning show for people who are not awake in the morning. This is exciting new writing from Matt Bulmer, Liam Williams and Daran Johnson. Runs until Saturday 31st.

#### Pressure Drop

The Junction: 8pm (£3-6)  
Dance Offensive in collaboration with Leo Kay of Madrugada offer their trademark mix of hip hop, martial arts and physical theatre. Runs until Thursday 29th.

### Music & Nightlife

#### Friday 23rd

**The Fiver Meets Radar**  
The Junction 1: 7pm (£5 adv.)  
The best local talent comes to the Junction for a night of rock action and mayhem.

#### Sunday 25th

**Resurrection**  
The Place: 9.30pm (£3)  
The Place to be for Sunday night clubbing.

#### Tuesday 27th

**The Streets**  
Corn Exchange: 7.30pm (£17.50 adv.)  
Cheeky Mike Skinner brings his band to Cambridge in support of his fourth album *Everything Is Borrowed*. Expect UK hip hop anthems and geezerish banter.

#### Wednesday 28th

**Remixology**  
Soul Tree: 10pm (£3 before 11/£4 after)  
Dance music combined with a Rowdy Pirate night? How can you say no?! CUSU Ents team up with Soul Tree to bring you the best midweek night out in Cambridge (apart from Cindies, obv).

#### Jeremy Warmesley

The Portland Arms: 8pm (£6 adv.)  
The singer-songwriter and one of Transgressive Records' best-kept secrets tours after the release of his new album *How We Became*. Brilliant electronica pop.

#### Thursday 29th

**Buzzcocks**  
The Junction 1: 8pm (£15 adv.)  
Everyone knows that 'Ever Fallen In Love?' is an undisputed classic, but their back catalogue is full of punk gems: check them out as they perform their first two albums in their entirety.

#### R\*E\*P\*E\*A\*T Presents Bokaata

The Portland Arms: 8pm (£15 adv.)  
A night of indie pop punk from some local favourite bands.

### Art & Classical

#### Ongoing Exhibitions

**Fitzwilliam Museum (free):**  
• Sir Sydney Cockerell and The Fitz (until March 17th)  
• Picasso Prints - Dreams and Lies (until February 8th)  
**Kettle's Yard (free):**  
• The roundhouse of international spirits (until March 15th)  
**Scott Polar Research Institute (free):**  
• John Gale & Sons (until February 14th)  
• British Antarctic (Nimrod) Expedition, 1907-9 (until April 4th)

#### Saturday 24th

**Rachmaninov, Beethoven and Chopin**  
Churchill Recital Room: 8pm (£4/£2)  
Pianist Tatiana Dardykina comes to perform at Cambridge having just finished completed studying at the Birmingham Conservatoire's highest level.

#### Sunday 25th

**Fitzwilliam Chamber Series 1**  
Fitzwilliam Auditorium: 8pm daily (£4)  
Fitzwilliam's distinguished ensemble-in-residence present four quartets by Joseph Haydn, spanning his entire compositional career.



**The Immortal Stone: Chinese jades from the Neolithic period to the twentieth century**  
Fitzwilliam Museum: until May 31st  
Spanning a huge time period, the Fitz brings out its collection of Chinese jades, from Ming animal sculptures to 19th century fakes.

### Talks & Events

#### Friday 23rd

**'Darwin's intellectual development'**  
Lady Mitchell Hall: 5.30pm (free)  
Harvard University's Janet Browne continues the lecture series celebrating 'The Origin of the Species' author's 200th anniversary.



#### Saturday 24th

**Man with a movie camera**  
Old Labs, Newnham Gardens: 8pm (free)  
n.e.r.d.i. presents Dziga Vertov's 1929 film (above): at once a documentary of a day in the life of the Soviet Union, a documentary of the filming of said documentary, and a depiction of an audience watching the film.

#### Monday 26th

**'It is to do one's best to look without laughing': the spectacle of the kangaroo in late eighteenth-century London**  
Department of History and Philosophy of Science: 1pm (free)  
Fan of Georgian marsupials? Here's the talk you've been waiting for.

#### Wednesday 28th

**Public open evening**  
Institute of Astronomy, Madingley Road: 7pm (free)  
The Institute opens its doors to the public to let you gaze to the skies.

### Film

#### Che: Part One

Arts Picturehouse  
Daily: 3.30pm  
Biopic about everyone's favourite T-shirt star and Argentine revolutionary.

#### Frost/Nixon

Arts Picturehouse  
Daily (not Sun): 12.45pm, 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm  
Sun: 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm  
See POTW.

#### Milk

Arts Picturehouse  
Daily: 12.45pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm  
A gala week for American political movies. Sean Penn is Harvey Milk. Harvey Milk is gay. This is the '70s - people ain't down with that.

#### Slumdog Millionaire

Arts Picturehouse  
Contact Picturehouse: showings at various times daily, you won't have to wait long.  
Good-looking, faux-Bollywood sleeper hit from Danny Boyle. See last week's Varsity for review.

#### Waltz With Bashir

Arts Picturehouse  
Sat: 1.15pm  
Superlative animated feature on the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacre.

#### The Wrestler

Vue  
Daily: 1.10pm (except Sun)  
Fri/Sat only: 11.00pm  
Down-and-out Mickey Rourke makes a big comeback by playing a down-and-out wrestler making his big comeback. A Golden Globe in the bag and quite possibly an Oscar on the way. See our review on p27.

#### St. John's Film Society

Sunday 25th: 7/10pm  
*The Bourne Identity*

Thursday 29th: 9pm  
Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging



#### Monteverdi's Orfeo

Tuesday 27th  
ADC: 7.45pm, Saturday matinee 2.30pm (£7-£12)  
Have you ever wanted to join Orpheus as he tries to rescue his wife Euridice on his perilous journey to Pluto's realm? Now is your chance as Fitzwilliam Chamber Opera & Cambridge University Baroque Ensemble singers bring you Monteverdi's rarely staged 1607 opera. Runs until Saturday 31st.



#### Frost/Nixon

From Friday 23rd  
Arts Picturehouse: daily, 12.00 (not Wed), 2.30, 6.45, 9.15  
Disgraced American President meets wholesome British talk-show host in this slick Watergate-themed production. Film based on the play based on the TV show based on the juiciest political scandal ever seen. Coming from *The Last King of Scotland* writer Peter Morgan, this looks promising: see next week's issue for our review.



# Pick up a Penguin

THE ROYAL MAIL HAS JUST NAMED THE PENGUIN PAPERBACK A BRITISH DESIGN CLASSIC. LAURA FREEMAN MEETS AWARD-WINNING PENGUIN DESIGNER CORALIE BICKFORD-SMITH TO TALK ABOUT KNIVES, ROBINSON CRUSOE AND REINVENTING AN ICON

Coralie Bickford-Smith has two mottos. The first is “stop designing, start playing”, and the second is “make a big mess”. And a fine mess she has made too in the freshly painted Penguin offices overlooking the Thames. When I arrive, a mass of hardbacks and paperbacks are spread across the table: a fuchsia *Treasure Island* the colour of a Ladurée macaroon, a dove-grey *Wuthering Heights* with thistles twining across the cover, a pile of Gothic Horrors decked out in sinister shades of yellow, and a sumptuous three-volume set of *The Arabian Nights* that would make Sir Richard Burton weep. Coralie presides over this circus of colour like a proud ringmaster and is loath to pick a favourite. No sooner has she decided on *The Man Who Was Thursday*, than she transfers her affections to *Crime and Punishment*. No, *The Spook House*. No, wait, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. With each new pick, the mound spreads, haphazard piles are assembled and dismantled, favourites are resurrected from the bottom of the heap and Coralie’s cyanotypes litter the table top. As messes go, it is a uniquely beautiful one.

In person, Coralie is quietly dressed in black, shy and hesitant, but get her onto the subject of books and she is transformed. One of life’s natural enthusiasts, she falls into paroxysms of delight over such seemingly dry subjects as typogra-



phy (which she studied “big time” at Reading), plastic kitchen utensils, and children’s alphabet books.

Coralie describes her four years at Reading with great fondness, reminiscing about her dissertation on the history of the illustration of *Robinson Crusoe* and the fiendishly difficult type identification exam. Her enthusiasm only falters when describing the years she spent working on ‘Loyalty Magazines’ for Sainsbury’s and British Airways. The frequent flier magazine proved a dull and unrewarding career choice and Coralie “ran away”, setting up as a freelance designer. Her stint as a freelancer didn’t last long, though, and she was swiftly snapped up by Penguin, where she has been “happily stuck ever since”.

She makes it sound like a fairytale: the unhappy runaway who found a Happily Ever After at a major publishing company. She evidently has a knack for such things. Fittingly, her first great success was a volume of Hans Christian Andersen fairy tales, published in 2004 and now in its sixth hardback edition. The

success of the magenta and burgundy Andersens opened Penguin’s eyes to an apparently renewed desire for beautiful, cloth-bound books among the members of the reading public – books as covetable collectors’ items rather than unremarkable vessels for a little light reading. Fresh from her fairy-tale success, Coralie took the helm.

Between June 2007 and June 2008, Penguin published twelve paperbacks in the Boys’ Adventure Classics series, among them *The 39 Steps*, *Tarzan*, and *Around the World in Eighty Days*, swashbuckling tales all. The set was commissioned following the triumph of HarperCollins’ *Dangerous Book for Boys*, which dominated the 2006 bestseller lists. With the Boys’ Adventure Classics, Coralie’s task was immense: twelve books by ten different authors, set on half a dozen continents, featuring subjects as diverse as dinosaurs, pirates and First World War espionage. The challenge was to unite these disparate stories in a cohesive series, while giving each book a clear and immediate bookshop identity. Undaunted, Coralie commissioned four illustrators to produce black and white illustrations while she researched typefaces. She is particularly proud of the disjointed Dada Futurist type on the cover of G.K. Chesterton’s *The Man Who Was Thursday*, which she relates to the novel’s central theme of anarchy and the disruption of the social order.

Coralie works closely with the text when presented with a series such as this, dutifully reading each book cover to cover. She admits that she had never read any of the Boys’ Own Classics before working on the Adventure Classics series, but she says she has since been converted. “This one’s brilliant,” she beams, picking up Anthony Hope’s *The Prisoner of Zenda*, “and this is fantastic,” she adds as she delves into a box to retrieve *Rupert of Hentzau*. “It’s the sequel.” The pile swells with every new favourite.

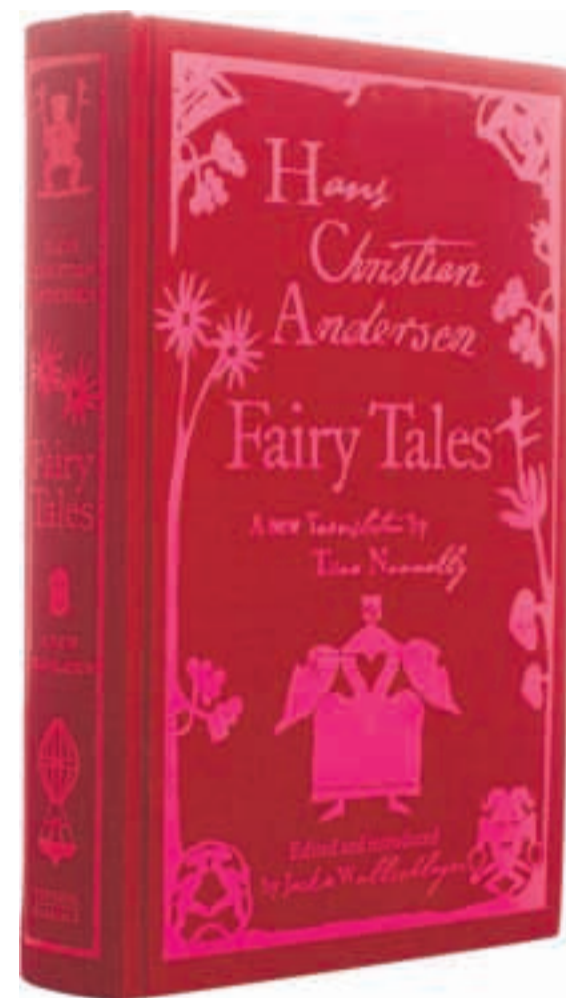
The books’ black-and-white illustrations are set against Technicolor backgrounds that don’t pander to any notion of a ‘blokeish’ colour scheme. There’s that macaroon-pink *Treasure Island*, an *Around the World in Eighty Days* decked out in parachute silk turquoise, a desiccated, dusty yellow for *The Riddle of the Sands*, and pillar-box red for *The Prisoner of Zenda*. Coralie admits to “obsessing about design” and being “anal about finish”. She observes ruefully, “It’s my job to push the beautiful finishes, and it’s someone else’s job to sit down and work out the budget.”

In the case of the Boys’ Adventure Classics, the budget was restricted, but that isn’t always the case. Here Coralie unveils her *pièce de résistance*, her favourite favourite, the three-volume set of *The Arabian Nights*. With each set selling for £125 a pop, Coralie was free to indulge in all the beautiful finishes she could wish for. The elaborately patterned covers, inspired by the tales of Aladdin, Sinbad the Sailor, and Ali BaBa and the Forty Thieves, were borrowed from antique Persian manuscripts, and are picked out in silver and blue on fine linen paper. The lavishness of the set – linen covers, exquisite endpapers, and pristine cotton spines – is a perfect masque for the *Nights*. After all, what are Aladdin and Ali BaBa about but the hoarding of beautiful treasures?

Coralie is eclectic in her inspiration. When she isn’t plundering Dada or Persian archives, she is buying 1950s kitchenware from eBay (her own kitchen knives take a star turn on the cover of Ambrose Bierce’s *The Spook House*), old typography books, and vintage wallpaper samples. “I drive my boyfriend mad,” she concludes. When asked to pick an inspiring designer from the Penguin archives, she nominates Romek Marber, who worked for Penguin in the 1960s and revamped their crime series in eye-watering, electric green.

Coralie cites Marber as the inspiration behind her Gothic Horror covers. These are a darker affair, confined to two hues, a ghastly blue and yellow, like a corpse dredged from the river. The idea came from

an unlikely source: sunlight paper, a children’s stocking-filler (true to her motto, Coralie stopped designing and started playing). By their proper name, these are cyanotypes – a photographic process in which objects



(keys, pins, torn paper) are laid on treated paper. The treated paper is then exposed to sunlight and the objects removed, leaving shadowy silhouettes behind. Coralie experimented with household objects, acetate, and Photoshop to produce a series of unnerving, bleached covers.

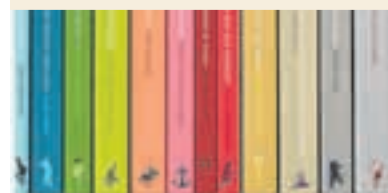
Her efforts have not gone unnoticed. In November, she won the award for Best Brand or Series Identity for the Boys’ Adventure Series at the British Book Design and Production Awards. Characteristically modest, Coralie admits she missed the awards ceremony because it coincided with her birthday. She found out she had won by text message. But she is justifiably proud of her award, which has just been delivered on the morning of our interview. “It’s very nice,” she tells me. “Very minimal.”

And with that, Coralie gathers up her sublime mess – the colourful hardbacks, the eerie, unsettling horrors, the Sherlock Holmes with their acidic covers, the covetable Arabian Nights, and two dozen stray cyanotypes – and carries the hoard back to her desk, to sit beside her really very minimal, glass trophy.



## Elements of Style

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 1974 | Coralie born in Norfolk   |
| 1998 | Graduates from Reading University with degree in typography   |
| 2002 | Starts work at Penguin  |
| 2004 | First edition of Hans Christian Andersen’s Fairy Tales  |
| 2007 | Publication of first of the Boys’ Adventure Classics  |
| 2008 | Publication of the Gothic Horrors; publication of the Waterstone’s Hardback Classics; Coralie wins award for Best Series at the British Book Design and Production Awards |



A woman walks into a bar and asks the barman for a double entendre. So he gives her one.

# Prostitutes, Parties and Port...

...welcome to  
Victorian Cambridge

Charles Astor Bristed, the son of an American millionaire, matriculated to Trinity College in 1840. At a time when Anglo-American relations were suffering, he hoped to rebuild the rapport between these jilted lovers. However, he was shocked by the loose morals and heavy drinking of his cousins across the pond. But he did find time to admire the Cantabs' thirst for learning and love of sport. For the first time in one hundred years, Bristed's memoirs of Cambridge have been published, and in a *Varsity* special, we print some choice extracts. Times change, people come and go, but it seems that student habits have been remarkably resilient over the passing centuries.



## Cambridge Nightlife

Taken from a passage describing the daily routine of a student, Bristed offers a glimpse of Victorian Cambridge's nightlife. With Cindies yet to have opened, and bops yet to have taken off, the evening hours were instead filled with wine parties, chapel, strolling and earnest reading.

During the quarter of an hour preceding four p.m., the students come flocking into their colleges and rooms to prepare for dinner. The academic cap and gown are resumed, and the hall crowded with hungry Undergraduates, who are not, however, admitted within the screen until the Fellows and Fellow Commoners have assembled. Then a Latin grace is read by two of the Dons, and forthwith the demolition of eatables proceeds. The tables of the Undergraduates, arranged according to their respective years, are supplied with abundance of plain joints, and vegetables, and beer and ale ad libitum, besides which, soup, pastry, and cheese can be 'sized for', that is, brought in portions to individuals at an extra charge; so that on the whole a very comfortable meal might be effected but

for the crowd and confusion, in which respect the hall dinner much resembles our steamboat meals. The attendance also is very deficient and of the roughest sort. But some of the company are better off. At a raised dais at one end of the hall the Fellows, Noblemen, and Fellow-commoners are banqueting on a dinner of three courses, with port and sherry, in addition to the malt liquor, and abundance of orderly and well-dressed waiters...

...After Hall is emphatically lounging time, it being the wise practice of Englishmen to attempt no hard exercise, physical or mental, immediately after a hearty meal. Some stroll in the grounds if the weather is fine, many betake themselves to the Union Society Reading-Room to glance over the newspapers and periodicals, and many assemble at wine parties to chat over a frugal dessert of oranges, biscuits, and cake, and sip a few glasses of not remarkably good wine. These wine parties are the most common entertainments, being rather the cheapest and very much the most convenient, for the preparations required for them are so

slight as not to disturb the studies of the hardest reading man, and they take place at a time when no one pretends to do any work.

At six p.m., the chapel bell rings again. The attendance is more numerous now than it was in the morning. On Saturday evenings, Sundays, and Saints' days the students wear surplices instead of their gowns, and very innocent and exemplary they look in them. It must be owned that their conduct in chapel is very orderly and proper, considering the great opportunities afforded for subdued conversation by the way in which they are crowded together when kneeling. After chapel the evening reading begins in earnest. Most of the Cantabs are late readers, so that supposing one of them to begin at seven, he will not leave off before half-past eleven, thus clearing more than four hours' consecutive work, his only intermission being to take a cup or two of tea, sometimes, but not often, accompanied by a slice of bread-and-butter. One solid meal a-day is the rule; even when they go out to sup, as a reading-man does perhaps once a term and a rowing-man twice a week, they eat very moderately

though their potations are sometimes of the deepest. Some students go to their private tutors in the evening; not unfrequently two or three meet in one another's rooms alternately to read some classical author or talk problems together – a very sociable way of

acquiring learning.

Such is the reading-man's day; as to how the rowing-man passes his I say nothing for the present. He is the abnormal development of the type, and the consideration of his pursuits need not now be dwelt upon.



## Cambridge Morals

*In this candid passage, Bristed condemns what he believes to be the moral failings of Cambridge students. His shocked reference to 'Barnwell' refers to the village which used to be just east of where the Grafton Centre is now. It was notorious for its brothels, and was a popular nocturnal haunt for Cambridge's less upstanding students.*

A young man passing as I did from an American College immediately to an English University, will certainly be astonished at some and shocked at many of the differences he notices in the habits of those about him from what he has been used to consider as the proper practice of students. That decanters and glasses should be among the articles directly recommended by the tutor's servant who assists him in furnishing his room – without any objection, too, from the Evangelical friend who assists him in his purchases; that he should be able to order supper for himself and friends out of the College kitchen, and his College tutor, so far from appearing as a bird of ill omen to mar the banquet, will perhaps play a good knife and fork at it himself – all this seems odd to him at first, but he readily comprehends that the system is one suited to the more advanced age of the students, and one which by refusing to make decent merriment a *malum prohibitum* within the College walls, deprives them of excuse for frequenting external haunts of dissipation. By-and-by, however, as his experience increases, he finds that this liberty is often abused into the most shameful license. The reading

men are obliged to be tolerably temperate, but among the 'rowing' men there is a great deal of absolute drunkenness at dinner and supper parties. And, after making all allowance for the peculiar climate which admits of stronger and more copious potations than ours, and the fact that an Englishman never drinks before dinner, still it must be allowed that there is a prevailing tendency to drink rather more than is altogether beneficial even among those who are never actually intoxicated. In a mere physical point of view this is greatly to be regretted. If the temperate libations of our students could be superinduced upon the wholesome food, leisurely digestion, and regular exercise of the English, we might expect as the result astonishing specimens of health and strength.

And, even with the chances which they thus throw away, they are splendid instances of physical development; but unfortunately their animal passions seem to be developed almost in a corresponding degree. The American graduate who has been accustomed to find even among irreligious men a tolerable standard of morality and an ingenuous shame in relation to certain subjects, is utterly confounded at the amount of open profligacy going on all around him at an English University; a profligacy not confined to the 'rowing' set, but including many of the reading men and not altogether sparing those in authority. There is a careless and undisguised way of talking about gross vice, which shows that public sentiment does not strongly condemn



Chapel Time  
"A numerous crowd arrayed in white  
"Drop the green in numbers fly." (Byron)

it; it is habitually talked of and considered as a thing from which a man may abstain through extraordinary frigidity of temperament or high religious scruple, or merely as a bit of training with reference to the physical consequences alone; but which is on the whole, natural, excusable, and perhaps to most men necessary. One of my first acquaintances at Cambridge, the Fellow Commoner next to whom I sat in Chapel, had not known me two days or spoken to me half a-dozen times before he asked me to accompany him to Barnwell one evening after Hall, just as quietly as a compatriot might have asked

me to take a drink; and though it would certainly be unfair to take this youth as a type of all Cambridge, yet, just as a foreigner on being invited by a Southern or Western gentleman to 'liquor' soon after or perhaps before breakfast, might conclude that to drink in the morning was not an uncommon thing for an American, and that a tolerably large class of persons were in the habit of doing so – the proposition made to me in so off-hand and matter-of-course a way might justify the conclusion that the practice was sufficiently common – as indeed subsequent experience fully proved.

## A Modern Comparison

"Abandon reigned throughout": Cambridge wine-parties were described as "thirty lads round a table...drinking bad wines", and "telling bad stories", aka banter. Sounds familiar to a modern-day swap in Hall after about twenty minutes of heavy pennyning. But Bristed really should have gone to Cindies (maybe actually called Cindies in his day?). Like many of today's drinking society initiations, Bristed came across students playing such die-hard drinking games (more along the lines of ving-et-un than twenty-plus-ones) that several would often lose consciousness, and their faces would then be subject to "the eternal joke of being blacked with burnt cork by those who remained." This was surely the precursor to Facebook rape, the consequences of which are less easy to wash off the morning after.

But there were other, more pleasant aspects to Trinity life, like the Classics reading parties. The annual Trinity Classics 'reading week' has indeed survived the test of time, continuing to the present day (this year's being held in Whitby).

The Trinity College motto, 'Semper Eadem', means 'always the same'. I wonder if seeing Cambridge today, Bristed would concur?  
*Nick Chapman, 2nd-year Trinity Classicist*

## The Raucous Rower



*During his account of a drunken Trinity dinner party, Bristed describes a notable College character. He seems to be a type not undistinguishable from our present-day Formal Halls and College bars. And his prediction of this character becoming a law lord one day was completely fulfilled; he is describing the future Lord Denham.*

That escaped-convict looking man, next Spedding, is the Hon. G. Dutton, Captain of the First Trinity. Though a peer's son, he has come up as a pensioner, not an unusual step now, the expenses of a Fellow-Commoner being so great. He is an Eironiast, like Horace, but with him it takes a more practical turn. There never is a gay boating supper party without George Dutton. The Barnwell girls know him well, and the Dons look askew at him. But the man is always walking through the fire and never getting burnt. Immovably capacious of liquor, cold and passionless as Pitt or Paracelsus, he is the wonder and the admiration of his weaker companions.

To hear him talk now, you would think his only object on earth was the Boat; working his men up the Long Reach at the top of their speed; running round the hall after dinner to see that none of them take sizings (pastry is bad for the wind, say the knowing ones); prowling about in all sorts of places, by night, and pulling them out of all sorts of places to send them of to bed at a proper hour. Yet that rowdy, reckless boat-captain manages to clear his seven-hours' reading every day, and no one stands a chance for Senior Classic alongside of him, except one steady, well-trained Shrewsbury man. (Marsden and Dutton are sworn friends, by the way, each worshipping the other; so much for the evil effects of emulation, etc.) In more thorough bodily and mental training you cannot conceive a man to be; and there is no doubt of it that he will take a high stand at the bar – probably be, as was his father before him, a law-lord, some day – if there are any lords at all by that time – which there will be, Democratic Review to the contrary notwithstanding.

## Cambridge Slang

*The Cambridge student's love for needlessly inventing new words to replace perfectly functional existing ones unfortunately seems to have a long pedigree. Here, Bristed provides a glossary.*

One of the first and most necessary things to be acquired by a resident in a new country is some knowledge of its language. Even in the few pages we have thus far gone through, terms have frequently occurred which required explanation; and without some insight into the Cambridge vocabulary, it would be impossible to describe Cambridge life intelligibly, or to understand a true description of it. I therefore subjoin a list of the principal cant terms and Phrases in use, translating them, when possible, into equivalent slang of our own.

Gownsmen: A student of the University.

Snob: A townsman as opposed to a student, or a blackguard as opposed to a gentleman; a loafer generally.

Cad: A low fellow, nearly = snob.

Reading: Studying.

A reading man: A hard student.

A rowing man (ow as in cow): A hard case, a spreër.

Shipwreck: A total failure.

Mild, Shady, Slow: Epithets of depreciation, answering nearly to the phrases, 'no great shakes', and 'small potatoes'.

Fast: Nearly the French *expansif*. A fast man is not necessarily (like the London fast man) a rowing man, though the two attributes are often combined in the same person; he is one who dresses flashily, talks big, and spends, or affects to spend, money very freely.

Seedy: Not well, out of sorts, done up; the sort of feeling that a reading man has after an examination, or a rowing man after a dinner with the Beefsteak Club.

Bumptious; Conceited, forward, pushing.

Brick: A good fellow; what Americans sometimes call a clever fellow.

To keep in such a place: To live or have rooms there.

Hang-out: To treat, to live, to have or possess (a verb of all-work.)

Like bricks, Like a brick or a bean, Like a house on fire, To the nth, To the n + 1th: Intensives to express the most energetic way of doing anything. These phrases are sometimes in very odd contexts. You hear men talk of a balloon going up like bricks, and rain coming down like a house on fire.

No end of: Another intensive of obvious import. They had no end of tin, i.e. a great deal of money. He is no end of a fool, i.e. the greatest fool possible.

Pill: Twaddle, platitude.

Rot: Ditto.

Bosh: Nonsense, trash, Greek phluaria.

Lounge: A treat, a comfort (an Etonian importation).

Coach: A private tutor.

Team: The private tutor's pupils.

Subject: A particular author, or part of an author, set for examination; or a particular branch of Mathematics, such as Optics, Hydrostatics, &c.

Getting up a subject: Making one's self thoroughly master of it.

Flooring a paper: Answering correctly and fully every question in it.

Book-work: All mathematics that can be learnt verbatim from books.

Cram: All miscellaneous information about Ancient History, Geography, Antiquities, Law, etc.; all Classical matter not included under the heads of Translation and Composition.

Composition: Translating into Greek or Latin.

Original Composition: Writing a Latin Theme, or original Latin verses.

Spiriting: Making an extraordinary effort of mind or body for a short time. A boat's crew make a spirt, when they pull fifty yards with all they have left. A reading man makes a spirt, when he crams twelve hours daily the week before examination.

COMPILED BY ROB PEAL, FROM AN AMERICAN IN VICTORIAN CAMBRIDGE: CHARLES ASTOR BRISTED'S 'FIVE YEARS IN AN ENGLISH UNIVERSITY', EDITED BY CHRISTOPHER STRAY, PUBLISHED BY UNIVERSITY OF EXETER PRESS, PAPERBACK £14.99; AVAILABLE FROM HEFFERS IN TRINITY ST.

# Geek Chic

**MARCUS DU SAUTOY, THE NEWLY APPOINTED CHARLES SIMONYI PROFESSOR FOR THE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF SCIENCE AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY, TALKS TO ARTHUR TURRELL AND ROSIE POWELL-TUCK ABOUT HIS NEW ROLE AS A 'SCIENCE AMBASSADOR', STEERING THE PROFESSORSHIP, AND HIS PASSION FOR PRIME NUMBERS**

Bicycles are the only point of comparison we can find between Cambridge and Marcus du Sautoy's North London hometown. Except that in North London, instead of bleary-eyed students and bespectacled Professors, we find Hasidic Jews complete with black hats and ringlets peddling furiously past us. Professor du Sautoy is characteristically casual about this diversity: "I live in a very multicultural area," he tells us.

## A Linear Sequence

- 1989 Completed DPhil. at All Souls' College, Oxford
- 2001 Awarded the prestigious Berwick Prize by the London Mathematical Institute
- 2003 *The Music of the Primes*, a popular science book about prime numbers, is published
- 2005 Made an EPSRC Senior Media Fellow
- 2006 Presents the Royal Institution Christmas Lectures, entitled 'The Number My5teries'
- 2008 (October) Presents a four part documentary series, *The Story of Maths*, on BBC4 (December) Succeeds Richard Dawkins as the Charles Simonyi Professor for the Public Understanding of Science

Reclining on his vibrant pink sofa, our conversation soon turns towards his new appointment as Oxford's Charles Simonyi Professor for the Public Understanding of Science, the chair especially endowed for Richard Dawkins in 1995. "This job captures the two things I love doing: creating science and communicating science," he explains. He seems delighted that the Professorship allows him to continue doing research on "hard-core, abstract mathematics" whilst at the same time satisfying his ambition to "push people out of their comfort zone" and enthuse them about science. Our first impressions of Professor du Sautoy are very favourable: he is both articulate and charismatic. This, coupled with the guitar on his mantlepiece and the colourful painting of his two adopted children, suggest that he is an approachable family man who couldn't be further from the awkward scientist cliché.

However, Professor du Sautoy is serious about the importance of his role. He is aware of the way in which the public view science and admits that it will be "a tough job" and "a challenge" to convey its true meaning to them. But, he says, "in order to make political decisions and control the environment in a positive way you need to use science," and that is why the public must be interested. "The things we love playing with, right through to the future of the planet, depend on

science. That's why it matters. If the public aren't interested then we are going to fall behind, scientifically, in the world."

When asked whether he thinks that Richard Dawkins, his predecessor, alienated people with his controversial approach, Professor du Sautoy hesitates momentarily. "I think that's probably true," he reveals, "but controversy can generate interesting debate and that's important." Indeed, later on he suggests that the media hype surrounding the Large Hadron Collider experiment in Geneva was a good thing because it got so many people actively talking about science. People from all walks of life became interested; Professor du Sautoy himself discussed it with his local football team.

As the new Professor, however, he does not feel it falls within his remit to continue the science-religion debate which so engaged Dawkins. "What I'm interested in doing," he expounds, "is talking about science: promoting science, and explaining science." He confesses, however, that "probably I share quite a lot in common with the way Dawkins views the world. I'm an atheist. For me, it doesn't make sense to talk about how the world works other than in a scientific way." But where Dawkins is absolutist in his opinions, Professor du Sautoy is noticeably more flexible and even sympathetic. He talks fondly, for instance, of an Israeli colleague who, as an Orthodox Jew, observes Shabbat but who "on the other six days of the week, is incredibly logical and... er... we talk mathematics". A self-proclaimed non-expert in the science-religion debate, he feels that it is time to "steer the professorship" away from that discussion and concentrate instead on his own mathematical agenda. "Maths is the language of science... almost the polar opposite end of the sciences from evolutionary biology."

The track record of his media projects is impressive; including the recent and popular BBC4 documentary series entitled *The Story of Maths*. He is aware, however, that one man can do only so much as the 'ambassador for science', and that many more scientists need to engage with the public on their areas of expertise. There need to be lots of "mini-Marcuses", he laughs. "I can't be an expert on everything you know, if someone contacts me about stem cell research..." His sentence is cut short as a phone rings. Pulling an iPhone from the pocket of his purple jeans he mutters, "hmm... er... let's leave that..."

Flippantly, we remark that it seems to have become more acceptable to be ignorant about mathematics and science than, say, literature and the cinema. "It's always been like that... one of the missions in my job is to get far less people saying it... people write to me from France and say 'nobody would ever say they were bad at maths - they wouldn't dare admit it', it's peculiar". He suggests that the problem starts in schools, "when a

student asks WHY in a maths class... that's quite a challenging question and if you don't have a maths degree..." he trails off. When we ask him why there is a shortage at all he points out that "if you have a maths degree the number of opportunities open to you are vast; you instantly get respect". Teaching, then, must compete with all the other options available to graduates.

**"THE THINGS WE LOVE PLAYING WITH, RIGHT THROUGH TO THE FUTURE OF THE PLANET, DEPEND ON SCIENCE. THAT'S WHY IT MATTERS. IF THE PUBLIC AREN'T INTERESTED THEN WE ARE GOING TO FALL BEHIND, SCIENTIFICALLY, IN THE WORLD."**

On the topic of research Professor du Sautoy becomes thoughtful: predicting future discoveries is notoriously tricky and he is careful with his words. "One of the ultimate frontiers is what makes consciousness..." he finally says, "but for me one of the most exciting things about science at the moment is the amount of

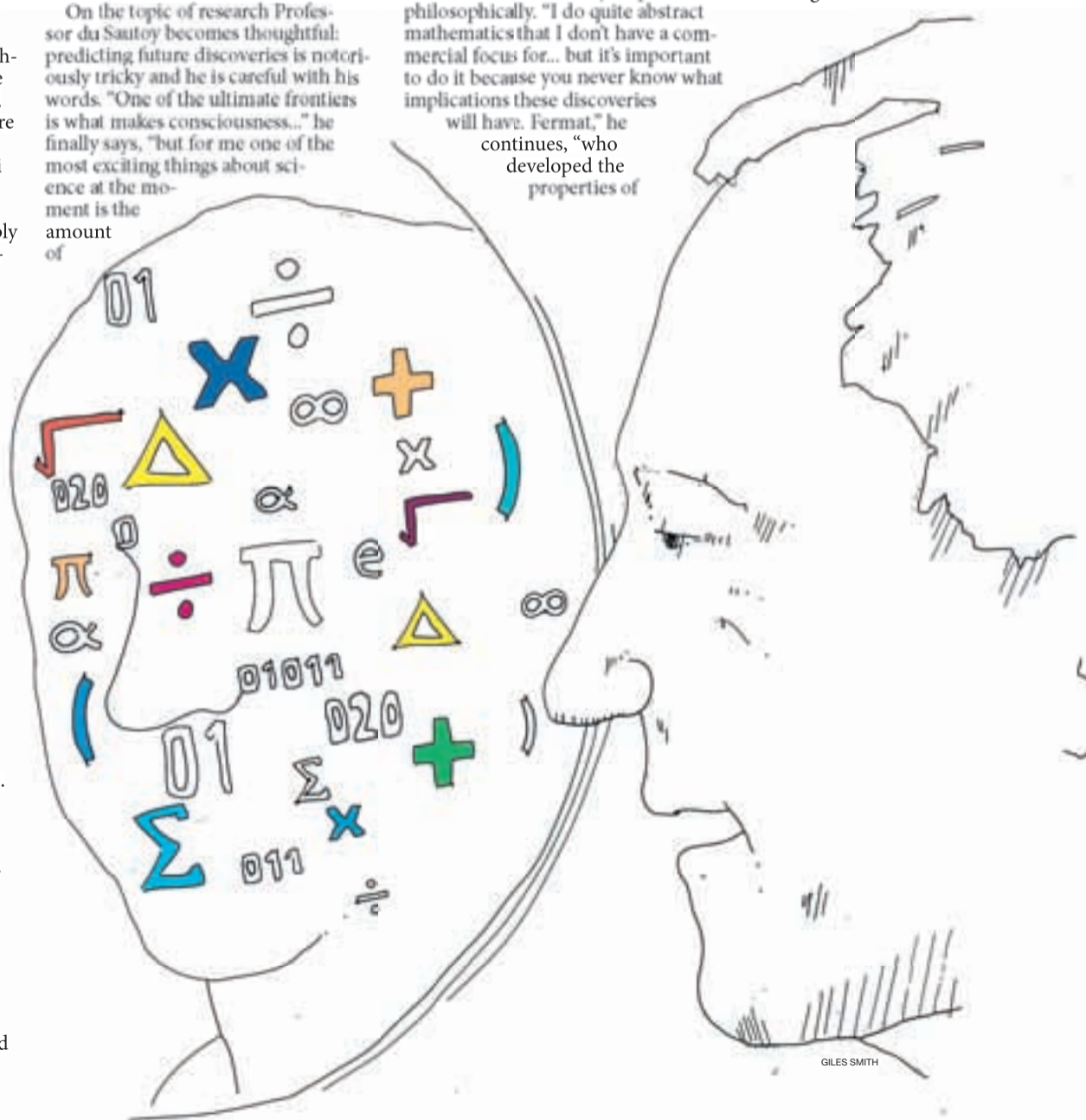
interconnectivity in the sciences". He paints a picture of academics from different disciplines collaborating at the various scientific interfaces and finding their research the richer for it. "We've got lots of skills and if we share them we can make a lot of progress".

He seems more comfortable talking about the research that's happening in mathematics. "One of the most interesting things recently is the solution to the Poincaré conjecture," he says, mentioning that this was one of the million dollar prize 'millennium problems' and is "important because it's about the possible nature of the shape of space". Prime numbers are his real passion though, and the topic of a popular science book he wrote in 2003, *The Music of the Primes*. "We still don't understand our most basic numbers, namely the prime numbers". As he explains these are extremely important because online credit card security is based on some "rather arcane looking bits of maths about prime numbers".

The point that some research is not obviously useful outside maths is made and Professor du Sautoy responds philosophically. "I do quite abstract mathematics that I don't have a commercial focus for... but it's important to do it because you never know what implications these discoveries will have. Fermat," he continues, "who developed the properties of

primes which are used in cryptography had absolutely no idea that his ideas would be used to protect credit cards, whatever they are going to be, on the internet, whatever that is". Insistent on this point, he prolongs the discussion to mention a favourite researcher grumble: funding. "Scientific research," he begins, "should not be funded just because one can see the commercial benefit... because then we would starve ourselves of some of the most important discoveries ever made. That message," he nods enthusiastically, "needs to be pushed again and again."

On parting we ask him: what happens if the public just aren't interested in science? Professor du Sautoy seems a little down-hearted at the prospect, but is expansive. "Why do you have to be interested in books? Why do you have to be interested in literature? Why in music? It's part of our cultural heritage. But science is something more than that. Our planet will survive or die because of science. The technology we use relies on science." He pauses. "It's extraordinary that people still don't get it."





# East is West

FOR TWO MORE MONTHS, THE ROYAL ACADEMY IS LOOKING EAST TO BYZANTIUM. ROB PEAL TALKS TO THE EXHIBITION CURATOR, ROBIN CORMACK, ABOUT LIFTING THE VEIL OF IGNORANCE AND MYTH WHICH HAS LONG DISTORTED OUR VIEW OF THIS MAGNIFICENT EMPIRE.

For centuries, Western Europe has refused to see Byzantium as a European empire, but as a distant and dubious other; an incomprehensible and effeminate land ruled by duplicitous eunuchs, loose morals, a corrupt church and tyrannical rulers. However, Robin Cormack, the curator of the Byzantium exhibition in London, hopes to see this civilisation demystified and reappraised as part of Europe's common history.

The exhibition is contributing to a significant change in the understanding of one of history's most invoked but least understood civilisations. Voltaire famously condemned it as "a worthless collection of declamations and miracles, a disgrace for the human mind". Others, instead of insulting Byzantium chose to distance it, most famously Yeats who, in *Sailing to Byzantium*, depicted it as an Oriental land of "sensual music" and "gold mosaics". Even 'Byzantium' is a misleading term, never used by the civilisation itself, which continued to call itself the 'Roman Empire' up until the fifteenth century. London's last Byzantine exhibition was in 1958, and Cormack claims that this exhibition's aims are markedly different. "As I see it, fifty years ago, what they empha-

sised was the difference from Europe, whereas I think this exhibition tries to show exactly the opposite: that it is actually quite familiar."

Robin Cormack is a Professor of Art History at the Courthauld Institute, but lives in Cambridge with his wife, Mary Beard. Having spent five years putting this exhibition together, he clearly hopes it will have a big effect. "The difference is in 1958 nowhere in the eastern Mediterranean was in the European Union," he tells me, but "now we're thinking of even including Turkey in the EU, so our whole perception of our past has changed."

One salient reason for this is that Byzantium linked the achievements of the classical world with medieval Europe, making a vital contribution to the Renaissance. It was due to Byzantine scholars that Plato was rediscovered in fifteenth century Italy, and the cultural exchange between East and West was crucial in the development of Italian art. Byzantium's cultural achievements are on full display at this exhibition. There are icons of such intricate painting that it looks as though golden thread has been woven through them, and the prized piece, an incense burner shaped like a domed church, has had visitors entranced by its witty creativity.

However, to see the most im-

pressive artefact of Byzantium, one has to visit Istanbul. Hagia Sophia was built in four years, but one thousand years after its completion it was still the largest domed cathedral in the world. In 1453 George Sphrantzes described it as "the handiwork of God, a marvellous and worthy work, the delight of the whole earth". It still stands today as a monumental feat of human ingenuity.

So why has it taken so long for us to take Byzantium seriously? According to Cormack, it has much to do with the myopia of the Enlightenment. "It is a faith culture," he tells me, "and from the Enlightenment up to Richard Dawkins there are people who don't like faith cultures." In contemporary newspapers, 'Byzantine' is now used as a term to mean irrational bureaucracy. But as Cormack is quick to remind me, "Byzantine bureaucracy absolutely pales in comparison to Gordon Brown's bureaucracy!"

One of the organisers has claimed that a "pretty good percentage of all that survives" of the Byzantine Empire is held in this exhibition. This is an extraordinary thought: an Empire that lasted for over one thousand years and spread from Egypt to Spain could leave so little trace that a significant portion of its remains can be housed in one moderately sized exhibition. You can see a beautiful collection of icons from the monastery of St Catherine in Sinia which were not even known about until the 1960s, but are now seen as the best of their type in the world. In Sinia they joke that where Moses said you should not have graven images, they've got the best. With so much more still to be discovered, Cormack confidently claims that "Byzantium is the fastest growing field in the history of art."

With no real modern heir, organising an exhibition of Byzantium's disparate artefacts is particularly testing. "Every day that you are doing an exhibition there is something that happens, there's some kind of crisis," Cormack tells me. "The Georgian war meant we didn't get the Georgian objects... We got a phone call from a woman saying

## Byzan-times

- 330 Constantinople founded as the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire.
- 537 Hagia Sophia is built.
- 550 Byzantine Empire sees its greatest expanse under Justinian.
- 1054 Great Schism splits Christianity between Rome and Constantinople.
- 1204 Constantinople is sacked by the Crusaders.
- 1453 Ottoman Turks capture Constantinople, ending the Byzantine Empire.

"I'm the new minister of culture, the previous one agreed but I'm not going to agree." He tells me of attempting to secure objects from Mount Athos, but being thwarted because all twenty monasteries had to agree to any one object being taken. Sinia only lent objects on the agreement that two of their monks are put up in a London hotel for the duration of the exhibition. Cormack explains: "If you go into the exhibition early each day you'll see Father Porphyrios or Father Neilus checking up on their icons."

This is obviously a frustrating aspect of the job, as Cormack tells me: "Specialists when they're giving reviews will say 'why didn't they have this' and curators always get annoyed because we probably spent weeks and weeks trying to get it. We probably flew to the museum only for it to be refused. But you can't say 'by the way, here's a list of things we asked for and didn't get.'"

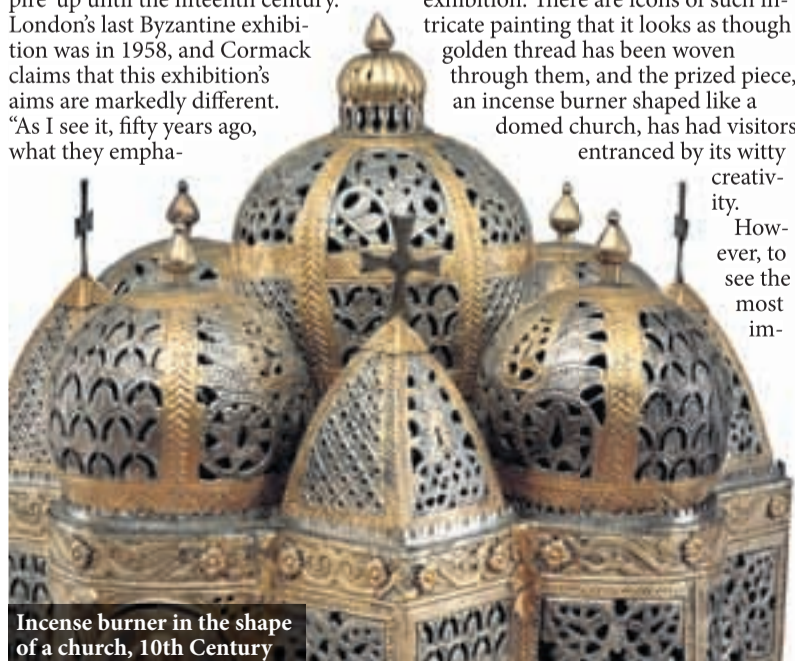
However, of the six hundred objects they initially set out to get, the exhibition got three hundred, a result Cormack tells me he is "very pleased" with. Nonetheless, he is sad that they could not locate a knife and fork. "Byzantium did invent the knife and fork, but we couldn't find any." This brings him on to one of the most challenging rooms in the exhibition: "It was very hard to do the room we called At Home, and actually to try and find out what being an ordinary person was like." The one incredibly rare piece they found was a child's tunic, borrowed from the Benaki Museum in Athens. It has a striking impression on the viewer, reminding you that behind the mystery

and the riches of Byzantium were real people.

A Cambridge historian has compared history to doing a jigsaw puzzle where most of the pieces are missing, an analogy that rings particularly true for Byzantium. As Cormack tells me, "There isn't a history of Byzantium, absolutely no one agrees about anything about Byzantium." However, that does not mean there is not still much for the open minded to learn. "I personally am not a religious man," Cormack explains. "I don't work in Byzantium because I am a Christian, I work in Byzantium because I think it is interesting." He eagerly tells me how an understanding of Byzantium can be applied to the modern world, in particular Russia. "It's extremely interesting studying Putin because Putin is an Orthodox Christian with a monk advisor, and promotion of the church in Russia is something Putin is very interested in. I think it's very difficult for us to understand Russia, but if you see it through the eyes of Byzantium it's a little bit easier to understand their aspirations and interests and diplomacy."

The exhibition is of such unusual importance that it has been extended for two more months. With around three thousand paying visitors each day, "a lot of people will have had a touch of Byzantium in their lives," Cormack beams.

Western Europe has a selective memory. Many subjects are studied into the ground, and the clamour of competing voices creates a disorientating din. However, in the case of Byzantium, there is a huge amount left to be said.



Incense burner in the shape of a church, 10th Century

What kind of fun does a priest have?  
Nun.

## Round Up

Victoria Ball tells us what's  
what in theatrical week 1

The Cambridge drama scene is beginning to stir, slowly waking up after the Christmas vacation when ski trips, rowing camps, holiday essays and weeks' worth of carol services, rather than theatrical soirées, filled our evenings. Rest assured that by week three or four, it will be back in full swing, as lavish and decadent as ever, with musicals, comedy and straight plays galore. But it must not be rushed.

The main show at the ADC this week is a dance show; an exploration of 'real beauty' that boldly quotes Confucius on its flyers. Instead of a late show, there is a different group each night performing as part of a Jazz Festival. The opening night heard tunes from an a capella group *Over the Bridge* and the festival culminates on Saturday with the *Varsity Big Band Competition*. This spirit seems to be pervading the whole of Cambridge; the *Henri Oguike Dance Company* and *Claire Martin* with her jazz trio are performing at the Arts Theatre this week. In short, it's great news if you love contemporary dance, jazz or 'exploring real beauty'. If not, it's probably a good week to get ahead on essay writing.

Nevertheless, there is (or so they tell me) life outside the ADC and Arts bubble. *Suitcase Cabaret* runs this week in venues including Jesus Chapel and Clare Cellars and *Cosi Fan Tutte* is taking over Great St. Mary's Church. We also welcome the first *Wolfson Howler* and *Jesus Smoker* of the term. So fear not, entertainment can still be found this week; you might just have to root around in the undergrowth of college bars a little more than usual.

However dormant the Cambridge drama scene may seem this week, we cannot forget all the thespians who, though seemingly calm, have started manic rehearsals for upcoming plays. Toes have been tapping and heels clicking for many weeks now to bring a performance of *42nd Street* to the Cambridge Corn Exchange in week three. The team behind *Death of a Salesman* is busy bringing the play into the 21st century. Excited schoolgirls, under the watchful gaze of their stern teachers, have been trying on gym slips ready for week five's *Big Book for Girls*. The cast of *Romeo and Juliet* are preparing to tread the boards of the Arts Theatre. And with such directing giants as Trevor Nunn and Stephen Frears appearing at the Union this term, theatre lovers have plenty to look forward to.

## THEATRE

## Beauty

ADC Theatre, January 20th-24th

Dir. Alice Bell; CU Contemporary Dance Workshop

★★★★★

Ten thirty in the morning, the deadline for this review to be in, passes me by. A couple of hours, three missed calls and a text message from my editor later, I sit down to write the review. Alas, that is what happens when you are near the end of week one and realise that you have already let your work pile up and that you have two essays overdue. It is beyond me why supervisors insist on giving us work to do; surely the point of university is that you work to GET here, but once you're here it's all about the extra-curricular – getting involved in sports, drama, Cindies... *nest-ce pas?*

Well that's a decent chunk of my review gone and no mention of the show yet. I guess I should rectify that. *Beauty* is this year's annual ADC dance show, advertising itself in the words of Confucius: "Everything has its beauty, but not everyone sees it." This could not be more true, as the theatre was less than half full on the opening night. However, I'm sure that the people who were there did not regret their venture. The evening captivated the audience with its "addictive rhythm and elegant aesthetics," charismatically delivered through twenty-one different dances in a range of styles.

The show did not get off to a great start. The first couple of dances were out of time; I felt a bit like I was watching my little sister's school dance, which is annoying – so many years of avoiding big-sisterly duties, just to suffer watching someone else's siblings.

But then the show picked up, as a large crew of break-dancers, body-poppers and hip-hoppers roboted their way onto the stage and filled the ADC with pumping energy. This contrasted really effectively with the next piece, a contemporary dance to Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata (and the Nokia tune, courtesy of someone in row H). I liked this one, as I really felt that it was saying something, even

though I did not have a very clear idea what it was.

Some other gems include a pretty sexy belly dance (although the girl who comes on at the end looked to me like an epileptic Christmas tree), a 1920s speakeasy (oh for the days of hats and seamed stockings) and 'Movement for Four', a combination of physical and musical movement based around the music of the cello.

I have two favourites, choosing between would be like deciding whether I love marmite or shopping more. The Rock'n'Roll team defied gravity with their energy, turns and lifts, even finishing their dance with the famous *Dirty Dancing* lift. Patrick Swayze, eat your heart out. Full points also go to the vivacious 'Chrysalis' dancers, a group of younger teenagers with crazy names like Rascelle and Soopa Noodle, who made me fancy fourteen-year-olds all over again (especially the one who dropped his trousers on stage – call me). The whoops from the audience were, well, energetic, presumably coming from family members filled with pride, and rightly so.

The show contains a rich array of treats, including drummer DJ Darbuka, masked ladies and swing dancers dressed as sailors. Good work tech team, the innovative and encapsulating lighting design enhanced the show, put together beautifully by Alice Bell, dancer and CUCDW president.

The show is by no means flawless, but beauty rarely is. Drama in Cambridge tends to be a closed box, and it was refreshing to see new faces with a variety of abilities and styles. That's what the stage is for. Unless you can't bear dance, I would big-fish-little-fish-cardboard-box it down to the ADC this week. Except for you, that couple who sat in seats D8&9 on the opening night. You should get a room. *Lauren Davidson*



KATY KING



TOM MORIARTY

## Portraits of Artemisia by Nigel Ward

Mumford Theatre, January 16th &amp; 17th

Dir. Nigel Ward; Anglia Theatre Company

★★★★★

The Mumford Theatre at ARU is a rather nice venue. Huge stage, large capacity, weird patterns on the wall: it's a winner. The set too: giant wooden frames with stringed grids stretched in all directions, it looked fantastic.

First off, Artemisia was a real-life painter from baroque Italy. Raped by a fellow art student Agostino Tassi, Artemisia had to face a drawn out court case. This is a retelling of that court case.

The prologue was read by some young woman who looked like she was dressed as Cinderella before her godmother got involved. Flanked by a projection of one of Artemisia's paintings, the studied deconstruction she gave of the painting seemed a little odd coming from a 17th century peasant girl. Anyway, the story

gets going when a veritable football team of identically dressed Cinderellas march on one by one. Crikey, which of these is Artemisia, I thought? All of them, and none of them; they are all versions, or portraits, of Artemisia. This kind of worked. Different characters paint different accounts of what happened. It was neat for five minutes, until it became so blisteringly apparent that this was going to become the most stretched and over-used metaphor in the history of theatre.

Okay, scene one, the first Artemisia shuffles on to face interrogation and paint her picture. She, like the whole play, just couldn't decide who or where she was. Half her lines were delivered all pouty and sexed-up and the rest were accompanied by her groaning and rolling

her eyes. Similarly, the script was all over the place. Uncomfortable shifts in register meant that half the time people were demurely saying things like: "I no longer wish to pose for you, father," and the rest of the time things like: "It smells like a pig shat himself before the altar."

Too long, repetitive, inconsistent, pretentious, kind of sleazy and often just a bit silly: *Portraits of Artemisia* is clearly no oil painting. Full marks need to go to the cast who gallantly persevered all the way to the bitter, bitter end. Of course, the true heroes of the piece were the set builders and designers who constructed something that was both visually nuanced and dramatic and yet managed to thoughtfully and intelligently reflect the themes of the story. *Nathan Brooker*

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### Wolfson Howler

Wolfson College Bar, January 19th

★★★★★

I went to a comedy club once. It was in London (well, near London) and given that I was in the hostile, alien atmosphere of 'the Big Smoke', I think it was understandable that I was a bit overwhelmed by all those jokes. So the Wolfson Howler always had that ace up its sleeve; it was in little old Cambridge. So my friend and I strolled jauntily into Wolfson bar, ordered a pint apiece (I saw them do this in London), and eagerly waited for the laughs to begin. And waited. And waited. A word to the wise; don't get there on time. You'll wait.

However, there are worse places to wait. Wolfson Howler had clearly done its publicity, for the place was packed and the atmosphere was buzzing. The compere, Ed Gamble, was a chirpy chappy and he managed the often difficult task of MC-ing with aplomb, which is easier said

than done. All the supporting acts were good value; Keith Akushie's act was of a particularly high quality. But undoubtedly the best performance of the night was reserved for Liam Williams. Boy, does this guy know how to enunciate, locking his lips around every syllable as if French kissing a vacuum cleaner. There was a confidence in the performance that marked a welcome change from the awkwardness of the earlier acts. This man knew his audience and worked them with consummate ease, littering his stand up with Cambridge jokes without having to resort to tired clichés.

Unfortunately, the headliner, Richard Herring, was a tad underwhelming. In fairness to him, he was booked for too long, but he hadn't prepared for that fact at all. There were lulls in his stand up where the laughter just petered out into si-

lence. Flashes of brilliance reminded the audience why Herring has been able to sustain a career in comedy for 21 years. But at times he showed his age; some of his cruder jokes felt vaguely antiquated, as if he was recycling gags from the 90's.

It was a shame to end on this, because the night deserved a better headliner. The Wolfson Howler is a far superior environment for comedy than the ADC, because it mirrors the intimate and relaxed atmosphere of a comedy club. One or two audience members even plucked up the courage to 'heckle'. The Wolfson Howler showed itself to be in rude health last night, and the next one comes highly recommended. *Nick Beck*

The next Wolfson Howler is on Monday February 9th in the Wolfson College Bar.



TOM MORRATY

### Context



Week 2: The history of castrati in opera

*Orfeo*, the opera on next week at the ADC, dates back to 1607. At this time, castrati played most female roles in opera. Although castrati can have their heavenly high voice due to a medical condition whereby they never reach sexual maturity, the vast majority are obviously produced by castration. This week I look at the fascinating role that the castrati have played in opera.

*Orfeo* represented the early days for the castrati, in this period they would have been largely kept to female and other subsidiary roles. But by 1680 they had supplanted 'normal' male voices in lead roles. An opera without at least one renowned castrato was doomed to fail. Castrati became the undisputed superstars of eighteenth century Italian musical culture, driving crowds wild with their intoxicating, androgynous virtuoso voices. As celebrities of their time singers such as Ferri, Farinelli (pictured above), Senesino and Pacchierotti earned enormous fees and hysterical public adulation. It was solely their voice that sustained their fame. Their frequently strange appearance and often-poor acting were a constant source of mockery.

Despite the uncomfortable route to stardom, many envied the extravagant and lavish lifestyles of the castrati. Thousands of poor families wanted their sons to become rich and famous musical stars. In seventeenth and eighteenth century Italy, about 4,000 boys were castrated each year, from the age of eight upwards, with the aim of making a fortune as opera singers. Of course not all castrated boys had successful careers on the operatic stage. The better also-rans sang in cathedral or church choirs, while some, trained as they were in acting, turned to the theatre, or even prostitution.

The popularity of the castrati could not be sustained, and by the late eighteenth century changes in operatic taste and social attitudes led to their decline. The Italian musical climate of the 1790s had degenerated to frivolity, and the Napoleonic invasion, with all its political upheavals, caused fashions to change. A new set of composers, most notably Rossini, had little trouble in setting new trends, in which the castrati played little part. By the first few decades of the nineteenth century, the castrati were mostly finished, and after the reunification of Italy in 1870, castration for musical purposes was made officially illegal.

There are no castrati in next week's performance of *Orfeo*. But if you're curious, you can hear Alessandro Moreschi, the only castrato to have his voice recorded, on YouTube. *Tim Checkley*



ZHANG TSUENING

### Suitcase Cabaret

Touring, January 21st-24th

Dir. Sam Pallis & Anna Maguire; CUADC

★★★★★

To describe *Suitcase Cabaret* is difficult – best to go and see it, or, rather, experience it, for yourself. Slickly directed by Anna Maguire and Sam Pallis, the show will tour round various venues in Cambridge. I have to say that Jesus Chapel was not the most ideal place for it to start. For those further than three rows back, the action was all but completely obstructed. The acoustic, while appropriately haunting, often meant that words were hard to discern.

Loosely based on the *Spoon River Anthology* by Edgar Lee Masters (a collection of unusual poems detailing lives in small-town America), the show advertises itself as "fusing the pertinent tales of Masters" with "the raw energy of a cabaret". To put it crudely: shame about the cabaret part. Well, not quite. The dead residents of Spoon River are presented

in a white-faced, macabre burlesque that is eminently watchable and manages to convey seedy horror and misery beneath a glamorous allure. However this device comes all too quickly to seem something of an imposition. It is an excuse for video projection, ballet, shadow puppets, and a seemingly endless ream of navy-blue silk.

The band, admittedly, were phenomenal. Effortlessly sending fragments of Satie, Wagner, Strauss (and something altogether more gaudy and sinister) out into the chapel. Yet they did seem over-used. Too often a word such as 'rotund' had to be accompanied with a farcical sloop on the trombone, or a soliloquy underscored with music.

There was serious sexing-up of which Alistair Campbell would have been proud: though I'm not convinced that this was needed. It was with the simplici-

ty of the skilfully interwoven monologues that the production was at its brilliant best. When the cabaret died away to reveal a jittering, hysterical lost soul (an abused alcoholic, a French ballet dancer) something mesmeric was created.

One can place too much emphasis on quibbles. *Suitcase Cabaret* is an evening that should (wherever its venue) not be (dis)missed. The small cast are extraordinary in their consistency, their mastering of accents, dance, and the beautiful, fragmented pouring-out of their temporal lives. Musicians, actors, designers and directors have come together to create an evening that is distinctive, original and imaginative. Yet their striving for these last three adjectives has meant that a faith in simplicity and in the moving, eloquent words of their source-material has been lost. *Oliver Soden*

### PREVIEW

#### The Heights

The Judith E. Wilson Drama Studio, February 25th-27th

Dir. Hannah Love; Telltale Productions & Madhouse Theatre

Telltale Productions burst on to the scene last term with *Submerge*, a critically acclaimed devised piece that had one audience member between six actors. I was then just a little curious to find out what writer Jess Hyslop's latest project is all about.

*The Heights* will not focus so much on audience interaction. Apart perhaps from 'a giant rat scurrying all over the place.' They will also be admitting more than one eager spectator. So you will have to share the auditorium with other wide-eyed gawpers. But I still reckon this production is worth getting excited about. The intimate space of the drama studio, along with extensive use of puppetry, will conjure the eerie, surreal atmosphere of a Tim Burton film.

The plot concerns our four pro-

tagonists, Hester, Leander, Orpha and Jasper, who live with Ambrose, an over-bearing patriarch. They never leave the house and they never have any visitors. Ambrose obsesses over his broken, motionless clock. He wants to keep everything just as it is. An apple hangs mysteriously from the ceiling. One day, a stranger enters the house. The clock starts ticking. The apple falls. We wait, and see what happens.

The theme of entrapment is captured by the fact that the only glimpse we get of life beyond the house is through a shadow puppet theatre. These dim silhouettes remind us, however faintly, that the outside world cannot remain hidden forever.

This intriguing new play looks set to be unlike anything else you will see this term. *Joel Massey*

### PREVIEW

#### Derek: The Footlights Spring Revue

ADC Theatre, March 3rd-7th

Dir. James Moran & Lucien Young

It's that time of year when people are starting to talk about this year's Footlights *Spring Revue*. Unlike past revues, this year's follows a character, Derek Fish, through his day-to-day life as he stumbles from one bizarre situation to the next. Expect to meet apologetic gangsters and tabloid journalists with writer's block. Fear not, 'Derek' is still a sketch show but the difference is that it has a main character to give the piece structure rather than a broad theme.

Writers Keith Akushie, James Moran and Lucien Young are still playing with the show; coming up with new pieces every day and finding that things emerge from rehearsals that simply are too funny not to be put in. They currently have far too much material and will have to hone it down to the finest hour and a half for the performances in week seven. The

writing process consists largely of Keith sitting Buddha-like in deep thought, James pacing around the room smoking and Lucien munching polos until something emerges and much fervent swearing ensues.

The writers are an eclectic mix of medic, English student and theologian from Downing, Selwyn and Jesus. Although they have all written extensively for Smokers, this is their first Footlights Revue. James set up the series of Jesus Smokers, Keith won the 2008 RAG Stand-Up Competition and Lucien put on a sketch show at the Corpus Playrooms last term. Add their talented cast (who are "so good" that director James wants "to have sex with them collectively") and you have what is set to be an exhilarating show that promises sniggers, hoots and roars of laughter. *Victoria Ball*



## iWatch

**Week 2: Big Chef takes on Little Chef, 9pm Wednesday, available at 4oD**



During my childhood, Little Chef was a heavenly institution. Driving down the A303 making our biannual grandparental visit to the geriatric utopia of Devon, I would suddenly lay eyes on that jolly little fat man with a tray. All other concerns would desert me, and I would unleash merry Hell onto my parents until they agreed that it was chef time. That jolly little fat man promised massive portions of greasy all day English breakfasts, washed down with an unfathomably synthetic strawberry milkshake, and I loved him for it.

So it was with both sadness and disbelief that I heard that Heston Blumenthal, the speccy kitchen nerd responsible for 'molecular gastronomy', was remodelling the menu of this roadside institution in a crisis. With logic shamelessly ripped off from *Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares*, an insincere consultancy from a celebrity chef would make entertaining TV and therefore good publicity, and against all odds save the company. Or so they thought...

This is the problem with reality TV of the 'audacious challenges' variety; you make a calculated risk that it will all work out. However, this whole cynical exercise was bound to fail from the start. Nonetheless, they forced the reality TV narrative arc down your throat with all the desperation of Heston trying to get a reluctant lorry driver to eat bacon and egg ice-cream. Whilst Gordon Ramsay's equivalent shows normally manage to fulfil the 'fucking disaster, fucking disaster, no wait; fucking brilliant' pattern, this was 'fucking disaster, fucking disaster... no wait; still a fucking disaster'.

Getting the 'best chef in the world' to rejig the menu at a motorway dinner is like hiring Terrence Malick to relaunch the *Carry On...* film franchise. Watching Heston try to convince the new Chief Executive of Little Chef that their new menu should contain braised ox cheek in a red wine reduction priced at £18.50 was painfully ludicrous. Having meekly abandoned his high hopes of Fat Duck writ large across the roadsides of Britain, Heston puts creativity to one side and relaunches the Little Chef with chilli con carne and fish pie.

As Michael, the camp manager of the Popham branch observed at the start of the show, "I'm not sure people are ready for snail porridge in Little Chef; they weren't even ready for muesli."

Rob Peal

## MUSIC

## Frank Turner

## The Junction 1

Monday January 19th

★★★★★

It's difficult to criticise Frank Turner's tireless work ethic. A highlight of last year's Cambridge Folk Festival, a staple on the touring circuit, and one of the last acts to play the London Astoria before its demolition, he has become something of a live phenomenon in three years. The former front man of Million Dead's fusing of punk and folk has seen him gradually scale the Radio One playlist and, as he proudly tells us, one of his songs is soon to be featured on *Blue Peter*. Claims to fame don't get much bigger.

Monday's headline show at the Junction, the closing date of his current tour, began promisingly with a solo rendition of 'The Ballad of Me and My Friends'. Its refrain of "We're definitely going to hell/ But we'll have all the best stories to tell" showcased Turner's strong voice, easily

matched in volume by the excitable crowd. It was a special moment, before his four piece backing band appeared through a cloud of smoke, strumming some chords and pulling shapes across the stage. Watching session musicians attempt the splits whilst playing guitar arms-width at 45° angles above their heads is a surprisingly engaging way to spend a Monday evening, and their exuberance certainly matched the panache of new track 'Live Fast, Die Old'.

Turner's onstage banter worked well throughout the fast paced show, drumming up a bit of Oxford/Cambridge rivalry and presenting his keyboardist with a miniature birthday cake he bought in a supermarket, impaled by a candle nicked from a restaurant. The atmospherically dark 'Worse Things Happen At Sea' was

an effective downbeat contrast, with emphasis on his storytelling ability; yet the biggest crowd reaction was saved for 'Long Live The Queen', an earnest tribute to a friend who recently passed away.

An encore of 'Photosynthesis' saw support acts Emily Barker and Chris T-T return to stage on banjo and keyboard, adding to the frivolities and climaxing in an emphatic "And I won't sit down/And I won't shut up/And most of all I will not grow up."

Like the rest of his material, it may not have redefined the 'singer-songwriter-with-ability-to-write-a-good-tune' genre, but with Turner wading into the front row to engage in a final sing-along, its infectiousness made for a frankly entertaining end to the evening.

Paul Smith



## White Lies

## To Lose My Life

Polydor, out now

★★★★★

Murder, funerals, and the end of the world; and this is just their first record. With more deaths than a *Jonathan Creek* Christmas special, *To Lose My Life* is one of the darkest records you'll hear this year. And it's outstanding.

White Lies have been tipped by just about everyone as one of the finest new acts around and this album shows us why. It's not especially experimental, but it is a collection of expertly-crafted songs which sound completely captivating.

It opens on a high with the single, 'Death', which tells of a man's fear of dying on a plane. If you are not gripped by the time the heavy drums kick in, you will be once the keyboard joins. 'Farewell to the Fairground' is a song with such a great



momentum; it builds to a bridge that mesmerises us as lead singer, Harry McVeigh, calmly repeats "there's no place like home" over and over

again. One of the album's best tracks is 'Unfinished Business', a brilliant modern murder ballad. The story of a lovers' quarrel that's taken a violent turn, it has some of the best lyrics on the record. It is beautifully succinct; not a word is wasted. You almost feel as if you're seeing this all unfold for yourself.

While on first listen, you may think that it all sounds a bit homogenous, such is the curse of a lead singer with a reasonably distinctive voice. But as you listen more the tracks begin to define themselves; 'Nothing To Give' emerges as the epic it is and the title track reveals itself as a potential dance floor filler (though for quite a specific dance floor).

A 20-piece orchestra was enlisted

to record this album. Organs, strings and heavy bass lines are everywhere. Intuitively it shouldn't work; on another record it could easily be overkill but here it is all perfectly mediated. The band have distilled all the dramatics from these elements, and discarded the banality that so often attaches itself.

White Lies have managed what eludes so many other artists; sombre songs full of emotion which avoid sounding tacky and remain compelling. These are not vapid, I-loved-a-girl-who-didn't-love-me ballads; these are songs with real darkness. White Lies seem to have understood what music today needs better than anyone else. I'm looking forward to great things.

Lucy Bryant

## Beethoven: Missa Solemnis

CUMS I; Choral Scholars of Magdalene, Queens', Selwyn, Sidney Sussex and Trinity College Choirs; soloists; Christopher Robinson (conductor)

Saturday January 17th

★★★★★

The *Missa Solemnis*, written just before the Ninth Symphony, was the musical summation of Beethoven's personal faith: it uses the traditional Latin mass text in a way that emphasises humanity, peace, and a merciful God. Like the Ninth, the *Missa* also represents the pinnacle of Beethoven's large-scale writing. It is fearsomely demanding, for both the orchestra and choir. The choir must contend with the outrageous fugues that characterise the composer's late works (Bach was a clear influence on the *Missa*), so it was fortunate that some of Cambridge's best choral scholars were in voice in King's Chapel on Saturday night.

The problem with concerts at King's was clear from the first few bars: the acoustics are simply dreadful. Beethoven's orchestral detailing was lost in the cavernous spaces above the audience, as was

the choir's counterpoint. That said, there were balance problems even before the chapel did its worst: conductor Christopher Robinson could be heard shushing the cellos and had trouble quietening the woodwind. In the choir, the altos were simply consumed by the vocal heft of the basses stood behind them: their entries barely whimpered into life. Worse, some of the orchestral playing, as in CUMS's Michaelmas Planets, was noticeably out of time, especially in parts of the Gloria and Agnus Dei.

What was often lacking was drama. Robinson rarely shocked: the opening notes lacked any sense of occasion. He preferred a more meditative reading; affecting in the Kyrie, but underwhelmed in the gigantic fugues of the Gloria and Credo (the choir, given such short rehearsal time, dealt with these as well

as could be expected).

Happily, the performers' most inspired moments coincided with Beethoven's most heaven-storming writing. The Benedictus brought real calm, as Ian Goh's violin solo soared over proceedings. But this was nothing compared to the tranquillity and breathtaking stillness of the Agnus Dei: the soloists' entries (the quarter were superb throughout) crept in gloweringly, accompanied by the choir's heartfelt pleas for mercy. Beethoven, like in so many



slow movements of his late career, creates stunning beauty from simple music.

Although a sell-out days in advance, this was something of a mixed bag: it hit glorious highs, but also the occasionally painful low. David Allen

# ART, FILM & LITERATURE

## *The Roundhouse of International Spirits*

Arp, Benazzi, Bissier, Nicholson, Richter, Tobey and Valenti  
Kettle's Yard, until March 15th

★★★★★

In the grand tradition of cultural capitals, Locarno is a relative unknown, wholly eclipsed by its favoured rivals Florence, Rome, Paris. Kettle's Yard is attempting to redress this balance with a little show focusing on the art of the region.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Locarno, on the banks of Lake Maggiore in the Italian Alps, established itself as a hub for a loose kibbutz of naturalists, anarchists, and spiritualists. By the 1960s, an artists' collective had been fostered there by the sculptor Remo Rossi and painters Ben Nicholson, Hans Arp and Italo Valenti. The great and the good: artists, philosophers, and muses paid court to these established artists prompting Julius Bissier to dub the area the "roundhouse of international spirits".

If it all sounds a bit drippy hippy, then the art is anything but. There is an air of terse refinement to the paintings, collages and sculptures on display. The colour palette is muted, a combination of the warm fawn and russet of southern European sunlight and the chilly greys and blinding whites of the Alpine landscape. Hans Arp's collages offer the only shots of colour. These are assemblages of papers in arresting autumnal shades: sage, cream, mustard and a peppery red. Arp was preoccupied with the mechanics of chance, the fall of the dice, and his collages are assembled from carelessly ripped paper sheets, arranged at the whim of the subconscious.

The nomadic Mark Tobey arrived in Locarno by way of New York, Kyoto and Basel. He was steeped in Asian

culture and wavered between Christian principles and Zen Buddhism. In China he had practised the art of calligraphy and there is a subtle calligraphic sense to his layered tempera paintings of densely interwoven, sinuous brushstrokes. These have all the intricate twinings of a tapestry while the colours recall muddied snow, or the pebble beaches on the shore of Lake Maggiore.

Felicita Vogler, the third wife of the uxorious Ben Nicholson, documented the artists in a series of bleached photographs. She captures a sense of holiday spirit and plein-air joie de vivre in her portraits of the venerable artists. There's a sprightly Hans Arp sporting two panama hats, one atop the other, inviting the photographer to dance and Nicholson shivering beside the Lake. The colours of the exhibition stay with



you: sun-faded, oxidised shades of blue, buttermilk and tawny browns that speak of nostalgic, fond-remembered summers.

Laura Freeman

## Take V Film one-liners



## Five of the Best

"Why so serious?", *The Dark Knight*, (2008)

The Joker's catchphrase seemed the best choice from last year's Batman feature: eerily unnerving coming from Heath Ledger's permanently-smiling villain.

"I wanna live again!", *It's A Wonderful Life* (1946)

It would be a cold heart that doesn't feel a spark of Christmas joy at the life-affirming conclusion to Frank Capra's winter warmer of a film.

"I love the smell of Napalm in the morning", *Apocalypse Now* (1979)

As well as "the horror, the horror" and Marlon Brando's Colonel Kurtz, Francis Ford Coppola's brought us this from the war-crazed Kilgore.

"Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn", *Gone With The Wind* (1939)

It may come right at the end of this admittedly-epic golden oldie, but Rhett Butler's devastating send-off to Scarlett O'Hara remains a timeless classic.

"You had me at hello", *Jerry Maguire* (1996)

Oh, come on, it may be cheesy, but who doesn't love a bit of cheese?

## Five of the Worst

"Bond... James Bond", any *James Bond* film not featuring Daniel Craig

In here, purely for every time someone who isn't James Bond has introduced themselves by giving their surname before their full name. It isn't big and it isn't clever.

"Is it still raining? I hadn't noticed", *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994)

Is this really the best the writers could come up with? Apparently the producers hadn't noticed

"Luke... I am your father", *Star Wars: Empire Strikes Back* (1980)

Again, a line that has sparked a thousand imitations. Just about passable when Darth Vader says it, not so great when it's a roomful of Trekkies at a sci-fi convention.

"Yippee ki-yay motherfucker!" *Die Hard* (1980)

Essentially a failure to produce any real words followed by an expletive, even Bruce Willis couldn't make this sound good.

"I'm the king of the world!", *Titanic* (1997)

Why, Kate, why? There was room for two on that raft! Any film containing Celine Dion's 'My Heart Will Go On' is bad enough, but this just takes James Cameron's cornfest to a whole new level.



## *The Wrestler*

Dir. Darren Aronofsky

Starring: Mickey Rourke, Marisa Tomei and Ernest Miller

★★★★★

Allowing in a post-match hot-tub of praise since it premiered at last year's Venice Film Festival, Darren Aronofsky's *The Wrestler*, and particularly the central performance of Mickey Rourke (seemingly as himself), are now firm Oscar favourites.

We follow Randy 'The Ram' Robinson, a washed-up pro-wrestling star from the 80s, as he stumbles through life as a weekend brawler in town hall fights before being given one last shot at the big time by a rematch with his old rival.

If Darren Aronofsky had a business card (which presumably he does), it would say 'D. Aronofsky - Auteur', probably in a very small font, and perhaps with a picture of a weeping clown on one side. As he passed it to you, he would subtly place a finger beneath his name and raise one eyebrow

as if to say "That's me - what did you say you did again?" Unfortunately, his finger gets stuck beneath his name for the entire film, unable to resist constantly reminding us that we're watching a piece of art, and that we'd damn well better not think this is just *Rocky* with blonde highlights. Overtly arty touches are shoehorned in, such as the camera constantly tracking the main character from behind: to the bar, to the office, to his trailer, always from behind. Similarly, we don't need to hear little snippets of the cheer of a crowd during Randy's everyday life to remind us of where he'd rather be.

There is a lot to like about this movie, though. The behind-the-scenes portrayal of wrestlers planning their dives and deciding who gets the barbed wire was both

interesting and funny, and characters with names like 'Lex Lethal' clearly deserve special praise. The fights are brutal, and the music is a good mix of power ballads and... well, perhaps mix was a strong word. Even if the secondary characters are all stereotypes, from the 'stripper with a heart', to the 'mean, short, balding boss', they're still entertaining. The plot ticks all the boxes, from a heartfelt reconciliation to setbacks after 30, 60 and 90 minutes. One of the few surprises is a running comparison of Randy with Jesus, because they, like, have the same hair and get beaten up a lot before their big comeback.

*The Wrestler* is everything you expect it to be, executed well, but with a dog-eared sense of familiarity that just prevents it from being great. *Tom Morris*

## Jen Hadfield

*Nigh-No-Place*

*Bloodaxe, out now*

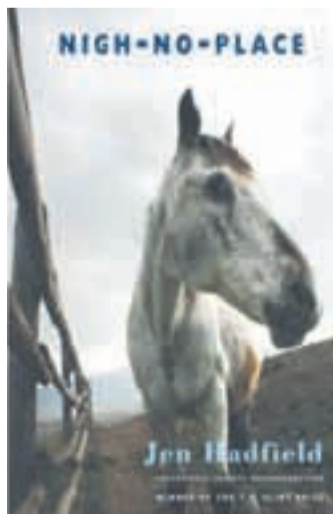
★★★★★

Last week, literary history was made when Jen Hadfield, became the youngest-ever winner (who also happens to be female) of the T.S. Eliot Prize, for *Nigh-No-Place*, the thirty-year-old's second collection.

As well as reflecting the wild surroundings of the remote island of Shetland, where she lives and works, these poems, notably 'Prenatal Polar Bear', imagine the Canadian landscape, her mother's native soil, which Hadfield explored with her prize money from the Eric Gregory Award in 2006. However, this is not a confessional collection. Hadfield has said that "All I really write is praise-poems", and each of these poems focusses not inwardly onto Hadfield's mind or inner life, but addresses presented or revealed visions.

For her acceptance speech, Hadfield read a poem written from

someone else's perspective, 'Ladies and Gentlemen This Is a Horse As Magritte Might Paint Him', which celebrates "the horse...that stands in mid-air". Elsewhere, Hadfield steps out of her experience to speak in the voices of a ploughhorse, a seer, and Odysseus - to name just a few. Hadfield could be considered as a nature poet in the vein of Hughes or Heaney, as a large proportion of her work confronts and explores the natural world: animals, plants, the rural landscape. She brings a transcendent joy to these objects and scenes, with captivating images such as "incandescent horses", "onions poked blind" and "sheepskulls/ in the midden". 'Our Lady of Isbister' contains the exhortation "O send me another life like this", making you release that this really is a collection of 'praise poems'. Hadfield's



work refers to the magical, mystical and spiritual, including references

to Krishna, the garden of Eden, and the creation Glintie Glaaney - from 'Glintie', the moon, and 'Glaaney', a clawing animal. Hadfield's vernacular is of course Scottish - and not just Scottish, but Shetland Scottish, of which Hadfield says "Some words are so local that they don't occur ten minutes down the road." These words include 'tao', 'glid', 'thrimilce', 'uncan' - a rich language to match Hadfield's rich images.

When Andrew Motion and Valerie Eliot (widow of Thomas Stearns) presented Hadfield with the £15,000 prize, they placed her firmly at the centre of the English poetry world. While this collection may occasionally be flawed by over-exuberance, the poems sometimes seeming frantic or uneven, this is also the mark of Hadfield's inspirational quality. *Colette Sensier*

## Great Works Of Art In Cambridge

### #20: Interior with Figures by Jan Steen

Fitzwilliam Museum

It would be pointless to argue for Jan Steen's pre-eminence as a painter based on the masterful wielding of paint, especially when Steen is in the company of other seventeenth-century Dutch masters such as Jan Vermeer and Pieter de Hooch. Steen's real mastery lies in his humour. The artist's Catholic upbringing within the predominantly Protestant Dutch Republic is reflected in his moral comedies, such as this *Interior with Figures*, housed in the Fitzwilliam Museum. Paintings from everyday life, otherwise known as genre scenes, were prevalent in homes across the Netherlands in the seventeenth century. Today, his humour is refreshingly familiar – indeed, it would not be stretching it too far to describe the artist as a seventeenth-century Peter Kay, on the basis of his lewd yet self-deprecatory manner.

Steen's background in the brewing trade fed into his preference for tavern scenes, in which he often depicted himself in vivid episodes of drunkenness as well as indecent proposals, as we see in this painting. To this day, in Holland, a rowdy home is often referred to as a 'Jan Steen Household', but the raucousness in Steen's works is never merely gratuitous. The paintings always offer a level of moral admonition, though this is often tempered by the overall jollity of

the comic mode. This *Interior with Figures* in Cambridge is similarly humorous and farcical: we see the figure in the background, almost certainly a nun, stumbling in on a man propositioning himself to a woman with a loaf of bread.

The success of Steen's humour is often born from the ambiguous nature of his narratives. In this instance, it is unclear whether the lady in blue is a prostitute or simply the wife of the man next to her. Either way, her foot warmer, which is half-visible under her dress, may symbolise her latent infidelity. Steen often depicted objects loaded with meaning, in reference to widely known Dutch proverbs. For example, in this tavern scene, the broken eggs are probably a reference to the saying 'cracking an egg into a pan', a euphemism for sexual intercourse. As in most of his genre paintings, Steen marries both comedy and morality to unique effect. The contemporary audience of this painting would no doubt recall the proverb 'he who sets one foot in the whorehouse, sets the other in the hospital'; however, Steen has made sure to avoid an overtly moralising tone, stressing the dandified appearance of his suitor as well as the absurdity of the suitor's offering.

Alex Esterick



COURTESY OF THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

## Sex in the University City



### Week 2: Orgies

Orgies are a tricky business. It's difficult to get an orgy quite right, seeing as most things about it are so very wrong. The first orgy we had worked, and this was because it entirely dispensed with etiquette.

"George," he said, "we're going to strip you naked."

It was not a warning; it was a promise. It was the thrill of saying the words that charged over fingertips, darting over buttons and forcing zips. George's body, tall and emaciated, was covered in a fuzz of downy hair. The hair was so thick that George's true shape was indistinct, each buttock resembling a ramekin of apple charlotte dusted with icing-sugar.

Arms and legs entwined, it was difficult to tell how many made up the writhing mass. A boy's hand reached for the member of a friend who was at that moment kissing a girl, his left hand furiously twiddling the nipple of another. The hand found said member ready for action. The boy shifted his hips and tugged at his belt, willing to be exploited in the anarchic context of the orgy.

There were no apologies, no explanations, only a warm bubble bath in the morning.

Orgies are a tricky business because once you have one, you just want more. You assess any subsequent social occasion in terms of its potential to become an orgy. A particularly heated discussion in Hall reminds you of the orgy, teetering between passion and hysteria. A supervision approaches an embarrassing climax as you grope blindly towards a conclusion that you had never intended; the orgy is recalled. You glance at your supervisor's lap, he sees your glance, all is lost.

Once a group of students voluntarily surrenders their right to choose whether or not they want last term's ADC star's penis probing perilously near to their anus, 'friends-with-benefits' becomes tainted, often forever. A beautiful sense of release is the cinematic promise, but, with orchestrated bohemianism, touching each other becomes not a privilege, but an entitlement. Nobody can revoke this entitlement, for then the inauthenticity of this new bohemian life would be revealed.

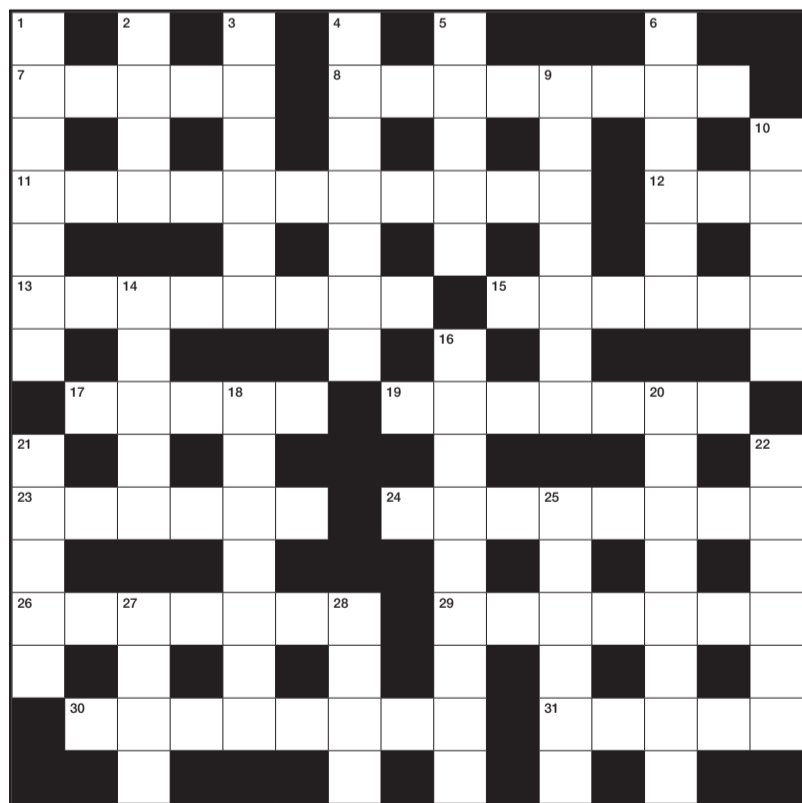
All it took for our fantasies to be splintered was one, single moment. Four of us, straight, bi-curious, bisexual and gay, splayed on the bed. We were all playing this game for reasons that we could no longer remember and, on cue, iTunes intervened with its miraculous shuffle function dispensed its next song and its sickly truth: the Lion King. *Wendy Woo-Woo*

# Games & puzzles



## Varsity Crossword

no. 496



### Across

- 7 Shy dragon conceals panadol enthusiast. (5)
- 8 Gang in period of easier access. (8)
- 11 Revealing garment with american rhythm lets you know you're going too fast. (11)
- 12 Most of this medicine causes one to be unwell. (3)
- 13 Device for holding in gas makes

- networking easier. (8)
- 15 This answer is a mythical creature. (6)
- 17 I hear it's in the style of God. (5)
- 19 Reflection of shadow takes too much for President – what are they called? (7)
- 23 Ban gun with battery in it? It's the future! (6)

- 24 Bird in a ring of fire. (8)
- 26 King is not my real chicken. (7)
- 29 Lady of the night has a shot at a little cake. (7)
- 30 Man with the beginning of telepathy? Bull - it's an act. (8)
- 31 Sounds like essay about tree is the place to start march. (5)

### Down

- 1 Lawyer is bolshy stereotype. (7)
- 2 Move tentatively towards guitarist. (4)
- 3 *The Go-Between* – It's black and white, I hear. (6)
- 4 Start of harassment in e-mails – call me. (7)
- 5 Worries about neck markings. (5)
- 6 Spot something to give your boss (6)
- 9 This newspaper is badly run – that's quite a yarn. (7)
- 10 Cliff is good at poker. (5)
- 14 Asthma aid with top removed is even healthier. (5)
- 16 Coital noise is largely confused – we're in it together. (9)
- 18 Stir cola and add a bit of hollyhock to form universal solution. (7)
- 20 Transport secretary gets entangled with pop star at island resort. (8)
- 21 Article by Nazi causes gulf. (5)
- 22 Revolutionary against Latin. (6)
- 25 We need more with windows in – it's making me sad. (6)
- 27 The unknown in this defunct group is a businessman. (4)
- 28 Confused, stunned, without a home, crazy. (4)

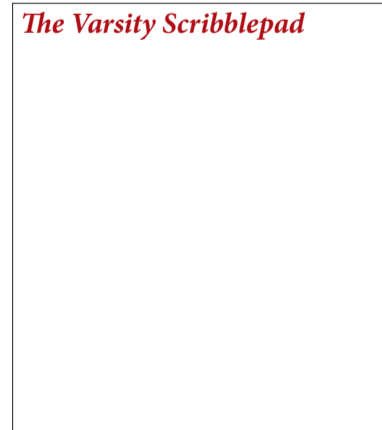
Set by Hythloday

## 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.

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

### The Varsity Scribblepad



### Last week's solution

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

Answers to last week's crossword (no. 495)  
Across: 1 Review, 5 Absinthe, 9 Elegant, 10 Annual, 11 Antioxidants, 13 Magi, 14 Hydrogen, 17 Speeches, 18 Fits, 20 Academic year, 23 Pizzas, 24 Science, 25 So-and-sos, 26 Misery. Down: 2 Eyed, 3 Iterative, 4 Wealth, 5 Astrophysicists, 6 Sea birds, 7 Ninja, 8 Heartbeats, 12 Cappuccino, 15 Offerings, 16 Chemists, 19 Helium, 21 Dozen, 22 Hear.

Why did the monkey fall out of the tree?  
Because it was dead.

REPORTS

# Cam slams Notts

» Chapman edges final bout to seal remarkable victory

Frankie Brown

On Wednesday Cambridge battled their way to victory over Nottingham Trent, retaining their position at the top of division 1A of the women's rugby BUSA league. Although indiscipline and petty handling errors disguised at times their superiority in all facets of the game, they fought hard to score six tries, including two from scrum-half Andrea Turner.

The match began in a scrappy manner that continued throughout. Both sides were guilty of unforced errors as each fought to impose themselves upon the game. A period of concerted pressure from Cambridge saw captain Lucy Thompson break through the line, and following some patient recycling of the ball, Turner spotted a gap and coasted through for the first try of the game. The remainder of the half saw Trent increasingly camped in their own half, defending obdurately but

Cambridge	30
Nottingham Trent	0

in the absence of ball and territory, more tries from Cambridge seemed inevitable but seven penalties in the first half offered respite to the Trent defenders. The deadlock was broken by a fine individual try from fly-half Anne Venner, dancing her way through several defenders to score. A further try was added on the stroke of half-time, as a series of rampaging runs by the forwards allowed Turner, a continual threat in attack, to streak down the blind-side for her second.

Going into the break 15-0 up, Cambridge sought to consolidate their control over the match in the second half. Pinning Trent onto their own line, quick hands from the backs saw wing Kate Robson score in the corner. The flood gates

appeared to be creaking, but once more indiscipline saw Cambridge increasingly frustrated as continued pressure did not translate into consistent tries. With the coach lambasting his players from the sidelines for "coasting" and a lack of concentration, Cambridge continued to surge onwards. Eventually fine driving play from the pack was rewarded with a try, just reward for their tireless work in providing a supply of ball for the backs all afternoon. With time running out, one last bit of individual skill saw full-back Helen Bellfield chip through and then collect the ball to score in the corner. It was a resounding way to complete a comprehensive victory. Mention must go to the pack, particularly number 8 Lucy Hartwell, who was tireless in both defence and attack, and created the platform that allowed Cambridge to be so dominant.

After the game Thompson, who had marshalled the side superbly and posed problems whenever she had the ball, described the performance as "not our best", citing both handling and finishing as problem areas. But a good win nonetheless. Their form looking towards the Varsity match could hardly be better.



An even challenge in the lineout

# Tennis girls come out on top

» Women's Blues secure place in Premier Division



Watson gets into her swing

Varsity Sport

The women's tennis Blues were on top form last week as they achieved a convincing and crucial victory over Exeter University to retain their place in the Premier BUCS Division with just one league fixture remaining.

Commencing with the doubles, the Cambridge first pair of Laura Morrill and Victoria Watson fired an early warning shot to Exeter that the Blues meant business by administering a comprehensive defeat. The second pair of Beth Ashbridge and Claire Bush, however, appeared to be suffering from the effects of a six o'clock start and a session in the notorious moving library (i.e. the train) as they succumbed to a feisty Devonshire duo. Hence the tie was level at one all with all to play for in the singles.

Cometh the moment, cometh the (wo) man in the form of Captain 'aggressive' Ashbridge. Leading by example she conjured a delectable treat of tantalising ten-

Cambridge	9
Exeter	1

nis which saw her opponent scrambling around in despair at the back of the court. The killer combination of huge serve and hefty forehand served the Captain well as she set the tone for her teammates to follow. Victory number two was attained by Cambridge number four, Claire Bush, whose athleticism and tactical nous allowed her to exploit the weaknesses of her adversary with pinpoint precision. In similar fashion to Ashbridge, following a tight first set, she found her groove in the second and prevailed to the sound of applause from the balcony.

The minimum number of points to win the fixture having thereby been attained, the Blues' numbers one and two, fresher Laura Morrill and second-year Victoria Watson respectively, were forced to postpone their jubilant cel-

ebrations in order to regain focus and complete the Cambridge conquest.

This they did emphatically with Morrill, who has won six out of her seven singles matches this season, continuing her winning streak and demonstrating yet again that she is a force to be reckoned with on the tennis court. A true professional, this impressive fresher was on cruise control as she made light work of a wily challenger prior to pursuing team celebrations.

Finally, it was down to Watson to clean-up, so to speak, which she did in satisfying fashion against a 'golden retriever' of an opponent. Questioning, at times, whether she would ever out-manoeuvre someone perhaps best suited to the running track, she decided to turn on the power which ultimately did the trick.

Probably the best BUCS result in two years, the Cambridge foursome can now look on with optimism to the BUCS knock-out cup and, of course, the Varsity match in June.

# Rugby: the big one

» St John's victorious in College grudge match

Jenny Morgan

John's and Jesus have something really special. It's called hatred. Real genuine stuff, that. And it makes for some very exciting rugby games...

In this league decider on Tuesday, there was shedloads of the stuff. John's came on strong, brushing off tackles and storming toward the line. Jesus desperately tried to slow down the play and managed to force a few errors and make a couple of turnover balls. Not that it mattered though, as the John's pack demolished any ensuing scrum, ramming the Jesus players backwards ten metres every time. Within a few minutes the ball was swept out to winger Shao-Chun Lin who sneaked back inside for a try under the posts. Aaron Sonenfeld duly converted.

From hero to villain, Lin was then responsible for a questionably high tackle against Dom Macklin back on his own try line, which gifted Jesus a penalty try to equalise. Jesus had caught them by surprise with some strong work through

St John's	21
Jesus	7

the middle of the field by the slippery fly half Ian Childs. Some great kicking from his opposite man Sonenfeld soon had John's back on track though, and when Jesus were caught holding up in front of the posts he was called upon to deliver another three points to regain the lead.

The play barely left the Jesus half in the run up to half time, but John's made little ground in the face of a strong defensive line. Unable to formulate the game patterns they wanted, they were eventually forced to take solace in another successful kick to goal. This seemed to break the stalemate, and good hands in an overlap on the right gave fresher Mathonwy Thomas the chance to put down over the line, leaving the score 18-7 at half time.

The second half was a more equal affair. A Jesus forward yelled "look where



An excellent first half display set the tone for victory

we are" as they firmly lodged themselves in the John's half of the pitch. Unfortunately, that is where they remained for much of the rest of the match, with static play inching painfully from one side of the half way to the other and mistakes on both sides stopping any attack before it could really get going. In fact, aside from an early penalty stretching the score a little further in the John's boys' favour, both teams struggled to

convert territory into points and a series of futile kick and chase attempts ended ingloriously in touch.

With five minutes to go, John's were still looking for another try, but as the sun dipped behind the Jesus rooftops, it was clear none was forthcoming. The final score of 21-7 will be a relief for the unbeaten Red Boys, but Jesus certainly gave them a run for their money. Cuppers may yet be another story...

## Quick Catch-up

### Mini Report

#### Men's Blues Lacrosse

A shortage in recent match play did not show as Cambridge Men's Lacrosse team stormed to a 14-5 victory over Buckhurst Hill on Saturday. With several key players sidelined by injury, this was a chance for some new faces to shine.

Six goals for Todd Nicholls and five for Co-Captain Phil Hall ensured that the early lead never looked in danger of being lost. Man of the match Edward Cassels was also on hand throughout to keep up the aggressive and attacking style of play. Looking for advancement to the Premiership and a win at Varsity, this result leaves the team confident and ready for more.

### Player of the week

#### Ben Osborne, Trinity

Strong on the ball and powerful in the scrum, the Trinity hooker made life a lot harder than the Jesus pack would have liked in their build up to the John's match. In consecutive games he was amenable up front, winning quick ball at the set pieces and leading the charge in the open field.

Ben has played in the College front row since his first year, watching the rise of the team from the 3rd to the 1st division. In his second year, he trained and played for the U20 and U21 squads, though never quite made the Varsity line up. Surprisingly, rugby has not always played such a major role in Ben's life. At school in King's Lynn there was little time for training or matches, so Cambridge was his first real chance to make waves on the rugby scene.

With the League and his engineering degree all but over, Ben is hoping to continue to play rugby for an adult team next year. A brave decision for the front row: his experience of rugby at Trinity will no doubt stand him in good stead.

### Mini Report

#### Blues Tennis

The Men's Blues Tennis Team crushed Edinburgh 10-0 in their final game of the BUCS Northern Premier League season on Wednesday.

Phil Compeau (Churchill) and Rutger-Jan Lange (King's) got proceedings underway with straight set wins: 6-0 6-1 and 6-3 6-2 respectively.

Next, James Ashton (Emmanuel) and Pavel Chichkanov (Queens') defeated their opponents in similarly strong fashion, with 6-3 6-4 and 6-1 6-2 scorelines apiece. With doubles left to play, Edinburgh conceded the second match due to injury, leaving the combination of Aston-Compeau to convincingly crush the first pair 8-5. The win assures the Men's team a place in this top flight league again next year.

Captain John Western was jubilant: "All in all, a great end to the campaign!"

Sport Feature: Winter Sports

# Stop Working and Grab a Broom

CAMBRIDGE ALREADY WEARING YOU DOWN? DON'T FRET: THE SEASON FOR WINTER MINIBREAKS IS UPON US AND BOREDOM EXPERT JAMIE PTASZYNSKI HAS SOME SUGGESTIONS

## SKI JUMPING

It's a fairly simple sport, which starts with a long slide down a steep slope that curves upwards a few degrees at the bottom. When the slope ends (this happens quite abruptly, so be prepared) you leap off into thin air at roughly 100mph. There you remain for anything up to about eight seconds, before landing on another, slightly less steep slope. Although you are supposed to land with a good 'telemark' style, I recommend you do whatever you think best to avoid breaking your legs/back/etc and try your hardest to

come to a halt as soon as possible. Ski-jumping is probably not for everyone. If you're afraid of heights or flying, or just don't think you'd look great in a skin-tight all-in-one and eight foot skis, you really ought to think twice. Also beware that once you start down the slope, there's no way to stop. For myself, I'd rather stick to the pistes, but if you're seriously considering it I recommend you go on YouTube and watch a couple of jumps and maybe a couple of crashes too. The current world record was set by Bjoern Einar Romoeren at Planica in 2005 and stands at 239m. Janne Ahonen did go further at the same event but he failed to land it, which is quite a

painful thought. If you find all these speeds, distances and heights a little too daunting, I'm delighted to tell you that ski-jumping is also a vastly underestimated spectator sport. At first it is intriguing in its stupidity, but soon you are mesmerised by the grace and athleticism of these absolute nutters. Being a nutter is one of the prerequisites for becoming a world-class ski-jumper. The other is having a ridiculous name. Roar Ljoekelsoey is a prime example of this; the undeniable coolness of his first name being entirely negated by the randomly selected jumble of letters that make up his surname. At

the top of this year's FIS World Cup leader board there sits a man called Simon whose surname usefully confirms his status as Ammann (it can be hard to tell in those outfits). Meanwhile at the bottom end of the rankings Andreas Wank's career has failed to reach the exciting climax predicted. **If you want to try it:** Check out [www.innere-salzkammergut.at](http://www.innere-salzkammergut.at) and go to 'recreation and sports' for details of their beginner course. **If you want to watch it:** Tune in to Eurosport at 5.30pm on Saturday 24th for the Canadian leg of the World Cup tour.



Ammann: Nutter



Dogs: unpredictable

## HUSKY SLEDDING

Probably one of the most pleasant all-round experiences of my life and something I would recommend to everyone: the pines drifting past in the everlasting golden-pink Arctic sunset, the gentle susurration of the wooden sled rushing through the deep snow, the stench of six sweaty dogs all trying to run and defecate at the same time (honestly, they make even more of a theatre

about it than Paula Radcliffe). But before you all lasso the family spaniel to the front of a toboggan, I ought to tell you a little more about it. We did it in Finland with a guy called Runi, who happens to be the former European Dog Sled Racing Open champion. Although we weren't using top-of-the-range gear, a racing sledge like his could set you back a couple of thousand pounds. You can't just use any old house pet either: running has to be in their blood and then the excitement to run must be nurtured for years. Runi's animals have had the right upbringing: the suddenly overpowering smell of canine hormones and the screeches, yelps and barks of seventy dogs that erupted as

soon as he harnessed the first dog to a sled tell you that these dogs are born for sled-hauling. Apparently a team of fourteen good racing dogs can run up to two hundred and fifty kilometres a day, with race lengths up to one thousand kilometres. Another shocking fact is that huskies aren't the amazing runners we've always been told. In fact they're arrogant and lazy: everyone just likes the way they look on the postcards. The best breed for racing is a cross between English and Irish setters, sturdy yet energetic. Beware, though, if you do try it, that even these highly-bred, per-

fectly trained animals are still just dogs. They haven't developed any super-canine ability to understand verbal instruction or human desire: In the end if they'd prefer to spend an afternoon trying to eat snow or to piss off into the woods occasionally to take a look at some faeces, dragging you rapidly towards an uncomfortable looking Nordic fir, there's not much you can do about it but bail out and hope for a soft landing. **If you want to give it a go:** Book a few days at Hotel Iso-Syote in Finnish Lapland. It's not cheap, but they also offer snowmobiling and rally driving for those who prefer an engine.

## CURLING

Curling was invented by Scottish clairs hundreds of years ago as part of a housewifery exam: one woman slowly slides a heavy rock (iron) as straight as possible, while the rest sweep as vigorously as they can. If it takes more than that to get your adrenaline pumping then maybe you should go back to the bit on ski-jumping. It may also put you off to learn that there's only one dedicated curling venue in England, near Tunbridge Wells. The fact that

the curling world stage is dominated by Scots and Canadians is equally unlikely to whet your appetite. But don't be too hasty. Curling is going to make a huge comeback in the next few years. In fact, I predict that by February 2009 curling will have overtaken Ultimate Frisbee as the pseudo-sport whose accelerating popularity most annoys university rugby players. My confidence is not as misguided as you think: firstly, the English Curling Association website agrees with me, and Stephen Hinds has been appointed as National Development Director to make sure of it. Who knows what such a man is capable of?

Secondly, global warming apparently means that we're going to have colder winters, like the Victorians had when the Thames froze over, and they all loved curling (and skating) on it (I think this must have been before we caused global cooling, which made all the ice melt). Thirdly, we're in the middle of an economic crisis, which means that none of you will be able to get jobs when you graduate, so you'll have to go straight into retirement. Suddenly curling seems a very attractive alternative to lawn bowling, the staple pastime of the lonely British pensioner. Finally, if you play your cards

right, you might get an Olympic medal. At the last Winter Olympics the British men and women came fourth and fifth respectively, but by the tightest of margins. Bearing in mind three of the men lived on neighbouring farms near Lockerbie, which has a really small population, it can't be the hardest of teams to break into. **If you think you could go straight to the top:** Contact the Royal Caledonian Curling Club. **If you want to play casually:** Go to Fenton's Rink in Kent, 'For A Cool Fun Day Out'.



Olympic aspirations?

## ONEWORLDWEEK The Great Cambridge Jump 2009



SATURDAY 14TH FEBRUARY  
To find out more visit: [www.uniskydiving.co.uk](http://www.uniskydiving.co.uk)

**Richard Kirsch**

*Sport Special*



# More après than ski

Enjoying the best snow conditions for many years, a record number of skiers and boarders, over 2100 students, spent the first week of their holidays in Val Thorens, France.

Approaches to the trip varied, from the more militaristic who reached the first lifts at 9.15 without fail, to those who nursed their hangovers till noon, only to strap on their boots, get the gondola car up, and enjoy a long lunch in the sun.

Evening entertainment was centred on the Malaysia nightclub, pulling eager party-hunters in with a potent combination of £10 drinks, and a thick, sweaty atmosphere. One night saw the club host a 'silent disco' party, which came as a welcome relief to those tired of hearing boorish Oxford voices.

Despite strict French laws on after-hours noise, bad behaviour was sadly prevalent. Shared hotel rooms often occupied by at least one snotty and unwell individual meant that promiscuous couples had to be inventive. Boot rooms and igloos were no-go areas after dark for all those with a sensitive stomach.

Varsity organisers laid on a handsome spread of events, though the

post-slopes VarCity tent struggled to compete with the bowling alley, whose internet access ensured no-one was ever too far from their Facebook profile.

After the first full day at the resort, many cold students were dazzled as our finest skiers jumped over a fiery chasm. Unfortunately a prominent committee

member suffered a disabling leg injury in the process. His penetrating scream soon silenced the mocking crowd.

The trip was unmarked by any degree of Oxbridge rivalry. Few bothered missing an afternoon's fun to witness Cambridge defeat in the 'ski matches'. Similarly, few took any notice of that rugby game on the television that took place during the week. A tug-of-war match offered some relief, as an all-Jesus team briskly saw off feeble opposition. Most trip-goers however got their competitive fix from the Eurosports channel, the only one in English, with its regular slots of curling, ski jumping, and unforgettably the European Timbersports Championship.

The social highlight of the week was the Valley Rally, an exercise in humiliation with the potential prize of a free week in Canada. Those willing only to go so far as naked skiing fell a long way off the pace, which saw early leads for vomit-eaters and a rather chilly blowjob. With any justice, the victory was handed to the ill-advised soul who publically consumed a 'burger' consisting of two buns and a steaming turd.

We look forward to more of the same next year.

*'A potent combination of £10 drinks and a thick, sweaty atmosphere'*



LAURA COLEMAN

Innocent winter fun?

# Blues see off Durham danger

» Refreshed Cambridge dismiss a defiant Durham

Varsity Sport

We were back at Grange Road on Saturday, but don't mention the V word. Succumbing to early errors, the Light Blues allowed a dangerous overlap to develop in the first few minutes. The memories of that day in December threatened to make their return. But then the defence started tackling, and there the comparison ended.

Cambridge, however, were far from dominant, and a well-placed kick from Durham full back Crozier soon landed them in trouble five metres from their try line. Mistake after mistake then gifted Durham a penalty which, taken quickly, gave them the first points on the board with an unconverted try.

The Blues struck back immediately. A territory-making run from James Greenwood built the platform for Cambridge to take the lead with a try and conversion for the consistent Jimmy Richards. A period of Cambridge pressure followed, with a series of piercing runs putting Durham firmly on the defensive foot. Only a lack of support for the lone runners and a loss of discipline at the breakdown denied Cambridge the chance to consolidate their lead.

Durham hit back and got to within the Cambridge twenty-two before a

<b>Cambridge</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Durham</b>	<b>17</b>

cheeky interception from fly half Sandy Reid and a swift offload to Chris Lewis made back the crucial metres. Twickenham try scorer Niall Conlon was then on hand to take the points. Despite Durham pressure, the half ended 14-5 with Crozier missing the first of a series of easy penalties.

Stern words at half time resulted in a strong restart by Durham, whose efforts unfortunately amounted to nothing when a double-movement saw their try disallowed. They continued to dig away at the Light Blue defence but were let down by some erratic kicking. Finally a break in play caused the distraction they needed for Durham winger James McCann to slip through for his second touch down.

Quality of play rapidly deteriorated with many mistakes from both sides. A missed tackle in the Cambridge back line let Durham through for a second try in quick succession, gifting them the lead. This would prove to be short lived as Cambridge finally took control of the match. Some flowing play ended with a try for Chris Lewis, offering immedi-



DHANEESHA SENARATNE

Three Durham players fail to take down the Blues' Will Jones

ate relief. Further attempts at the Cambridge line came, but to no avail. The Light Blue defence held and Lewis was then on hand to provide the icing on the cake as a fantastic pass from outgoing captain Jon Dawson gave him the space to dive into the left corner.

The Durham match is always enjoyable and Saturday was no different. From

the crowd's perspective, it was refreshing to see the Blues on winning form again and to see some new faces amongst the old. We would also like to offer our congratulations to new Blues Captain, Dan Vickerman.

Varsity man of the match: James Greenwood for his strong running and consistency in defence.

## Cooney's Marathon



**Lauren Cooney**

*Week 2*

In which Lauren doesn't drink (much) and explains shin splints.

Week one of 'training', so my trusty Internet-sourced schedule calls it has run (ba dum bum) smoothly. Not least because I have really enjoyed being back at uni, and bumping into a myriad amused faces who taunt me with pub excursions and make a point of buying me soda and lime, or apple juice.

Things I have drunk this week: soda and lime, apple juice, milk, 3 coffees, vodka and orange (bop). Things I have not drunk this week: red wine, a leffe, and a lot more coffee. I have heard mixed reviews about how much one can 'get away with' when training for a marathon; the general consensus seems to be ABSTAIN, which is a horrible word.

Feedback has also included unprecedented concern. People seem to be worried that I actually might die. Waking up and reciting motivational mantras seem a little futile when faced with inevitable, irrevocable, impending fatality. Hmm, let's hope not... (to the tune of my flatmates' favourite Joseph megamix): "Go go Lauren, you know what they say, go go Lauren, you'll make it some day..."

I'm sure that the uber-sporty types who accidentally read this column - I can see why my photograph would be misleading - on their way to patting themselves on their meaty backs whilst reading about their victory over blah and blah are scoffing at the first sentence of this article. "Pah! Week one of training! Pah! Pah!" But the reason why my schedule is so gloriously succinct is because of mid-Michaelmas shin splints, which had me first spitting angrily into my bastard overpriced Asics, and then ordered not to run for at least six weeks.

The only thing that made this setback less irritating was the pride I felt when telling people I had a running injury, and the various explanations I heard about what shin splints are. A synthesised definition would be "the splintering of muscles that occur when you exercise too much, and the muscle grows too fast, a bit like stretch marks, and grows into your bone, and if you stroke your leg then you can actually feel them, it's really weird."

Thankfully, the six-week break paid off, and my poor splintered shins are doing OK, which means I can now sing my alternative Joseph megamix, go for a lovely moonlit run, and then head off to a swap, where I may or may not drink apple juice. Remember to join the facebook group and suggest a charity: Lauren Cooney London Marathon.

## The Week Ahead

**National**

### Heineken Cup Rugby

Live coverage on Sky Sports as Leicester face the Ospreys, Harlequins host the Scarlets, and Montauban attempt to munch Munster.

Saturday January 28th, from 1.30pm.

**University**

### Blues Netball

This re-arranged fixture at the Leys will be an interesting form indicator for the Varsity match now less than a month away.

Saturday January 24th, 12.30pm.

**National**

### Conference Football

Cambridge United take on arch rivals Oxford United in Conference crunch. At the Trade Recruitment Stadium on Newmarket Road.

Thursday January 29th, KO 7.45pm.

**University**

### Blues Hockey

Relegation decider at Wilberforce Road as the Ladies take on Cardiff in a crucial bottom-of-the-table clash.

Wednesday January 28th, 2pm.

# Sport



## WINTER SPORTS

Here's a few things you haven't tried before...

**VARSITY MATCH RUNNING TOTAL: CAMBRIDGE 0, OXFORD 2. COMING SOON: CANOEING, SWIMMING, WATER POLO.**



SEAN JONES

## View from the River

Silas Stafford



The days leading up to the Boat Race are rapidly disappearing, and we at CUBC are finding ourselves increasingly out of time to make excuses.

Now is the season to hit the training as hard as we can; now is the time to perfect our stroke; now is when we win or lose the race. Even though we have not yet set the line-ups of the Blue boat and of Goldie, we are now beginning what will be probably the most intense weeks of training. And with this intensity comes inevitable soreness and fatigue deep inside our bodies.

My body and I, we have a difficult relationship. After a week of intensive training, my body will be very upset with me. Its aches and pains will be translated into the instructions, "feed me more, row less!" to which I respond by telling my body to stop complaining and pull harder, or into "sleep more! skip morning practice!" I tell it to shut up, sack up, and get up.

Occasionally during our silent struggles, my body gets the better of me. There is the odd morning when my alarm mysteriously "never goes off", or when my legs spontaneously cramp up while sitting in lectures. And when my body really means business, it goes so far as to get injured, setting back weeks of training.

To mitigate my body's complaints, I must try to do all the right things: eat well, stretch, sleep a lot, and hydrate. And to reward my body for good behavior, I load it with beer and candy and indulge in frequent naps. These treats are vitally important carrots which motivate me to get my body through difficult training sessions.

To the rower, the body truly is a temple. A grumbling, sore, and indignant one perhaps, but a temple all the same.

# Cambridge comeback hits Hethersett

Becca Langton

As an avid Chelsea fan for the full twenty years of my life, like my father and grandfather, I have always viewed women's football with some suspicion. A token effort towards equality perhaps, but a much lesser version of the game I love.

But having witnessed the women's Blues' extraordinary victory over Hethersett Athletic at the weekend, overturning an earlier 7-0 defeat and embarrassing a team sitting five places above them in the East Regional Premier Division, I have been forced to reconsider. Women's football might be played at a slower, less intense pace, but it has the same excitement, passion and enthusiasm one would expect to find in any men's team. By the final whistle the Blues had pulled out stunning goals, desperate sliding tackles and thrown in some blood, sweat and tears for good measure. I'm definitely a convert.

Cambridge seemed hesitant in the first half. Having succumbed to Hethersett's pace and skill in the away match in October, the Blues were wary of at-

**Cambridge 3**  
**Hethersett Athletic 0**

tacking with any real intent, and as a result chose to play the ball in and around the midfield, keeping possession but looking only fleetingly threatening.

Flooding their own half with players, Cambridge kept quiet as the orange-clad Hethersett wasted energy attacking an impenetrable defence. Lizzie Richardson in particular was calm and assured at the back, picking stray balls off an increasingly aggravated Hethersett and letting the quick-paced wingers give the opposition keeper something to worry about.

At half time, however, the score was a predictably even nil-nil. Whilst there was everything to play for, a few frustrated tears from the young Hethersett right wing suggested that Cambridge had the upper hand.

A period of early pressure following the break demonstrated the Blues' new found resolve. Hethersett were stretched

at the back and forced into desperate defence as a series of aggressive long balls found the opposition's weakness in defence and exploited their inability to cope with the combined pace and strength of the Cambridge midfield. The first goal came with undisputable flare as centre forward Amanda Wainwright placed a swerving shot from well outside the box into the opposite corner; the keeper was nowhere to be seen and Cambridge's positive play was rewarded with the lead.

Standing strong at every challenge, the opposition attempted a fight back. Hethersett were not yet finished and a last ditch save off the line by stalwart defender Clare Ross following a lapse of concentration at the back suggested that Cambridge might still be vulnerable.

But this only provided further encouragement for the Blues up front. Clare Ross, as useful up the line as at the back, stole the ball from a hopeful Hethersett and following a quick throw-in from Maise-Rose Byrne, Amanda Wainwright was again on hand to drill home for the second.

Hethersett seemed to all but have

gone home, demoralised by a stunning Cambridge comeback. It was only a matter of time before they could go home for real to nurse their fairly bruised egos in private. But Cambridge were to inflict one final goal before the whistle could intervene. Shaking off the defence, and coming through to a one on one with the keeper, Wainwright claimed a deserved hat-trick as she placed a well struck volley past a keeper seemingly unsure of the appropriate response. A three-nil victory at full time was credit to the courageous Cambridge comeback.

This New Year, the Blues certainly have something to celebrate. And Oxford will surely have something to worry about when they travel to Cambridge on February 28th to take on a team whose increasing confidence and growing goal difference is putting them in a good position to claim victory for the second year running.

*Varsity Woman of the Match: Amanda Wainwright took advantage of every opportunity to hammer home three stunning goals, and reflected the ability and potential of this Blues team.*

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