

A room worth a few: uncovering the disparities in Cambridge rents (cont p.3)



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A libel without a cause

University donor Dmitry Firtash, who brought a libel case to British courts on account of his connections with Cambridge, has had his case struck out

ANDREW GRIFFIN
deputy news editor

Dmitry Firtash, a prominent benefactor of the University of Cambridge, who attempted to use his donations to engage in 'libel tourism', had his case thrown out of UK courts yesterday.

Firtash, a Ukrainian billionaire, had attempted to sue the Ukrainian *Kyiv Post* for libel. As *Varsity* reported last month, Firtash's solicitor attempted to justify bringing the case to English courts by citing his donations to the University's Department of Slavonic Studies, which fund the Cambridge Ukrainian Studies programme, as well as the fact that he had once dined with the Queen.

Master Leslie, at the Royal Courts of Justice, said that Mr Firtash's connections with the UK were "tenuous in the extreme".

The donations to the University of

Cambridge formed a significant part of Firtash's lawyers' argument, *Varsity* was told. The defence, on behalf of the *Kyiv Post*, argued that this would set a disturbing precedent, whereby one could buy UK court hearings with university donations.

Master John Leslie, who presided over the case, said that it was "almost" an abuse of process.

The lawsuit concerned the *Kyiv Post's* publication of an article online about Ukraine's natural gas sector in which Mr Firtash, through his company the GDF group, is financially involved.

Following the publication of the article, Firtash issued libel proceedings in London against the *Kyiv Post*. In order to justify their being heard in England, Firtash's solicitor claimed that Firtash was a "prominent businessman who lives in Ukraine but also enjoys a reputation in the UK".

The case was of significant interest to numerous libel reform groups,

and numerous proponents; Stephen Fry and Simon Singh of libel reform tweeted *Varsity's* article covering the proceedings.

It was seen as a demonstration of the possibilities and problems of libel law in the UK, which is thought to give undue power to litigants. 'Libel tourists' exploit this by bringing cases through English courts that would not usually be heard elsewhere.

The editor of the *Kyiv Post*, Brian Bonner, said that he was "very pleased" with the ruling, and hoped that it would give impetus to libel law changes that would "strengthen free speech and curb the practice of 'libel tourism' in the UK".

He said that the *Kyiv Post* had "repeated [their] offer to Dmitry Firtash to tell his side of the story or tell [them] what is wrong with the article in question", but had not received a response.

Jonathan Heawood, the director of

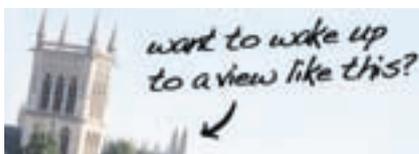
English PEN, said: "This is obviously good news for free speech, but the libel chill still remains.

"This phenomena of libel tourism is a form of legal harassment, which discourages responsible investigative journalists from speaking the truth to [those in] power."

The judge did allow for an appeal of the libel action, which was brought by Firtash against Public Media, publishers of the *Kyiv Post*.

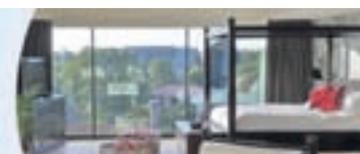
As a result, the newspaper has not lifted its block on traffic from the UK, which has been in place since 14th December 2010, in protest at "draconian libel laws there that hinder legitimate free speech and threaten the work of independent journalists, authors, scientists and others worldwide".

The paper said that it would wait to see if the ruling was appealed by Firtash's lawyers before removing the block.



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EDITORIAL

Over the years, there have been many reports in *Varsity* and other publications in Cambridge on the status of women within the University. Looking back at the archives you can find anything from “Now King’s agrees to take women” to “Women’s Campaign blasts Union sexism”.

We have clearly come a long way since the first headline, from 1969, and huge leaps since the first female Colleges, Girton and Newnham, were established in 1869 and 1872 respectively. This term, after all, we find ourselves in the unusual situation of having women at the helm of all three major newspapers and having a female president of the Union.

Cambridge still fosters, however, a pervasive ‘lads’ atmosphere probably best exemplified by Kat Griffith’s RAG Blind Date (see www.varsity.co.uk/opinion/3225). Yes, it began as a joke, but it was the kind of joke that could only have arisen out of one kind of mentality. More worryingly, that it was done at all and that the writer went on said date suggests that he was not perturbed by what he had written and assumed that it would be accepted as ‘banter’.

We can only admire Kat for making a point of this kind of behaviour. Too often it goes unsaid and unnoticed, accepted as the usual run of student life here in Cambridge. It is not to suggest that we should only ever see gender relations in a dour light or not see the potential of a funny side. But this was a joke too far. When there is a recurrence of sexual attacks, as there has been around the Newnham area this week, we are once again reminded that to be a woman is still to be somewhat vulnerable and the ‘lads’ amongst us should be mindful of their female friends. Walking someone back shouldn’t just be seen as a ticket into their bed.

This extends to some college authorities who have failed to warn female students about the attacks. Solidarity amongst women has prevailed, with many posting the article on Facebook pages or spreading the word amongst friends. However, that a male student feels free to comment on one post, “they were pretty fit tho [sic],” makes it difficult for any woman to feel comfortable putting forward her views in a supposedly respectful learning environment.



EMAILS, LETTERS & TWEETS

ANIMAL INSTINCTS

Dear Editors,
*What exactly is the point being made in Clare Mohan’s article. That stereotypes exist? That they’re not always accurate? Oh my god, thank heavens we have the finest Cambridge minds on the case, coming up with such earth shattering pronouncements and radically challenging opinions! Male/female stereotypes exist because of sex. Notice the things you mentioned are the things most attractive to the opposite sex in (most) straight relationships. Feminine women are seen as more attractive. Masculine men are seen as more attractive. * This isn’t something disturbing or outdated. This is biologically founded, and plenty has been written on the subject - we are animals first and last, something which so many non scientists seem happy to ignore. And since sex is the most important biological imperative which impinges on others (breathing, eating and weeing are less about social interaction in general. Certainly less than sex is), naturally it will define us outside of the bedroom too - the reason we think about sex so much is that it is so important. Since a lot of what constitutes society is about curbing our animal behaviour, there are in fact a lot of laws in place to mitigate stereotyping, you’ll no doubt be shocked to learn. *(Of course this is reflected in the gay world - why do butch lesbians and very effeminate gay men exist do you think?)*

Guido Martin-Brandis
via website

LAMPOON

Dear Editors,
Racist? In reference to your review of the Gilbert & Sullivan gala, Gilbert might have used the “n” word in Mikado, a word of the time, but in Utopia he lampooned the British colonisers who come to improve paradise by making it as British as possible and wreck the place, a satire well understood in Australia. There is nothing racist in Mikado when he uses Japan as an extrapolation of the British class system and uses it to satirise Britain.

John Lok
via website

SEX EDUCATION, EDUCATION, EDUCATION

Dear Editors,
Sex education from a young age is very beneficial and sex will always be a learning experience full of mistakes. Even in a porn free world.

Sarah Wooley
via website

JUMPING THE GUN?

Dear Editors,
I write to question the validity of damning comments made in last week’s article, entitled ‘Stingy Students Dodge Donation’, regarding students opting in/out of the Collective Charitable Donation, currently enjoying its inaugural year. Firstly, it was made clear in the previous week’s Varsity that many May Ball Committees would struggle to take part this year due to the delayed formation of the idea. However, it was quite rightly emphasised that next year the ‘charitable pot’ will be significantly greater as more Committees will be able to contribute and a chosen charity for next year has already been unveiled. As Chair of the King’s Affair this year, I find it astounding that this article has been produced before one of the few Colleges, in a position to make a considerable donation this year, has even begun selling tickets? Only an informed conclusion can be drawn regarding the ‘stinginess of students’ once ALL the tickets of ALL the participating June Events/May Balls have been sold.

I understand that the issue raised in the article is of students allegedly opting out of donating. However, in the cases named of Emmanuel and Trinity both had to advertise that the charity to be donated to is, as yet, undefined. That would appear to have caused reluctance or an unwillingness to donate on the paying Guests’ behalf, not a lack of charitable goodwill. People deserve the right to know what they are donating to. Furthermore, Wolfson June Event and Jesus May Ball, as briefly mentioned at the end of the article, already have impressive figures to report. This all leads me to the conclusion that VARSITY has, in this case, rather ‘jumped the gun’.

Rory Boyd, King’s Affair Chair 2011
via e-mail

DIGITAL DIGEST



VULTURE
Radiohead’s the King of Limbs: mere body parts.

Dan Brooks listens to Radiohead’s eighth studio album *The King of Limbs* and concludes that “It is not great.” Dare to disagree?



VETEMENTS
Undercover at London Fashion Week

Our London Fashion Week correspondent goes undercover at a Pam Hogg show and witnesses a crying Daisy Lowe and more



VERIFIED
Climate Change Explained

STILL not convinced about climate change and want to see the data for yourself? Our blogger breaks it down.



VARSITECH
Bridging the digital divide

Is the internet a basic human right? 5 billion people worldwide are currently left out of a thriving global conversation - here are some of the ways this gap is being bridged.

YOU, THE COMMENTATOR

A pick of the week’s comments from the website

“OMG I can’t believe this. I work my cotton socks off, I totally deserve an MA!”

Hannah Emily Sarah

“It’s very exciting that Susanna and Figaro’s wedding is in the newspaper, but I would like to know how they got hold of a picture of me in my dressing gown. I have enough woes without being chased by photographers all the time.” Contessa Rosina Almaviva

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Rents: extortionate or proportionate?

Do Cambridge rooms represent value for money? *Varsity* examines the varied price tags of the University's cheapest and most expensive dwellings and finds a vast discrepancy between cost and quality

ANNA GOLDENBERG
investigations correspondent

A *Varsity* investigation comparing room rates from undergraduate Colleges has revealed significant disparities in price, range and value for money throughout the University.

Robinson tops the list with an average weekly rent of £132.50, followed by Queens' College (£127.44) and Girton, where students pay £124.50 to live outside the city boundaries. The University-wide average lies at roughly £100, but there are several Colleges where one can live for significantly less: a student at Pembroke pays only £72.21 for an average room. Rents at St Catharine's on the opposite side of Trumpington Street are also only £75.65 per week.

The University website advertises the

range of weekly room rents as being between £70 and £120 per week, which is comparable to Oxford and other British university towns. However, these figures can be deceptive as the actual price range in Cambridge is substantially higher.

The most expensive room can be found at Robinson (£158.50). For this rate, more than three of the cheapest rooms in Trinity Hall could be sublet at £51.20 – a striking difference of more than £100. The range of room prices at Robinson is also relatively high at £54, whereas the Cambridge average lies at £44.37.

"We pay no kitchen charge, so our rent is all-inclusive," Rosalyn Old, president of the Robinson College Students' Association, has said in defence of the high rents. "Our rooms are modern and a very high percentage [of them] are either en suite or share a bathroom

between just two rooms. Robinson has some of the best College student accommodation in Cambridge!"

Miguel Barros Brito, a second-year at Robinson, is also happy with the price he pays for his accommodation: "I think my room is worth the money. It is spacious, well equipped, and well and promptly maintained. If you look past the hideous curtains and even the occasionally creaking floor, this room is the perfect student accommodation with good value for money."

There are only two Colleges, Girton and Newnham, where all students pay the same price for their accommodation, irrespective of their room grade. "I think this is a good system, because it is egalitarian," says a fourth-year student at Girton.

There are great differences in room prices – and quality – in other Colleges. Downing beats Peterhouse with the highest intra-College range of rates: the most expensive room (£140.80) costs more than twice as much as the cheapest room (£63) in the same college, which amounts to a difference of £77.80. At Peterhouse students have a range of choices with rooms for £59 and £130 – a gap of £71.

At Queens' College, no JCR committee member was available for a comment. Kate Bonham, JCR president at Girton College, can account for the high rent in the former women's College: "This figure is not as high as it seems as it includes Kitchen Fixed Charge. However, the rent figure is still one of the highest amongst the Colleges. Girton is under a lot of financial pressure and has two very large sites with heavily staffed canteens, something which I am not aware [that] any

If you look past the hideous curtains and creaking floorboards, this room is the perfect student accommodation

other College has."

Another Girtonian admits: "It fits with the market prices in Cambridge and it has the services which makes life more interesting. If you lived out, you wouldn't have the security of porters and the convenience of a library."

The University promises "very competitive living costs, which are much lower than many imagine" for its prospective students in Cambridge. It is also one of the few universities in the country to offer its student accommodation for the entire duration of their undergraduate studies.

Few students live out, as property prices in Cambridge are substantial higher than College prices. The average weekly rent in the city lies at around £230, and does not include electricity and heating – commodities for which most Colleges do not charge extra.

A *Varsity* investigation from 2002 showed that room prices have

Cambridge by numbers: who pays what?

College	Per week		
	Average Rent	Cheapest Room	Most Expensive
Robinson	£132.50	£104.50	£158.50
Queens'	£127.22	£81.80	£147.22
Girton	£124.50	All undergraduate rooms are the same price.	
St. John's	£111.84	£103.50	£120.17
Newnham	£108.60	All undergraduate rooms are the same price	
King's	£108.35	£98.63	£142.80
Downing	£107.00	£63.00	£140.80
Gonville & Caius	£100.90	£83.10	£118.70
Trinity	£100.80	£69.10	£132.50
Fitzwilliam	£100.10	£81.60	£118.60
Clare	£100.00	£82.00	£117.00
Homerton	£99.11	£92.75	£100.31
Corpus Christi	£99.00	£77.00	£125.00
Murray Edwards	£96.90	£83.70	£110.10
Churchill	£95.00	£74.40	£119.10
Peterhouse	£94.50	£59.00	£130.00
Christ's	£92.70	£69.00	£108.60
Magdalene	£90.00	£70.00	£110.00
Trinity Hall	£88.00	£51.20	£109.50
Selwyn	£87.48	£56.22	£118.73
Jesus	£86.25	£58.50	£114.00
Emmanuel	£81.68	£66.02	£97.34
St Catherine's	£75.65	£58.10	£93.20
Pembroke	£72.21	£60.20	£94.32

increased significantly in the past nine years. In 2002, the Cambridge-wide average was £58.22, which is more than a third less than today's figure.

Taking inflation into account, it is the increase of inter-College differences that should be more worrying: students at Homerton, the most expensive College, paid 13.6 per cent more than those at Churchill, which then had the most affordable accommodation at an average of about £53 per week. Figures from this year show that the rent at Robinson is 18.34 per cent higher than at Pembroke, which on average is currently the cheapest College.

These disparities are disconcerting, in light of the fact that students are usually told when they apply to Cambridge that they should not spend too long worrying about which College to choose. Students often hear that whilst

every Cambridge College is 'unique', Colleges tend to have 'many more similarities than differences'.

Comparing room rents, however, shows that different Colleges offer significant differences in what students can get for their money. Despite this, 'price of accommodation', unlike 'College size' and 'admissions criteria', is not one of the factors which the University website advises prospective students to take into account.

In addition, students who have been pooled to certain Colleges may, justifiably, feel that they have been put at an unfair disadvantage financially. For example both Robinson and Girton, two of the most expensive Colleges, have around 30 per cent of admissions from the pool each year, far above the University-wide average of 18.5 per cent.

A room of one's own

Penny-pinching:

£51.20 per week at Trinity Hall

Rate Middleton:

£100 per week at Clare

Cash-splashing:

£158.50 per week at Robinson



LARA PRENDERGAST & ANDREW GRIFFIN

PRESS CUTTINGS

The pick of the week's papers

QUAKE ROCKS CHRISTCHURCH

Hundreds remain missing after an earthquake hit Christchurch, New Zealand. The 6.3 magnitude quake is the country's biggest natural disaster in 80 years, with 71 deaths confirmed so far.

GADDAFI LOSING GRIP

Colonel Gaddafi is struggling to retain control of areas in western Libya, as protestors consolidate their control in the East. The uprising has claimed at least 300 lives so far. David Cameron has said the situation in Libya was "very dangerous" and the UK's "first priority" was to help the many Britons stranded there.

JULIAN ASSANGE LOSES APPEAL

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange will appeal the decision to extradite him to Sweden. If the appeal fails, he will be sent to Sweden in ten days, where he will face allegations of rape and sexual assault. Assange has been battling extradition since December. He maintains his denial of the allegations brought against him in August last year.

Clegg's 'poorest students' statistics face criticism

KIRSTY GRAY
news correspondent

Figures released to MPs show that students from poorer backgrounds are seven times less likely to attend a university like Oxford or Cambridge.

It has been revealed that in 2007/08 one per cent of students on free school meals gained access to a Russell group university while only 15 per cent won a place at any university at all.

Following the increase in maximum tuition fees to £9,000 this statistical proof has been used in order to pressure top-ranking institutions further into signing agreements with the Government promising to admit more children from poorer homes.

"Recent changes to higher education funding could well make it harder to convince students from low-income backgrounds that universities such as Cambridge are realistic and worthwhile options," Dr Andrew Bell, Admissions Tutor at Gonville & Caius, told *Varsity*.

"Lack of knowledge, lack of encouragement and simple misinformation can all stand in the way of such students applying. We'll have to continue to work hard to address this."

However, there is some controversy as to the appropriateness of using those on free school meals (FSM) as a basis for calculating statistics of poor students. Statistics only include pupils who receive school meals, rather than all of those who are eligible: research shows that a quarter of those entitled for them

do not take advantage of the scheme.

There has also been dispute as to whether the data includes Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, as well as students studying at Further Education colleges rather than "schools".

Information regarding FSM eligibility is not made available to Higher Education institutions but the University of Cambridge, using late 2010 figures, estimates that an average of 22 FSM students were admitted annually between 2006-08.

A University spokesman suggests this figure does not, in fact, indicate any particular inequality in the admissions process:

"Of the 4,516 FSM students who secured a pass grade at A Level in 2008 only 160 secured the grades then required for entry to the University of Cambridge.

"Assuming that all 160 of these students applied to Oxford or Cambridge in equal numbers and 22 were successful in securing places at Cambridge then this would represent a success rate of 27.5 per cent – higher than the average success rate for all students applying to the University."

Nonetheless, put into perspective, more students from one school alone were admitted into Cambridge than the FSM average intake from across the country. The high-end private school, Westminster, whose Old Boys include Nick Clegg, boasts that 26 of its 2009 leavers obtained places at the University of Cambridge.

Chaos on King's Parade



VARSLITY NEWS

One Cambridge student and one sixth-form student were arrested in King's College yesterday evening. The students had been on a protest, and were allegedly arrested for obstruction.

King's College porters asked the police to leave the grounds, because arrests cannot legally be made on

College property. The police then forcibly removed the students, and put them in police vans on King's Parade amidst the fury of fellow protestors.

Witnesses report that pepper spray was used to subdue one of the two arrested. Following the incident, a friend of the arrested parties told *Varsity*: "I don't know what to say, it's completely ridiculous. It's an illegal arrest."

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Aaron Porter to step down

NUS President will not seek re-election despite his belief that he would certainly have won



EMILY CARLTON
national correspondent

NUS president Aaron Porter has announced that he will not be seeking re-election next month.

Mr Porter had previously expressed an interest in a second term, however, despite claiming that he certainly would have won, he felt that the NUS was in need of a "fresh start".

In an email to members of the NUS he said: "After considerable soul searching, I believe there needs to be a new

president to lead the student movement."

This announcement comes in the wake of widespread criticism about his lukewarm support for student action against increased tuition fees. One student activist, Mary Robertson, publicly said that Porter had "admitted defeat before the battle over tuition fees had started".

More recently he was forced to leave an anti-cuts rally in Manchester at which he had been scheduled to speak under police escort. He left vice-

president of Further Education Shane Chowan to finish his speech after he was drowned out by chants from the crowds such as "Porter: out" and pelted with eggs.

He has asserted, however, that this animosity has nothing to do with his decision to step down, calling it an "occupational hazard" and saying "I've grown a thick skin".

Porter was instrumental in getting the Liberal Democrats to sign the (largely meaningless) pledge to scrap tuition fees and in his time in office has seen an extraordinary rise in student activism.

He says that he will step down with pride as, "we've kick started a wave of student action, brought the Coalition to its knees, and we've shaped the public debate on education in an unprecedented fashion".

Some, however, would resent this claim, and much of the criticism of Porter has come from student activists who feel his role has been far less integral.

As a member of Defend Education said prophetically last month, "Porter looks upon the student movement as no more than a CV opportunity, to be abandoned as soon as the scrawl of graffiti dares to interrupt his perfect form. The genuine student body is on the streets to which we been thrust by decades of counter-productive NUS bureaucracy."

“Europe needs Britain”

Rhys Treharne talks to the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, about the European Union's mid-life crisis



NIGEL LUCKHURST

The European Union has long since forgotten the celebration party it held for its fiftieth birthday in 2007. Instead, it now faces economic malaise, near monetary collapse, and constitutional fisticuffs, to such a degree that one wonders whether the EU is undergoing a mid-life crisis.

Not a bit of it, apparently. In fact, José Manuel Barroso, the current President of the European Commission, has some lifestyle advice for me and my impertinent opening remarks, “you know, there is an old saying: life begins at forty”.

Very well; a flippant response to a flippant question. But President Barroso, the erudite and charming former Portuguese Prime Minister has a point, and he offers me a brief revision course in European history to prove it. “Where was Europe sixty years ago? We experienced probably the worst episode in the history of mankind: the Holocaust, that’s where we were. Thirty years ago? Much of Southern Europe was run by dictators”. Today the community of twenty-seven member states has ensured the most obvious and most overlooked fact of contemporary European life: peace. “We have put together countries that were formerly enemies; we have created common institutions.”

But President Barroso was not visiting

Cambridge last week in the name of European harmony; rather, he was invited to deliver the annual Alcuin Lecture on the future challenges facing the EU. There was much in the speech to admire, but there was little in it that was new (though references to “the great work of Cambridge University [sic] in European student exchange schemes and joint research projects” certainly pleased

When young Europeans think about their academic studies they naturally look to Britain

the home crowd). There was, however, an interesting personal intimation: the President sometimes thinks of himself as “an accidental politician”. His scholarly background does not suggest this (nor, I might add, do his garments: indeed, compared to most British politicians, Barroso is sartorially superior), but the job of President

of the European Commission is an undeniably unusual one. Not accountable to an electorate, but representative of an entire continent, the office is itself a clumsy but necessary compromise, and President Barroso’s time at the top has been bumpy.

Yet in face of recent European crises – the narrowly avoided collapse of the Eurozone, the contentious Lisbon treaty, the perpetual problem of the ‘democratic deficit’ – the President remains boundlessly optimistic. “Of course Europe must recognise its problems,” he admits, but this is no reason to dump the European project.

As a matter of fact, President Barroso’s brand of graceful Europeanism provides a refreshing contrast to the embattled Little-Englanders who dominate the European debate at home. I wondered what the President made of British attitudes to Europe: “Well, the people of Britain are very wise: they elect reasonable politicians at home, and the less reasonable ones they send abroad, usually to Brussels”. He recognises Britain’s immense contribution to the EU: “Europe needs Britain; the Single Market, the fight against climate change – the UK has been a strong advocate of all these things.” It has also been a strong advocate of Turkish entry into the EU, a fact that some French and German commentators regard as a threat to Europe’s ‘Christian personality’. The President is rightly horrified by such remarks: “Yes, there are countries opposed to the accession of Turkey, and of course the cultural heritage of Europe is Christian, but we have a great classical tradition in European society, as well influences from the Enlightenment and the Risorgimento. Europe is diverse and we ought not use religious arguments in a political context.”

President Barroso’s cheerleading of the fundamental principles of the EU intrigued me. And what with the sound of collapsing scenery from the despot Arab and Gulf states ringing in our ears, I asked the President if he regarded the EU as a model for the world. “One must always avoid arrogance in international relations, but if you mean a model as something we propose – not impose – then yes, I think the European experience has been successful. The EU has been a great laboratory for globalisation and ensuring peace. I can only say that I hope this experience inspires others.”

During our final few minutes together, I asked President Barroso about the state of European and British higher education: is this perhaps the route to further European integration? He answers: “Britain, partly thanks to its leading universities, is one of the most international places in the world. When young people on the continent think about their academic studies, they look naturally to this country. My advice to Britain is to keep that way.”

LETTICE FRANKLIN'S



GOT SOME NEWS? EMAIL SALADAYS@VARSITY.CO.UK

In every term, there comes an awful, inevitable moment when you realise you are a walking cliché. You’re exhausted, feeling a little glum, you’re not skipping to the library quite as gaily as usual, your heart no longer beats faster at the prospect of yet another portion of gammon and pineapple from the Buttery, the cheeky crocuses have been teasing a little too long, ‘maybe attending’, half-heartedly scattering themselves along the Backs, but not obliterating the interminable greyness of the sky, your U.L. plastic bag splits in a room full of academics whose books are all on the week’s reading list that you are yet to tackle, you don’t have enough coppers to afford an extortionately expensive speciality coffee in the tea room, and you just really really want to cry... And these feelings, these ‘blues’, as I suppose you could call them, usually fall around now, which is, what I don’t know, about, hmmm, the tail-end of... Week Five...

We can seek solace in the company of all fellow clichés.

Indeed the cliché of fifth week blues is not the only one proving true this week. The ADC mainshow, Laura Wade’s *Posh* addresses all the clichés and stereotypes conjured up by that contentious adjective. The play is peopled by the Riot Club, bow-tied, dinner-jacketed, and “châteaud beyond belief”. (Did you know that, if said with the right intonation, any noun, followed by –ed, can become a synonym for drunk, e.g. Gosh, Tarquin was totally lapped at the club last night; did you see how daffodilled Rebecca was at Cindies though? Cool, eh.) Once royally Rolls-Royced, the boys become violent and tailcoats get torn....

Nick Green, Etonian and member of Oxford’s Bullingdon Club, on which the Riot Club was modelled, showed such cliché to have basis in fact. He was arrested outside a club in Oxford after injuring Etiene Ekpoutip in a tiff over his ex-girlfriend, Miranda Gilbert, hand-cuffs adding a whole new accessory to the Bullingdon £1,200 tailcoat he wore, and whole new meaning to Tatler’s hailing of him as “a great shot with a bow and arrow” – or perhaps a fist.

As well as clichés, proverbs too are being enacted in front of our eyes. Thursday night showed

us not to judge a book by its cover, as the Union shook off its mildly fuddy-duddy image and played host to some of the leading lights of the porn industry. Clothes don’t make the man, and students packed into the Union to hear stripper and porn star Johnny Anglais, former stripper Shelley Lubben and others debating the motion ‘This House believes pornography does a good public service’. Johnny Anglais coined

a proverb-worthy analogy, suggesting that parents who let their children use the internet without supervision were more to blame for any harm than the porn industry: “Allowing your child unlimited access to the internet is like dropping your child off in Soho, saying ‘Here you are, we’ll see you in a few hours.’” Needs a bit of fine-tuning before it litters our conversation perhaps, but nonetheless it did the job, and the motion was passed easily with 231 ayes.

All good things come in pairs, and, weeks after the success of Fitz

After Dark, *Twilight* at the Museums allowed the public access to not only the Fitzwilliam Museum again, but also to many other museums around town and to the Botanic Garden after opening hours – all for free. The darkness revealed lights often unappreciated: dinosaurs wandering through the Sedgwick Museum, the previously unexplored reaches of the Polar Museum, New Hall’s *Fear of an Intellectual Wife*, a painting showing a woman with an absolutely enormous brain looming over a tiny, tiny man, hung at the entrance to the library, just in case we didn’t get the message.

No news is good news and this week Cambridge newspapers attested to that sad inevitability that accidents will happen as two lorries collided on the A14 near Cambridge, one carrying milk, which was sent gushing out over the motorway. The papers mention ‘a police spokesman’; he must have been biting his lip SO hard, resisting the urge to sigh ruefully and insert the appropriate proverb into his calming speech. In fact I’m really disappointed by the fact that he didn’t. Oh well, I suppose there’s no use crying over spilt milk.

As I’ve made use of some pretty inappropriate proverbs, why not use another one? Better be hung for a sheep than a lamb eh? Snuck it past you there, didn’t I? Professor Jenny Morton has found that sheep aren’t quite as woolly-brained as people think. Experiments showed them able to find food in different coloured buckets (!!!), which apparently gives them the same brainpower as humans. Who knows which proverbs they’d have up their lovely, Aran-knit, sleeves??



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This House Believes...

The Kindle is the new book

PROP.
John Ledger, second year, Trinity Hall

We've all been to the UL haven't we? Big, isn't it? Now, imagine if you could hold all of those books in one hand...

Granted, the Kindle is still quite a way from such condensing trickery, but it's set the proverbial ball rolling.

Despite the protestations of many, the Kindle, lets face it, is not a Godzilla figure, crashing its way through libraries, defecating on the history of literature and flicking the V at Shakespeare.

No, the Kindle is merely a technological advancement that could make the distribution of books, magazines and other related paraphernalia smoother, quicker and less, well, bulky. And like at technological advancements, there is the required reticence from conservatives who want to keep everything as it is.

Do you remember having a CD collection that took up more room than your best friend? Yes, you do, but then the iPod rolled into town and changed all that.

So lets get out of technology way, and let the Kindle do the same. (and please don't tell me you love the "feel" of books. What are you? A bibliophile?)

OPP.
Alice Hancock, second year, Emmanuel College

The iPod may have revolutionised music listening for a generation but then, there was nothing to miss in the feel of a hard plastic CD case.

A book is an entirely different beast.

The simple fact is this: there is something visceral about books that will vanish with the onslaught of this new alien of a technology.

Oh imagine! We can have everything in the same dull font on one screen that scrolls past our dazed eyes as we reach our eighteenth hour of reading War and Peace (because yes, the battery does last that long).

Psychologically speaking, when I hold my current read open I know exactly how far through I am. Not being able to tell this from a screen could have a knock on effect in the way we read a plot – as when we watch a film, we will have no conception of where it ends.

More importantly, though, who wants risk electrocution when settling down with a good book in the bath?

Sentenced to Vote



CATHERINE MOUSDALE

Lock 'em up and you throw away the key to prisoner rehabilitation

It makes me physically ill even to contemplate having to give the vote to anyone who is in prison'. Such were the words

of David Cameron in backing the decision of the House of Commons to oppose prisoners' rights to democratic participation.

This development sets the Government at odds with a 2005 Strasbourg ruling that declares the current UK blanket ban on convict voting incompatible with Article 3 of Protocol 1. The ensuing constitutional implications are undeniably going to be difficult to stomach, but in terms public policy, is the potential enfranchisement of the prison population really so nauseating?

Art 3 of Protocol 1 confers the right to 'the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature'. This right may be qualified by government measures if they pursue a legitimate aim and do so in a way that strikes a proportionate balance between the right and competing public policy considerations. The Grand Chamber allowed that the relevant domestic law pursues a legitimate aim but asserted that its application is disproportionate.

The judgment points to the arbitrariness of the ban in the form MPs seek to maintain as failing to accord Article 3 appropriate weight. It objects to prisoners whose crimes are of different gravity being alike deprived of the right and also to the fact that some prisoners under custodial sentence could have received a community penalty for the same offence and retained the right to vote under the latter. The rationale underlying the disenfranchisement of 'anyone who is in prison' already starts to fall apart. The decision does not compel the UK to allow all prisoners to vote but makes it incredibly difficult to justify continued imposition of a blanket ban.

However, in a sense broader that

that conferred by the legal phrase, does disenfranchisement of prisoners really pursue a 'legitimate aim'?

The first policy consideration advanced to the European Court by the previous government was that the measure pursues the aim of preventing crime by sanctioning civic responsibility and respect for the rule of law. This is rooted in the idea, predominant since the early 1970s, that punishment of crime is a communication between society and offender. The imposition of a deserved sanction allows society to demonstrate to an offender the gravity of his/her offence and the offender can choose to respond to the censure of society by striving to respect the rule of law thereafter.

The communication embodied in disenfranchisement is that society wishes to exclude prisoners from participation in its life. Research demonstrates the importance of community support in preventing recidivism amongst released offenders. If a released prisoner has no links in the community, no home, no job, and no support for drug and alcohol problems he is more likely to revert to crime.

Reinforcing a sense of being outside the local community by disallowing participation in election of the local representative surely does not incentivise offenders to participate in the order of civic responsibility upon release. It also communicates a mentality of exclusion to the general public, further weakening community support. This can only have a detrimental impact on crime rates and the aim is no longer so legitimate in light of its impotence.

The second policy consideration forwarded as a 'legitimate aim' of disenfranchisement is to confer

extra punishment. The notion of communication is important in an ethical sense as well as having a potential impact on crime prevention. Ghandi once said that the state of a nation's prisons is reflective of the state of its society. Disallowing prisoners the vote represents and fosters an ethos of exclusion, apposite to social cohesion.

The prison population is relatively small and during the recent debate, ex-prisoners have told reporters that they are apathetic and may not have voted whilst in prison even if they had the opportunity. Despite this, the message of exclusion conveyed by denial of the vote has practical and ethical consequences.

'Tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' has long been the rhetoric of the criminal justice system. The former part, retributive in its end, has been well tackled by successive governments. The latter part, with a holistic goal, recognising the need for investment in better social support for those affected by poverty, family breakdown, cognitive deficit and other proven causal factors, has received less systematic attention.

An accepted mentality of placing prisoners outside society makes marginalisation of their interests more easily digestible. This is unjust. Democratic participation is fundamental to the rule of law and when it is eroded without solid justification the result is injustice. It is for this reason that the attitude of the House of Commons is so unpalatable.

Let us hope that David Cameron does not end up having to confer the right to vote on prisoners: we would not want him to be physically ill in such close proximity to suffering a severe bout of verbal diarrhoea.



Ghandi once said that the state of a nation's prisons is reflective of the state of its society.

Wearing your faith on your sleeve

Surmising on the rise of electric blue hoodies around Cambridge...

OLIVIA CRELLIN



This term, as I dutifully participate in the various and very important seminars, lectures, library sessions necessary to the not-unpleasant-finalities of final year, I have started to notice more familiar unfamiliar faces flitting around the Sidgwick Site than I had previously thought existed.

There is something happening... there is a new bunch of beaming students that I have never seen before. The new bunch of beaming students is not what is grabbing my eye – it is the bright blue hoodies that they are wearing.

In matching outfits complete with a term calendar of events on their backs – a human sandwich board of doctrinal goodness – I have discovered previously camouflaged members of Cambridge's Christian Unions.

My initial reaction is good for them. And then... my goodness, I never realized there were so many Christians about! What a pleasant but surprising revelation! Our modern world can have you duped on this point.

Slowly, however, as I take a

desperate mid-afternoon lunch at the Sidgwick Buttery, my admiration, or rather friendly indifference, starts to sour.

In the corner of the buttery a daisy chain of turquoise hoodies, with the promising titles of questionable talks (such talks are always enticingly titled as questions), catches my eye.

They appear to be mumbling into their coffees, stirring up an aura of hocus pocus that I immediately recognize as an impromptu prayer group. The table I was aiming for, next to this cackle of Christians, I hold back from and let another group occupy.

I guess my problem with Christians wearing their faith quite literally on their sleeve is that I fail to find any notion of credibility in such a uniform statement, such a mass operation. My stereotypical prejudices against evangelical Christians of this ilk suddenly and unhappily whirr into motion.

Despite such apprehensions having been acquired first-hand following a period of ultimately traumatic soul-searching, I do not revel in my feelings of disapproval. I am not an atheist. My objection is resolutely

not about religious belief but rather social methods.

You see for me, these holy hoodies do not float through the faculty replete with the angelical glow of guitar-strumming redemption, but flash in my mind as an uneasy warning.

Why can't Christianity exist in doing good and not broadcasting itself as a part of a many-pronged recruiting campaign?

Maybe I am sickeningly, culturally Church of England and need gothic aesthetics in order to inhale the safe sane whiff of God, but I cannot help feel that if people with a desire to spread the word of God got on with it, by silently acting on the word of God, it would be the non-believers putting real, not rhetorical questions, to their church-going friends.

Maybe "culture" is quite an important word in this debate. Historically conditioned since the moment England split from the Catholic Church under Henry VIII, mainstream Protestantism has always eschewed outward shows of religion as social aberration, creating an image of religion in Britain which is a secular, but more importantly, private affair.

The last time non-conformists really caused a stir was back during the Civil War under Oliver Cromwell: a war which saw the creation of, among others, Quakers, Baptists and Muggletonians.

With the rise of other faiths in our multicultural Britain, should Christian communities be working harder than ever to maintain England's religious identity in the face of imported religions such as Islam?

There is the worry among many that one day church bells will cease to ring and the call to prayer will be the standard sound associated with British faith. In Lebanon, such a situation already causes friction: a mosque is built; a church built next door – a storey higher. A set of matching society hoodies is really no big deal, then?

But I still can't seem to let go to the notion that these hoodies do more harm than good!

Evidently they appear to be registering at least a morsel of attention, but is it for the right reasons?

Either way, I implore you to realise that this debate is much more than just a matter of appearances.

Ten Commandments: Terry Sanderson lists ten reasons why Secularism is essential for Britain

PRADEEPA SIVANTHIRAN



1. Secularism protects religious belief and believers in an uncertain world

Secularism is sometimes portrayed as anti-religious, which is wrong. Secularism's primary purpose is to protect freedom of religious belief and practice. It ensures religion's independence and freedom from state interference. The greatest secular constitution is that of the United States. Its establishment clause reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." Under this law every religion can flourish without fear or favour or interference from the Government.

2. Secularism protects the right to self-determination

All people should be able to determine for themselves what they believe, who they are and how they will live their lives. In a secular state it should be impossible for one religious group to write into law any coercive requirements that impact on people who do not share their beliefs. It reasserts the rights and dignity of the individual over the vagaries of group identity, particularly sectarian identity, which often mask deep injustices (particularly towards women.)

3. Secularism protects free expression

Religious fundamentalists often feel that their beliefs are entitled to special exemption from the rough and tumble of debate in an open democracy. They often ask that their doctrines receive special protection against "offence" or "defamation." We believe that such protections are a severe threat to free speech. Under a secular constitution, no such exclusive protections would be granted.

4. Secularism ensures that there is only one legal system that serves us all

We should cherish our democratic institutions, which guarantee that every citizen is equal under the law – the same law. However, some members of religious groups demand parallel legal systems based on their religious creeds. Creating more than one legal system in this

country will bring disadvantage to other minorities and to women.

The secular legal system protects all people equally. It must not be compromised.

5. Secularism protects religion from state interference

Under our present system of establishment, the State still has the power to interfere in the affairs of the Church of England. It can dictate the appointment of bishops and the laws governing the internal workings of the Church have to be approved by parliament. The Church should be free to run its own affairs without interference from any outside body, so long as it abides by the secular law.

6. Secularism protects the state from theocracy

Religion can harbour political ambition and this is not always healthy for democracy. History tells us what the consequences can be when religion becomes enmeshed in the political process. We can see theocracies operating in other parts of the world and observe the injustices, corruption and persecutions that are endemic within them. Secularism protects the state from religions that seek to impose their doctrines

by law.

7. Secularism is the bedrock of a truly just democracy

In a secular democracy all are equal citizens before the law and parliament. No religious or political affiliation brings advantage or disadvantage. This ensures that everyone can have an equal opportunity to prosper on their own merits, and no religious preference will push them back or forward.

8. Secularism protects believers and non-believers alike from persecution

When on religion takes power, other religions are disadvantaged. We see from events in theocratic countries in the Middle East that when one religion becomes the state – as in Iran and Saudi Arabia – minority religions are persecuted. Christians in these countries are punished because of their religion. This experience has also been part of British history. We can protect ourselves from such a situation ever arising again by instituting a secular constitution that prevents any religion taking over the functions of the state.

9. The public space we share cannot be colonised by one

opinion

There are spaces and institutions in the public realm that we must all share: hospitals, schools, the police, local authorities. It is essential that these institutions remain secular so that no-one can be denied their services on the grounds of what they do or do not believe. A secular constitution would guarantee that none of our shared spaces could ever be colonised by a single opinion that becomes exclusive and excluding.

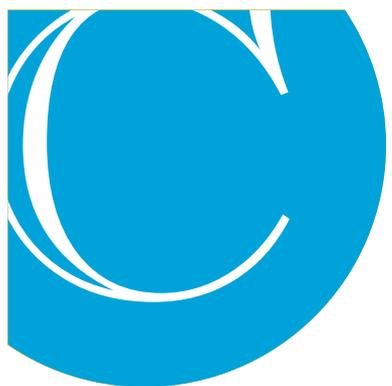
10. Secularism recognises the changing demographics of a nation, but does not allow those with minority status to suffer disadvantage

Britain is changing fast, whether we like it or not. We have to live together peacefully, without permitting any single ideology or theology to dominate. Secularism protects all minorities from exclusion from the national life. Whatever people's religion or belief, colour or sex, secularism will ensure that whatever happens in society, the state will never be used as a means of attacking them

TERRY SANDERSON IS THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

the essay

All people should be able to determine for themselves what they believe and how they will live their lives



CULTURE

I have a problem. It's a pretty big one at that. I feel the need to indulge my dirty habit four to five times a day, which costs me a small fortune. It all started innocently enough – I was a young man, living on my own for the first time. “Go on!” I thought. “Everyone’s doing it!” But one turned into two turned into twenty. The worst part was everyone was doing it. Maybe there’s a small minority who know when enough is enough; if so, I’ve never seen them. Everyone else is shelling over their hard-earned cash (read: loan) for another little bag filled with leaves. I am, of course, talking about tea addiction.

On a shelf in my room that should be reserved for books is an unnecessarily vast collection of teas. It’s a disease – I can’t help myself buying more and more varieties. Every time I walk through the market square, the man beckons me over with his soft, familiar patter to peddle his wares and boom! Next thing I know, I’m walking home with three different varieties of Orange Pekoe. I half-forget them next to the Yerba Mate (which is horrible, for the record) until weeks later when I’m looking for my fix. Worse still, it makes you lose perspective – when I was told that

Totally Addicted to Tea

Food & Drink editor **Andrew Tindall’s** battle with binge (tea) drinking

nothing positive could be said of my essay “for all the tea in China,” I briefly considered making a counter-offer.

It’s an affliction that affects your friends. Whereas once the prospect of a cuppa and a slice of cake was enough to bring coffee-drinkers running, now they’re put off at thought of having to endure half an hour of ‘ahh – flowery, spicy with subtle ginger and rose’. Even worse is when another teaholic is skulking around and we engage in metaphorical dick-measuring contests, somehow finding merit in who has more varieties of Earl Grey. Of them, I scoff – they probably can’t tell the difference between my teas. The sad thing is that, frankly, neither can I.

I’m sure I’m not alone in this disgustingly middle-class addiction – from personal experience I’d hazard that the average number of tea varieties in a Cambridge student’s room is greater than 2 even if you omit the crazy hoarders like me. It’s a gateway drug, of course, to buying silver tea infusers and bone china teacups (which you’ll swear by up until you have to do the washing up or use a mug). It all seems a bit unnecessary: I’ve never had

a craving for First Flush Darjeeling that couldn’t be satisfied by Assam, and I pick between them seemingly at random. Yet to fall into my trap and fetishise the providence of what goes into your cup is to miss the point entirely.

The real attraction, like that of a covertly cadged cigarette, is those five minutes of peace and quiet. Who doesn’t feel comforted by a tannic sip of lukewarm, over-brewed green tea in the library at 2 am? Or a misjudged camomile and lavender infusion during a frantic work day? We all lead busy lives (whether we broadcast it or not) and sometimes forget to devote a little time to ourselves. Why do we insist on adulterating it with a layer of pretence that is all so easily forgotten when the pressure is really on? By all means put the kettle on, but for God’s sake, just have PG Tips like a normal human being!



Procrastination Station: IV

This week, **Ellie Kendrick** and **Adam Ryder** attempt to introduce 16,000 jelly beans into the procrastination equation

As of last week, we second-years are halfway through our degrees. And how far we have come! We are now masters in hastily fabricating summaries of unread texts. We have transformed the grovelling excuse email into an art form. Our shirking skills have been sharpened to point-blank precision. Yes, with age comes responsibility, and with responsibility comes a word count of zero. But all is not lost. There’s still time to waste. Dawdlers and dalliers, unite and take comfort in: The Fantasy Dinner Party Plan.

Adam and I bonded over first-year ritualistic steak-massaging sessions. Now that we live together, gastronomic essay-evasion has become a way of life. The more extravagant the meal, the more effectively work is avoided. At the beginning of second year we decided to throw a dinner party: what better way to while away those precious remaining hours than languishing in gluttony?

But, alas, two terms in and this event has never actually materialised. Our greatest culinary achievement thus far has been an unfortunately anatomical *moules marinières*, which, apart from the magnificent time-wasting potential of scrubbing several kilos of ruggedly bearded mussel, did some serious damage to our hosting aspirations. We even got a little overexcited after watching a re-run of Heston Blumenthal’s Christmas feast and narrowly avoided incineration while testing our scanty

facilities to the limits.

This is all about to change. Ellie and Adam are planning a dinner party, and this time it’s really going to happen: an extravaganza more outrageous than that which Coleridge’s opium-clouded unconscious could conjure. The guest list has been drawn up. The invitations sent. The menu perfected to within an inch of its exotic little life. Forget John’s May Ball, this is where the party’s at. And only two days to do it? Sounds fine to me. And that essay? It can wait! Who needs a degree when you have a career as socialite/party planner/*bon viveur par excellence* to look forward to?

Adam has been placed in charge of decorations. Ellie in charge of food. A perfect synthesis of taste and taste. What could go wrong? Silks! Incense! Belly dancers writhing to a snake charmer’s bulbous flute! After much excited noun-shouting, we retire to our separate quarters – the early night a smugly self-justifiable recourse for any seasoned procrastinator.

The Day of the Feast

12pm We both oversleep. Adam’s going to head down to Mill Road for saris and spices in a flash – as soon as he’s caught up on Season IV of *The Tudors* – oh, perhaps a bit of ermine would be nice for the dais? Actually, what is ermine? Or a dais for that matter? Just a quick glance at Wikipedia to find out... Ellie, meanwhile, begins to collate

recipes. Oh really? Jamie Oliver has a blog now? Let me just skim through that for inspiration...

5pm The day draws on. Adam has spent the last four hours meandering around an internet encyclopaedia to an article listing all sixteen thousand varieties of jellybeans. It’s Sunday night; the shops are about to close, and not a piece of velvet in sight. What to do? Blame Ellie!

Too late. She’s burrowed down for an early-afternoon snooze filled with herby hallucinations of ever-more outrageous seasoning combinations.

8pm The doors are locked in a desperate attempt to bar all visitors and we consider promulgating rumours of our emigration. We skulk to our rooms in shame while the baked beans simmer mournfully on the hob. Nothing to do but admit our failure: Procrastination has had her wicked way once again.

We are beginning to accept, now, that the dinner will never happen because a) it would bankrupt us; and b) it would probably be illegal. Yet we can scrape a little comfort from this charred pan of postponement: at least this way we have an endless source of procrastinatory planning pleasure at our disposal.

WEEKLY
PROCRASTINATION AT
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n. a person who is self-indulgent in their fondness for sensuous luxury

Have you ever thought about how space affects time? What I have in mind has very little to do with physics, but a lot to do with our experience of life. Everyone knows that spatial distance and temporal distance are correlated – if you live five hundred metres away in St Johns it only takes me a couple of minutes to get to you from Trinity (ed. the example is purely theoretical; this author would never actually go to John’s). What is less obvious is the way in which Cambridge, as a space, affects our emotional lives.

Cambridge’s spatial density actually makes for a temporal condensation of our relationships here. The smallness of Cambridge, the nearness of everything to everything else means that you can see a girlfriend or boyfriend every day, even all day if you like, from the moment you first meet them. It is over days that relationships in Cambridge unfold, rather than over the weeks they might take in the capital, and this is also the reason that they can be so intense; we wonder why Cambridge relationships are so often heated and tumultuous – it is because we are all squeezed together in such a small melting pot. Moreover, this spatial closeness is compounded by an automatic social and cultural closeness at first meeting; another Cambridge student is not a stranger in a London club – there is immediately much more you have in common – and going back to his or hers usually means visiting a College you have been to before, rather than a flat on a street you haven’t. Indeed, with regard to the practical considerations of love affairs, Cambridge acts as stimulant, or steroid. There isn’t an hour-long taxi ride for you to sober up and reconsider the choice you are making, or during which the moment might be lost.

Such spatial closeness not only increases the intensity of relationships, but also their number and frequency. Whereas in London I might have one or two engagements a day, in Cambridge you can find your diary

bursting with social commitments, not including all those people you run into incidentally. This higher frequency, though, can make each encounter, perhaps each relationship, less significant, sandwiched as they are between many others, and the effect of this is to create social amnesia of a sort that I have never witnessed anywhere else. The result of Cambridge’s closeness is that everything happens bloody fast, and the result of everything happening bloody fast is that things get forgotten very quickly. People who cheat on their partners are absolved in a couple of days, not for possessing greater moral virtue than their UCL equivalent, but because their deeds are buried in the vast volume of stories and events that Cambridge supplies. We are so busy here that days feel like weeks, weeks like months, and what happened two days ago in Cambridge is already a hundred hellos and goodbyes away, where in London it might be just four.

A great French philosopher of time, Jean-Marie Guyau, comments that: “If you want to lengthen the perspective of time, then fill it, if you have the chance, with a thousand new things.” The more various and unusual your activities, the longer the stretch of time you have experienced will appear in your memory – this is why ten days spent city-hopping seem not only more vivid, but actually longer than ten days on the beach. Unfortunately, the more time you spend in a place, the less various and unusual your activities there seem, and time begins to speed up; it begins to shorten in the memory. Now halfway through my third year, Cambridge is rattling by at several times the pace it travelled at when I first arrived. John Archibald Wheeler, a theoretical physicist who worked on general relativity, who wrote that “time is what stops everything from happening at once”. He had obviously never been to Cambridge.

PETER LEGGATT



ARTS IN VERSE

Poems about works of art have a venerable tradition. From Homer's ekphrasis of the shield in the *Iliad* to W.H. Auden's 'Musée des Beaux Arts', poets have looked to art to write about life. See and read what Cambridge students have to say about works of art and artefacts in the city

Untitled

Inspired by Wordsworth's life mask

by James Patton

Are these the eyes through which the torrent of light and things older than men and the new-born newly sprung wells of French blood flowed? You are shut, lids sunk like melted-over caves. We all know, watching, peering into this cast which touched cast which touched skin, and will never let another breath in, that you are only plaster, only a mass of clay. And yet that sagged mouth, those lids bulbously pregnant with centuries-sleep, so undulant, half-inflated like a bladder. You are plaster but you are too ugly to be art. And as a photograph could almost whirl into a film with a shake, those lids, those flaps of skin want to wobble into a burp, a slurpy cough, blinking plaster from these eyes, picking it out of your nose. I want to fling you just to see you break, to kill this thing less perfect than human, less and sickeningly more than your ivory-tower self.



Wordsworth's life mask.,
St John's Library

© FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

Morgante

Inspired by Giambologna's 'Morgante'

by Susanna Langsdale

Achondroplastic bandiness:
porcine belly –
such a funny little bronze, not like us!
Simone has bemoaned our immanency,
matter of blood and roots.
We are fecund as the soil
but there is no gold in seed bearers!
Let's don artful gold masks
and try to be dutiful wearers!
We should suck, lick, gorge on big toes
(pushed through holes in the gold)
from the auriferous feet of the Duke.

Let's mock Morgante!
Lost wax! Malfatto! Deformed!
Fruitless in gold:
he is as beast in bronze,
a woman? –
but his lips are not lush, babe;
his hips, doll, are not swell;
and he does not like your jokes one bit.
Not a woman then? –
"He is bronze" Etruria roars.
"No mask for him" the Duke proclaims
"But gold masks for all the bronzen women."

Cup and spigot, but no mask for Morgante,
for a freak is cast, luckily, in bronze.



Giambologna, *Morgante*, 1560-1630

Marlene Rolfe, *Kitchen Table*, oil on canvas, 1997

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND NEW HALL ART COLLECTION



Untitled

Inspired by Marlene Rolfe's *Kitchen Table*

by Angela Lui

We always eat our eggs sunny side up,
Little yellow smiles on shiny white plates,
Catalogue-cut colours, designed to please
The lazy camera or unfocused lens;

The cherries on that vinyl tablecloth
You bought because you thought it homey,
Bright red like bloodlust, or a mockery;
Cherries are not my favourite fruit.

I touch your empty cup and feel how wrong
Two lives can look plugged side by side –
Then scrub it hard, watch soap suds burst,
For fear of falling down the drain

For fear of seeing truth in distant eyes,
In crimson cracks wherein we drop;
Wrought not from words, their lustre lost,
But from disdain and utter loneliness

Which strip down through the paint and we
Are left with black and white; our eggshell life
On which we try to paste our happy snaps
Snaps.

Dead Presidents

Inspired by a Denarius

by Sam Gould

I think you were weak and you stumbled upon an act that became a tragedy that became yours...raised around the very daggers that took from you your father
et tu Brutus? he quips and CLAP
off goes the very gun that's aimed squarely at your jaws
aimed at Lee Harvey Brutus and worse than a gun or a dagger
a thing that can freeze time
trapped in the moment that's his not yours
you become a character with tragic flaws
for Shakespeare
and like Gavril Princip,
you've got TB in Vienna,
no torture but
no way to go for a regicide.
you think
that you're a moment
just a moment
and a moment cannot hide.

The metal captures you in time, in the house in March that became murder that became more...in its metal the shock that was your own blood in the presidential
et tu Brutus? he exclaims and BAM
you're done for eternity and the Republics a sham
bringing Antony and worse than loverboy
Octavian, Augustus
"they've forgotten us"
whispers Princip as he dies of cold in a cell
no way to go for a regicide
but you're a moment
just a moment
and a moment cannot hide.



Denarius showing Marcus Brutus Junius the Younger, best known for taking a leading role in Caesar's assassination, Greece or Assia 42-3 BC

The Exhibition of Architecture

Louise Benson talks to Barry Bergdoll, Professor of architectural history at Columbia University and Chief Curator of Architecture and Design at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City



How do you fit a city in a building? A house in another house? For Professor Bergdoll, the interest of the architectural exhibition lies in the layering of such spaces. It is at once an ongoing challenge for Bergdoll in his own role as curator at the MoMA and, in his most recent research, an archaeological delving into the history of the exhibiting of architecture. Certainly Bergdoll's art history background in Cambridge is at play here, clarified himself a few moments after we sit down: 'I am not an architect: I am an architectural historian'. It seems that he is exploring a reciprocal relationship between art and architecture, and a transplanting of the civic context of architecture into the cultural realm of the gallery. Though, such a shifting of contexts puzzles me in its practicalities: I still want to know, how do you fit a building in a building? Bergdoll explains that for him, it is the expansion of architecture to a larger cultural definition that is central to overcoming such a problem. I ask, then, if it is a necessary representational process that must be followed

in order to convey architectural ideas and spaces. He agrees, describing how, with a few notable exceptions, you can't actually display the end product of architecture. "I think that contrary to art exhibitions, in an architectural exhibition the curator is often an interpreter of things that aren't there: the buildings, the way they interact with the larger environment." Such exceptions are something brought up in Bergdoll's Slade lecture series stemming from this exploration of architectural exhibitions, wryly named 'Out of Site: In Plain View' – when asked about the effect of removing architecture from its original context, he stresses the latter part of his title in positing that "there is undoubtedly something that is gained" in widening the scope of architecture through the gallery context, both in terms of the medium and the audience reached. I am enchanted by his description of images of buildings displayed on a scale so large you could almost walk into them, brought about, as he explains, by developments in photographic enlargement and printing. He tells me of how New York slums were transported at the turn of the twentieth century to an uptown gallery, laughingly detailing how even the slum cockroaches too were moved. On occasion, it seems, a building can indeed fit inside another

building. Evidently there are countless curatorial choices that must be made in the construction of an exhibition: not only the medium in which the architecture will be displayed – full scale or otherwise – but decisions regarding the gallery space itself on lighting, the order in which works are displayed, and any accompanying text. The gallery becomes a simulacrum, a space representing another space. When I ask Bergdoll about this shift in the gallery from the actual to the imagined, it is with an infectious excitement that he explains the capacity of certain extraordinary images of future architecture to have actually more influence on public perception and writing on the history of art and architecture than an actual constructed building. He leans forward and asserts: "Ideal architecture is not simply a paper dream; it has incredible power to both catalyse and to focus debate." And so the accessibility of an exhibition, I say, must be of central importance in ensuring such debate. The challenge is to overcome the distancing effect that the gallery can have when we walk through the doors of, say, Bergdoll's own prestigious MoMA, or the Tate Modern over here. He agrees: "I feel that if the exhibition is not a medium for assuring a public engagement in the making of architecture then it falls short." It is a responsibility

that he talks about in relation to his own role as curator, and I begin to wonder how far this responsibility extends: does the curator become more prominent than the architect being exhibited? Here, Bergdoll points out the fact that individual architects are extremely famous, giving such examples as Renzo Piano and Frank Gehry as names known to a large educated public – "so called starchitects". But doesn't this dominance of certain celebrity architects make the role of the curator even more important? Is it not the curator who constructs the status of certain architects? "It's a conundrum, because curators and exhibitions have certainly been in the last couple of decades part of what one might call 'the economy of fame'" – and, I suggest, "the economy of cultural capital". "Exactly," he replies, "in my job as a curator I have an incredible position of strength: [for] anything that I do under the rubric of the Museum of Modern Art, I find that I get an incredible amount of attention. It's an incredible platform. Sometimes I do feel that there's an enormous responsibility – it is not a prestigious platform to be squandered."

READ THE INTERVIEW IN FULL AT
www.varsity.co.uk



You shall go to the May Ball

Leonie James reveals the secret perks, and hidden drawbacks, of working at Cambridge's wildest parties

May week is incredible. It's also damned expensive, which is why working at balls can be a lifesaver. The average ball costs £130. This goes up to £150 for the likes of Magdalene and John's, and even if you have the money unless you've got the connections, honey, you ain't getting a ticket. Security at balls is tough. The perimeters are closely watched, wristbands cut off and removed when a guest leaves the ball early and some colleges even paint the walls with green paint that stains would-be crasher's clothes. Unless you're a nightclimber or good friends with a security guy, you're probably not getting in – as a guest at least. If you've missed the proverbial boat, trying out as a worker could be the way forward.

Every ball has its own system for workers, but as a general rule the duties fall into six different categories: food and drink, security, ents, general, set-up and clear-up. Prepare yourself for a less than ideal task however. Last year at John's, a friend was delighted to be assigned to the Shakeaway stand only to spend the night washing up used glasses. Conversely, having accepted the same job title, I had a great time serving Baileys to drunk ball guests. You can't be proud if you're going to work at a ball. The jobs can be dull, the guests rude and the shifts long. You're likely to have attended a ball the night before and working through the night is testing.

A tip from those who've worked before is to read the small print. Not all balls allow workers to attend as guests. At Queens' workers have to spend their

breaks in a designated area, away from the ball. Jesus is no longer operating a policy that allows workers to attend the ball for the part of the night they are not working. There are still some balls which allow you to attend as a guest, however. This may be on a half-on, half-off basis. For instance last year at John's, workers worked for two hours then had two hours off and were free to enjoy the ball, alcohol consumption excluded. There was no pay, but attending the ball in that capacity was effectively your pay packet. Others have two shifts for workers, and you only work one of them, enjoying the ball as a guest for the other. Again, those working the second half of the ball won't be able to drink. Furthermore some, notably Clare May Ball and King's Affair, don't allow second-half workers to attend the first half, with them instead get paid for their second-half shift. It's up to you what you would prefer to do, but it is worth thinking about.

What you want to do may depend on the event itself. Some, like the King's Affair, are incredible to go to as a guest, but as a worker you can't drink. If you're attending the second half of the Affair it is worth bearing in mind that the decorations aren't as good as other balls – and King's isn't known for good food. Whereas if you have half an evening at Clare you get to see a beautifully decorated College, and if you're at Trinity you get the pick of some excellent cuisine.

The second part of the small print relates to money. If you just want to get paid, then Emma may be the best way forward, offering £6 per hour. Not all balls have released information on workers' pay yet, but bar workers at

Emmanuel will earn 30p more per hour than workers at King's. If you want to work and not attend a ball, choose Jesus over John's to earn an extra £25. Checking these finer details is a good plan before signing yourself up to anything. Something else to remember is the deposit. The amount on the signed cheques you have to hand over varies per ball, as do the circumstances in which those cheques will be cashed.



Double-check this to avoid a nasty surprise.

The final official bit: the finer details of what you're actually expected to do. Some balls like breaks more than others do. Queens' gives you two hours of breaks in a 12-hour shift; Jesus allows you two 30-minute breaks in a nine-hour shift. Lastly, check your call time. John's workers last year had to be there at 5.30pm so the College could be turned

into a fortress with you on the inside. Jesus expects workers to be there at 6pm for shifts starting at 8pm.

From previous ball workers the consensus is that the more organised the ball, the better it is to work there. Where ball committees hired too many workers, people found themselves with 'non-jobs' for hours on end. If organisation isn't up to scratch, you're the one left to deal with angry May Ball guests. Sidney might have made a canal last year but behind the scenes things weren't nearly so pretty: food began to run out before midnight and the tea and coffee stall ran out of tea, milk, sugar and, at one point, electricity. To replenish these rather essential elements the committee member with the key to the refrigerated truck had to be tracked down. He had a tendency to wander off and no one ever knew where he was. Similarly, one girl I spoke to was on the bar at King's Affair at 3am when the alcohol ran out. Compare this to John's, where upon the dropping of a tray of glasses, the 'emergency response team' was immediately radioed and everything sorted out within minutes. These are the kind of things that can make all the difference to your night.

Warnings aside, working a May Ball is a fantastic way of seeing it without coughing up enough to put a deposit on a house and can be a lot of fun, so get applying – quickly, as application dates are passing as we speak.

MORE ESSENTIAL INFO ON WORKING AT MAY BALLS AT
www.varsity.co.uk



The Best Deals

Pay per hour: Tit Hall clear up, £40 for 4 hours' work, option to extend for £10/hour if necessary.

Shortest shift ('during ball' work): Tit Hall: 3 hours on, 3 hours off.

Most breaks: Queens' and King's both work out at 10 minutes off for every hour worked. Queens' have a 12-hour shift with two hours of breaks; King's has a 4-hour shift with forty minutes off.

Getting in: John's. Not worth it for the money, but effectively a right to bypass the system.

Attending the ball: King's, 4 hours' work; free at 1am to enjoy as a guest.

Quick money: King's clean up, only 3 hours (5am-8am). However, only £5.40 per hour.

Scariest deposit: Pembroke, 2 x £110 cheques.

Best set-up: Emma, £6 per hour.

Best during ball pay: Queens', works out at £7.50 per hour, though you will be there for 12 hours in total and see none of the ball.

Worth working for the food: John's, Trinity and Magdalene.

Can't attend the ball at all: Jesus, Pembroke, Queens'.

Half-on, half-off: Robinson, Emma, Downing, Tit Hall, Corpus, St Edmund's.



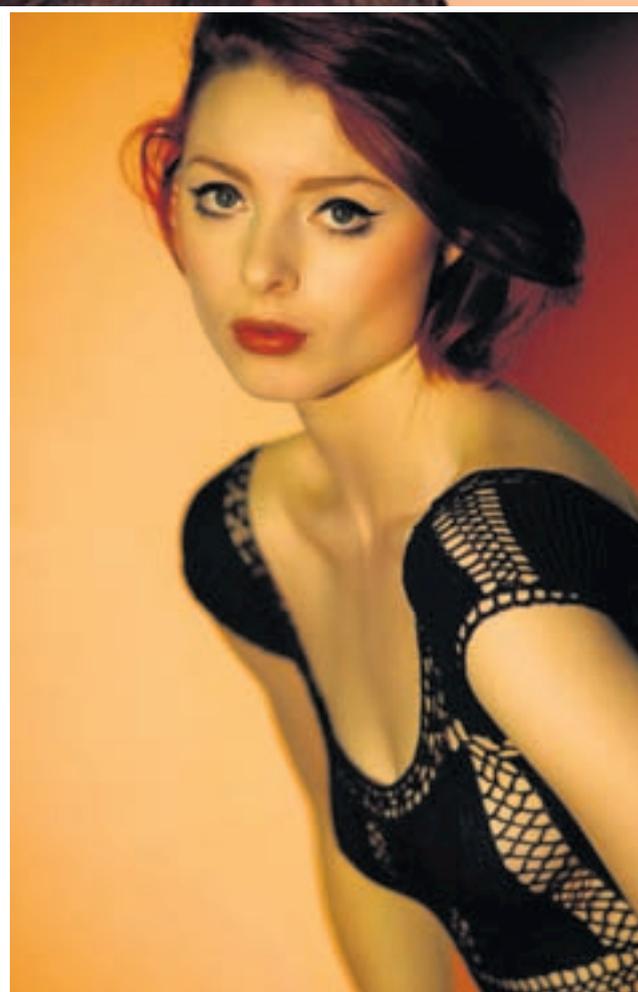
STYLISTS
Niloufar Haidari &
Rina Sawayama

PHOTOGRAPHER
Rina Sawayama

MODEL
Saoradh Favier

ROSE-TINTED

SPOTLIGHTS



Human Planet - just keeps getting better. And we thought it had reached a peak with the woman who breast-fed monkeys...



After its 2010 comeback, Christopher Kane has made our **Soda Stream nostalgia** officially ok with his sexy LFW collection. Fizzy pop once again becomes cool for the over 10s. Result.

So week five came along but then we remembered that nice little new cafe **Stickybeaks** and those blues disappeared along with the first bite. Get your beak out of the books and get stuck into the carrot cake.



Launch party overload - May Ball launch season is fully underway and what with the usual run of play, charity and God knows what other things that need to be introduced to the world via Kamar and the like, we can barely see our Facebook profiles for event invitations. 'Maybe attending'...?



It's bye bye to the Bieber phenomom bowlcut and sweep. A massively undecided VG/VB can't decide whether to commend JB for his philanthropy or find it just that little bit creepy that someone would bid for the ex-Bieber barnet in the name of charity.

Just to rub in the fact that we don't get a **half term**, we get the joy of negotiating all those charming youngsters enjoying idyllic family shopping trips and thronging the Cambridge streets. Bitter, us?



In his granny glasses and jaunty turban, Libyan fashionista **Gaddafi** gave the world a piece of his mind this week. Apparently, "protesters are giving your children drugs, they're making them drunk". If you say so, Col. G.



Stage Talk

SIOBHAN FORSHAW



This week, the word on everyone's lips seems to have been *Posh*. Perhaps that's because I live with the producer; an admittedly mitigating factor, or perhaps because the second-ever opening of the show has provoked debate and discussion beyond the dreamy spires.

It's a rare occurrence that Cambridge theatre seeks to actively engage with the world outside the bubble, and this incisive satire presents both a topical examination, and a gift of a dramatic situation for any director. Tackling the blue-blooded roots of our social elite, the play is evermore relevant at a time when ten per cent of our House of Commons were chums at Eton and the leaders of our three main political parties hail from almost identical backgrounds.

The original opening of *Posh* last year coincided with the general election, which witnessed the controversial creation of a political partnership that finds a handy connection through past involvement in these kinds of clubs. Never before have politicians faced such relentless scrutiny of their past selves, and this pressure is called upon within the production, as the boys come to uneasy terms with the idea of their own wealth and reputation. The Pitt Club – explicitly anxious about comparisons to the Bullingdon, who were once again recently embroiled in a timely piece of scandal – have come under fire again for clinging to tradition, whilst the rest of Cambridge strives to shake off the embarrassing cliché they pose.

From one sold-out show to another; *The Seagull* opens this week amidst a cloud of excitable *Daily Mail* commentary. Simon Haines's intriguing collaborative effort across the ether with Anton Chekhov promises to be a 'sinful pleasure'. Week six is awash with new writing; Tamara Micner's exciting new venture with *Fantasmagoriana* seeks to revive the Frankenstein legend, in modest parallel with Danny Boyle's visceral reimagining of *Frankenstein* at the National Theatre.

In a similar confluence between theatre and science, *The Descent of Bot* in the Judith E. Wilson studio is the latest in Rani Drew's very long list of international achievements; this week she confronts a dystopian vision concerning artificial intelligence. The studio will also play host to *The House We Grew Up In*; another experimental venture observing reconnection with the past; the pain and strange pleasure this brings.

If you're seeking light relief from intellectual probing, a whole host of comedy comes to town this week, in the various shapes of *Mexican Standoff*, new writing from the likes of last term's *Now Now*; *Hay Fever*, the classic farce worth cycling to Homerton for; and the familiar bosom of Cambridge comedy, the Footlights, welcome their Doxbridge counterparts to the ADC stage on Sunday.

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THEATRE

Posh

ADC Mainshow
(Tues 22nd - Sat 26th February)

★★★★☆

A play about the elite performed in an elite university town will always have relevance. *Posh* seeks to highlight the entrenched system of artificial privilege in Britain, and draw negative attention to the narrow stratum of society from which our political leaders are drawn. Despite claiming to be a play just as much about "ten young men finding their way though university" as it is about politics; it's the "Tory bashing" that comes through. The sheltered and self-assured superiority of the country's ruling elite and their belittling pretensions to benevolent paternalism come under heavy fire from the playwright,

... moments of brilliance ...

Laura Wade, who clearly feels there is a point that needs to be made, which she makes it stridently. *Posh* attracted much consideration on its opening last year in the run-up to the general election, and although the political messages of



MAYA BEANO

the play are still pertinent, they have inevitably lost some of their immediate relevance a year on.

Without doubt, the play was very well-produced. The direction coped admirably with the large cast, ensuring no words, or even glances, were lost amongst the crowd. Meanwhile, the set allowed for plenty of room for frolicking while maintaining the realistic atmosphere of a private dining room, and was suitably conducive to being heartily smashed up. The play sustained a good pace, exchanges of dialogue felt spontaneous and natural, and the music

in the few scene changes was particularly apt.

Although this was an ensemble piece, moments of brilliance set apart several members of the cast. John Lindsay was aloof and sinister as Jeremy, framing the puerility of the Riot Club at the heart of the play with the calculating minds and well-connected individuals such organisations produce. Jack Hudson as Toby and George Johnston as Alistair gave disquieting tirades against the less materially fortunate of this world, while Matt Kilroy interjected with some amusingly ditsy one-liners as George.

Alex Gomar, too, deserves a mention for his stylish dancing during a tense game of musical chairs. However, the landlord's character could have been developed further to provide a starker contrast with the Rioters, and his reaction to the destruction of his gastro-pub could have been more convincing.

The characters may well have charisma but they utterly lack charm – I found myself laughing at them far more than with them. The ensemble fulfilled the requirements of the script, portraying a room full of the nasty, snobbish and filthily-rich types that everyone warns you are swarming around in Oxford and Cambridge. Nevertheless, such a depiction does not ring true for a Cambridge audience, who knows that this, for the most part, is untrue. It is here that the play begins to fall down, as it pushes the action beyond the bounds of plausibility, meaning that the play loses some of its resonance. While it has the potential to make a point about the elite's sense of entitlement, it makes the issue increasingly hard to relate to as the action becomes ever more debauched and finally violent.

This is a well-performed production of a play with strong contemporary relevance, but it is ultimately betrayed by the overtly politicised nature of the script. *Posh* makes a fair point about an unfair world, but does so in a way which is not particularly convincing.

RICHARD STOCKWELL

THEATRE

Jacques and his Master

ADC Lateshow
(Weds 23rd - Sat 26th February)

★★★★★

Never has bleakness been so much fun. After last week's excursions into this kind of theatre offered up dancing love hearts and people gazing sullenly from bins I was wary of another one. I need not have worried. Milan Kundera is more whimsical than many of his compatriots in the realm of the absurd, and only sometimes less serious: this production is faithful to his spirit of mischief, conceived and performed with grace, wit and enrapturing vivacity.



GEORGE SHAPTER

The partnership between roguish servant and his musingly stupid master is central, and here it flourishes. Harry Carr cannot be said to steal the show, for as Jacques it is rightfully his, but his acting as well as his casting makes him the dominant figure. In a play where the characters do almost as much watching and listening as the audience, to reminiscent monologues and the re-enactment of them, his expressively mobile face and staring, almost protuberant eyes are a rich and responsive source of comedy. When he does speak his boyish scampiness is very plausible, at once knowing and more subtly naïve, though the one-liners are fired

off smoothly and with sardonic affection. Best of all he achieves something rare and usually problematic – a sense of progression. There is by the end a wisdom and generosity which was earlier implicit but as yet unrealised.

Patrick Garety, almost as good, combines an employer's noblesse (not unaided by the gulf in height) with an indulgent respect for his servant's resourcefulness. His lubriciousness has a paradoxical innocence, and yet stays – indeed, becomes – amusedly aware of itself. Once again, character is not allowed to remain static: the gullible, almost insipid figure of the retrospective scenes becomes more plushly contemplative.

Performed with grace, wit and vivacity

Those passages in which Carr and Garety recount their earlier adventures introduce a splendid supporting cast. Remembered figures flit on to the blue-lit back half of the stage as the dialogue continues up front, simulating just the fusion of past and present the play so insists upon. The spectacle of the two 'pious' women kneeling at Vespers in what was the hayloft, beneath a kitsch but simple cross, well captures the deft and striking set work.

Garety's friend and betrayer is gloriously conniving with a debonair strut and a larynx that seems custom-made to sneer. The inevitable Kunderan marquis, who doubles as bawling barmaid, delights and when appropriate disturbs with her glamour and energy. Her lover, though excellent, is upstaged by his own velvet jacket, the jewel of an elegant production wardrobe.

The play's amused awareness of itself, though it never grates, demands almost parodic over-acting, a demand the whole cast meets well and of which Carr's performance is the best example. It's cruel to wonder if they'd be as good playing it straight, when everything is so apt and exuberant. Surrounded by chaos and coincidence their characters face a fate worse than fate, but do so with an *élan* that confounds its grimness.

BEN SLINGO

THEATRE

Some Explicit Polaroids

Corpus Lateshow
(Tues 22nd - Sat 26th February)

★★★★★

It came as a relief that the Polaroids projected onto the back of the Corpus playrooms during this wonderful production of Mark Ravenhill's 1999 play were more suggestive than explicit. Though the title might suggest a shallow portrait of debauchery, what the audience got instead was a powerful depiction of society at the advent of the new millennium: at times bleak, at others tender, always challenging, and occasionally hilarious.

The performances are uniformly strong. Aron Solomons is admirable as Nick, freshly out of prison after 15 years, cast adrift in the changed world, and struggling to come to terms with his crime. At the play's emotional high points his profound sense of frustration resounds very clearly, though he might benefit from spreading that energy through the other scenes. As his former flame Helen, Nikki Moss is entirely convincing as someone who has made a supreme effort to move beyond their old radical politics and is prepared to compromise as a local councillor, making the buses run on time. When she says she has cut bits out of herself,

you believe it. The most affecting and challenging performance, though, comes from Sam Curry as superficially super-confident gay man Tim, who behind his gloriously sneering, manipulative facade is just as desperate as the rest for a sense of place and purpose. Youness Bouzinab is brilliantly funny as the Eastern European go-go boy Tim has 'downloaded', though he also seamlessly brings out the more tender (and hurt) sides to his character

At times bleak, at others tender

Much of this post-modern ennui – Tim's declaration that they're living beyond the happy ending – might seem very 'late 1990s'. Yet the play never seems trapped in its time, and despite its apparent assertion that society has disintegrated into estranged individuals, eventually provides a way to reconciliation, some form of onward narrative, even if it is just a collection of snapshots. There are some practical issues to be resolved – the music in the final scene almost drowned out the dialogue, for instance – but this is a production that demands and provides an unusual level of critical and emotional engagement. Unless, of course, you're the drunk man in the front row who prefers to take pictures of the semi-clad actresses. But then perhaps you're just giving the play more ammunition.

PAUL MERCHANT

MILLA BASHMA



DEBATE

This House believes pornography does a good public service

Cambridge Union Society

★★★★☆

During this debate Jessi Fischer, a writer on sexuality, proclaimed that one of the worst porn shows she has ever watched showed two women going to scratch out each other's vaginas with their long, painted finger nails. Watching the first half of the Union debate was a similarly bad viewing experience: rather than concentrating on whether porn does a good public service, both sides seemed more interested in making catty attacks on the other side's credentials. Thankfully the real porn star argued her case against the industry effectively, bringing the debate closer to its climatic finish.

Porn is "like a game," according to Anna Span, Britain's first female porn director. According to Span, we should ignore the claims that porn provokes sex offenders or that the industry's workers are riddled with STDs, because apparently such facts and statistics are incorrect and easily manipulated. She insists that there is no link between porn and rape, or between children, porn and paedophiles. Conversely, porn provides, "one of the best ways to change perceptions of sexuality and to expand women's rights". Span's real anger, however, was not directed against the "moral entrepreneurs who target the porn industry," but towards Shelley Lubben,

former porn actress and now anti-porn campaigner. Span attacked Lubben's health statistics, undermined her degree and blamed her history of prostitution for her claims of cervical cancer, herpes and miscarriages. Span thrust her sharp catty claws into Lubben, presenting her as a woman who had merely joined the opposition to porn because it appeared to be more lucrative.

Span first brought the bitch into Thursday's porn debate, but the cattiness had only just begun. Fischer told us that porn is good because it "sparks public debate," but I don't think it was a debate that Fischer was after. When a young gentleman from the floor posed a point of information, she completely ignored his words and seductively flicked her hair, replying, "you and I could grab a camera right now and film whatever we want" – prompting males in the chamber to clap and laugh. This only seemed to prove the opposition's

Lubben was angry and inarticulate. She didn't hide behind prepared rhetoric

point that porn is detrimental to our society because it stops men from thinking and keeps them masturbating.

The most forceful argument of the debate came from Dr Gail Dines, lecturer and feminist activist. She is often told that "what you need, Gail Dines, is



a good fuck," but here is a woman who understands that "anti-porn doesn't mean anti-sex". She gave a graphic, powerful description of the realities of porn websites like Gonzo, where "bitches have no choice but to take it all" and where women, according to Dines, become "fuck objects". She reminded us that porn is often humiliating, degrading and brutal, and to see the effects all we had to do was watch Lubben take to the floor. She was angry and inarticulate. She didn't hide behind prepared rhetoric. She dug her heels into the ground and begged: "Please, please don't believe the lie of pornography... I've been there, done that, more than any of you have." To look at her you can see that she is right: "there is nothing glamorous about porn". It leaves you broken.

The motion was carried, but this was not because of overwhelming support but because nearly a third of the chamber abstained. Perhaps they couldn't deal with the reality of porn. In the emergency debate 'This House Would Rather Be At Oxford Than St Johns', white males brought the stereotypical Cambridge elitism to the chamber, with all its Chardonnay, Conservative Party members, May Balls, Boat Races and University Rankings. Maybe the motion was passed because the voters are too far removed to understand the real issues of porn, or maybe because porn has succeeded in deadening and dehumanising brains. Or maybe Lubben is right: only when anyone "has done as much gang bang as me" are they qualified to talk about porn.

LAURA MAYNE

MUSIC

Black Label Society

Corn Exchange

★★★★☆

Strength, Determination, Merciless, Forever... So goes the Black Label Society motto, an emblem of their brand of 'empowering' metal. I was into really heavy metal in my early teens, and even played in a few bands. However, at around age 15 the mentality of a gig not living up to expectations unless you leave bleeding strangely dissipated. BLS were just not heavy enough for me then ('cock-rock' being my favoured derisive term), and it has always struck me as paradoxical that the heavier and more technical metal bands become, the less time they waste beating their chests (which frontman Zakk Wylde regularly did in this instance), and showing off their skull tats.

As much as I prefer the less aesthetic-based aspect of the genre, BLS have undoubtedly honed their image of power to an impressive degree. Their rig was of a magnitude that the Corn



Exchange is unlikely to see again for some time, consisting of a backline of 20 Marshall stacks and a drum 'throne' raised up on nine monstrous bass cabs (which I am nonetheless sceptical were actually functional, lest the drummer's bowels gave way). All of this certainly looked the part, however I don't think that the Corn Exchange can really handle so much volume, and sound quality was somewhat diminished by the venue's cavernous reverb. Zakk's vocals were particularly hard to discern, although this was probably not an issue for more erstwhile fans.

The guitars fortunately cut through the reverberating maelstrom, and true to Zakk's reputation (having won pretty much every guitar award going), his solos were both more complex and freer

a surprisingly engaging metal experience

than on record. Their stated preference for bassists who are guitarists by trade seems anathema to the age-old saying that guitarists make poor bass players and vice versa, however in this case the occasional guitar-style bass-shredding beefed up their pinch-harmonic laden sound to great effect. Drummer Craig Nunenmacher played with suitable vigour, and exhibited all the mandatory rock stick-tricks to boot. He even recovered from a mistake during a trick by battering a cymbal with his bare hands, a true exhibition of at least Strength, Determination and Mercilessness (if not 'Forever' – whatever that means).

In short, BLS are clearly consummate showmen, and their power-based, slightly macho ethos and sound makes for a surprisingly engaging and uplifting metal experience. Zakk's playing in many ways epitomises the modern 'rock' guitar solo, and in this he did not disappoint. It's just a shame that the perennial curse of the messy-sounding metal show should hinder both a great band and venue. **JOBAN THOMAS**

LIFESTYLE

The Riverbar Steakhouse & Grill

Quayside

★★★★☆

The dark is such a shame sometimes. The Riverbar Steakhouse & Grill cries out to be eaten in on a clear day when leisurely punts can be seen lazing by on the river just beyond the expansive plate glass windows. Nonetheless, the restaurant is also open at night and perhaps it is a good thing that one can't be distracted by the view – the full focus can be on the fairly solid blend of continental and home based cuisine.

Essentially this is swept up pub fare – not a comment intended to do it down. The baked camembert to start was a delight in dairy indulgence, drooling cheesy goodness and *à point* for dipping. Antipasti cold cuts and olives were of equally delicious quality, although two artistically placed bruschetta did seem to be something of an afterthought so that the menu entry mightn't look too bare.

Sourcing food locally is clearly a point of pride (for which read explicitly stated on the menu). Clearly the cutting of food miles pays - a main course of fillet steak served on a board (perhaps a little close to being reminiscent of the butchers although satisfyingly rustic) with bowls of substantial paprika potato wedges and horseradish mash could hardly have disappointed. For those of us who are picky about their steak, it could have been a

little bloodier but then this isn't France and I do like my steak to be practically running from the plate.

Unlike a pub, it was definitely a question of dessert and not pudding. A white chocolate and cardamom mousse proved to be just the right side of the sticky/creamy divide and, whilst I tend to think of cheesecakes as something of a copout option, the smooth white expanse cut with some sharp forest fruits turned out to be surprisingly, well, good.

The menu isn't a gastronomic adventure and the food is not going to open up new vistas of epicurean delight. If someone had said 'It's a steakhouse, guess

a delight in dairy indulgence, drooling cheesy goodness

what's on the menu', you'd probably get it right. But nonetheless, this is the gratifying epitome of good food done well. Worth the price? Not if you are on a student budget, but if kindly godparents or the like are down for the weekend, they would probably be suitably impressed – not least because the wine menu is a treat.

ALICE HANCOCK

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DARREN BENNETT

**Keeping It Reel**

ALICE BOLLAND



Real talent is often hard to discern amongst the countless crappy rom-coms and clichéd thrillers which are churned out every year; yet occasionally a diamond in the rough emerges. *True Grit*'s Hailee Steinfeld is currently wowing audiences in her first leading role as the sassy Mattie Ross: with this in mind, it is worth taking a look at those performances which have kick-started the careers of some of today's most revered A-listers.

RIVER PHOENIX: Stand By Me

Rob Reiner's quintessential coming-of-age film immediately launched River's career; he won instant recognition and admiration in his role as the troubled young Chris Chambers. His performance as a young boy burdened with intense familial and psychological issues is staggeringly provocative.

WINONA RYDER: Beetlejuice

Seventeen-year-old Winona was perfectly cast in this Tim Burton classic as disturbed goth teenager Lydia Deetz, who finds solace in her suffering by befriending a myriad of deceased spirits. Winona's portrayal of teen angst is both touching and satirical, commanding high praise from audiences and critics alike.

TOM HANKS: Splash

Ron Howard's charming romantic comedy brought Tom Hanks to our screens; with the vague memory of having been rescued as a child by a mermaid, young businessman Allen returns years later to the same spot, only to fall in, again, and be rescued, again, by the beautiful Madison (Daryl Hannah).

**AL PACINO: The Godfather Trilogy**

Al Pacino is outstanding in this, his defining role as good-guy-gone-bad Michael Corleone in Francis Ford Coppola's masterpiece. His character, famous as one of the most iconic villains of film history, is incredibly complex and twisted, and Pacino's representation of such perversity and immorality is incredible.

NATALIE PORTMAN: Leon

Luc Besson's gritty thriller rocketed the young Natalie (just 14 at the time) to stardom; her portrayal of newly orphaned Mathilda is superb, balancing both her desire for revenge and her admiration (and lust) for Leon (Jean Reno), a hardened hitman who begrudgingly trains her to become an assassin.

Blues lose ground in league

The Blues fail to make the most of a golden opportunity to stop rivals UEA in the league

CAMBRIDGE	0
UEA	2

DAN WELLBELOVE
football correspondent

Victory in the Varsity match is only one of this year's goals for the Blues football team. Success in the league is another, and Monday's game at Grange Road could prove vital in determining the league champions at the end of the season. UEA and Cambridge topped the league heading into the fixture, and it was the visitors who scraped the three points that may prove decisive.

In a game of only two chances, Cambridge will feel aggrieved that both fell to the side from UEA. The Blues were, at the very least, the equal of their opponents in every aspect of the match, and can consider themselves unlucky that the ball fell kindly to their opponents twice.

The first half was a largely unmemorable affair, for which the conditions can claim much of the credit. The ball bobbed upon the uneven surface, and the players struggled to keep their footing in the persistent rain. Shots at goal were extremely infrequent, and neither keeper was typically troubled when the strikers managed to find the half a yard required. The Blues side were able to maintain possession in defence and midfield, but the final ball eluded them, as it did for much of the evening. Striker Haitham Sherif produced Cambridge's best chance of the first half, turning on



the edge of the UEA box, but the bouncing shot was saved comfortably.

In the closing minutes of the half, UEA took the lead as they capitalised upon a calamitous mistake by the Cambridge goalkeeper. Lars Boyde rushed out to clear the ball, ahead of the oncoming striker, only to miss it completely. This

“The Blues were, at the very least, the equal of their opponents in every aspect of the match”

allowed the striker to calmly finish past the defenders rushing back.

Cambridge started the second half brightly, as they sought to take advantage of space down the flanks. One such break led to a cross that was only half-cleared, but Paul Hartley shot marginally over on the half-volley.

However, this momentum was halted by the UEA ten minutes after halftime. They moved the ball quickly down the left side of midfield, evading a last ditch

sliding challenge. The ball was then played low into the box, past the striker, and into the path of the right-midfielder, arriving late, who finished confidently to make it 2-0. Captain James Day nearly replied from a corner, but was unable to connect cleanly with the header, before the game entered a momentary lull.

Halfway through the half, Cambridge shifted to three at the back, as Ross Broadway replaced Chris Peacock. From this point on, the Blues maintained the upper hand. A series of promising situations went untaken, before UEA had the ball in the net for a third time, although the ref had blown considerably earlier.

During the final minutes, Cambridge repeatedly threatened down the right, as winger Rick Totten continued to beat his opponent to the byline, although UEA typically were able to intercept the delivery. Hartley had another decent effort from outside the box before the full-time whistle, but Cambridge will rue their inability to convert their late pressure into goals.

With four games remaining, Cambridge now lie in second position, three points behind but with a game in hand. A strong finish will provide an excellent chance of promotion, as well as confidence heading into the match with Oxford.

From the Commentary Box: The line and length of a sprinkler



CHRIS HUMPLESBY
cricket correspondent

The post-Ashes utopia is well and truly over. If the ODI destruction in Australia wasn't enough, then the Netherlands brought the Three Lions crashing back down to Earth on Tuesday. Although a six wicket victory with eight balls remaining might appear relatively comfortable, there were enough moments of uncertainty to leave England with a substantial chasm to close before they meet the might of India on Sunday.

The lack of control shown by England's frontline bowlers will be the primary source of worry. The exemplary lines bowled by James Anderson down under were a distant memory in Nagpur, as the Lancashire pace-man sprayed the ball wildly in a manner reminiscent of England's famed sprinkler celebration. His bowling at the death was by far the most painful to watch, as Dutch wicketkeeper Peter Borren peppered the boundary rope with worrying ease. Ten overs for seventy-four runs will simply not suffice against Tendulkar and co.

Yet we must not take any credit from Ryan ten Doeschate, who scored a magnificent 119 for the men in orange. As a leading light on the county circuit, the Netherlands' main man is not a new name amongst the avid followers of English cricket. His astute technical stroke play and devastating power makes him a dangerous player in all forms of the game and he would make the starting XI for most international outfits.

Credit must also go to Graeme Swann. The Nottinghamshire off-spinner finished with a respectable two for thirty-five. His changes of pace and mastery of flight will be crucial if England are to be successful in the sub-continent, but his efforts

in the field put the icing on a dismal England cake. The dolly he shelled at third man characterised the entire display as severe lapses of concentration (Borren was given a reprieve as England failed to have four men inside the fielding circle) took the potency out of the Three Lions. Although we now expect exceptionally high standards after the razor sharp fielding displays in Australia, Tuesday's effort was barely beyond village.

Whilst the run chase was successful, England's batting had a "same old story" feel about it. Opening for the first time, Pietersen made a bright start before catching yet another bout of left-arm

“England's batting had a “same old story” feel about it”

spinner disease, as Seelaar snared him for 39. Strauss meanwhile made a breezy 88 before mistiming a pull shot to deep backward square leg. Trott and Bell continued the pattern of getting in and getting out, leaving Paul Collingwood and Ravi Bopara to seal the victory for England with some aggressive stroke play.

Whilst the front-foot, back-foot combination of Pietersen and Strauss complements each other nicely at the top of the order, I can't help but feel the management have it wrong. I would much prefer to see Bell take the batting lead. The combination of a hard new ball and his unparalleled form would ensure a positive start for the Three Lions, leaving Pietersen to unleash his brute force in the second half of the innings. Only time will tell if they have got it right.

Blues belt Oxford Varsity goes swimmingly

CAMBRIDGE	5
OXFORD	0

KAZUTO SHIOMITSU
karate correspondent

Cambridge University Karate Club held off the Oxford University Karate Club to win their Varsity match for the fourth consecutive year at the Chesterton Sports Centre.

In the Kata competition (a pre-arranged sequence of strikes and blocks), Roman Szytler and Nim Sukumar took first and second place respectively in a repeat of last year's results. Further strong performances gave Cambridge a convincing early lead to make the score 58-12 to them.

In the women's, Cambridge captain Gosia Stanislawek took second place with the rest of her team also performing well. The women were leading 28-14 and a beautifully executed performance of "Jion" in Kata extended their lead to 40-14.

In the Kumite (freestyle points based fighting) Cambridge outclassed their opponents. Team captain Liam Gabb set the Men's A Team off to a flying start with victory in the opening match. The Men's A ended with an epic match involving Cambridge's Richard Oriji,

which eventually ended in a draw. After the spirited fight, the fighters showed exemplary sportsmanship, hugging each other for a fight to remember

The Men's B, who were trailing, had a new look of determination. Pragesh Sivaguru put in a great fight on his Varsity debut to win. Further dominant displays meant the team reversed the early deficit to come out victorious with the score at 72-58.

In the women's Kumite the experienced Cambridge women's fighters fought back from an early defeat to bring in three successive wins. Madeline Wood, in particular, was outstanding and won in record time, scoring two points in what seemed like ten seconds. Their final score was 73-29.

The overall victory was a comfortable one for Cambridge. The Enoeda Cup will stay with them for yet another year.



HENRY MARSHALL
swimming correspondent

Cambridge University Swim Team defeated Oxford in their annual Varsity match. The competition saw the swimming elite shaved, suited-up and streamlined, trained and tapered for the event. It was one of the closest matches in recent years with the whole contest decided by the final race.

Cambridge started strongly, with Henny Dillon winning the women's 200m IM. This was followed by Clare fresher, Dale Waterhouse and last year's captain, Tom Rootsey, gaining first and second place respectively in the men's event. Oxford caught up, taking both the women's and men's 100m backstroke with Cambridge's Emily Bottle the only swimmer able to gain significant points, placing second in the women's event, with Heather Moore coming in third.

Kat de Rome and Chloe Spiby Loh battled it out for first in the women's 200m freestyle but were beaten at the touch to place second and third. Men's captain, Andy Corley suffered the same fate in the men's event placing third behind two Oxford swimmers. Henny Dillon and Emily Darley dominated the 100m butterfly occupying the top two positions in the women's event with Aussie-grad, Joel Carpenter coming

second in the men's event followed by Downing medic Jack Long in third.

After the first half of the gala, Cambridge led by one point. In the second half, the teams continued in much the same way, placing either first and fourth, or second and third in a number of events, causing the points to cancel out. Notable swims include women's captain, Caroline Gordon Tom Hill, who both destroyed Oxford in the 100m breastroke. Kate Weber and Ho-on To were Cambridge's number two swimmers in the breastroke. Again, Dale Waterhouse managed to hold off Oxford in the crucial 100m freestyle event, getting his hand on the timing pad 0.2 seconds ahead of Oxford.

Going into the final events, the score was 70-69 to Oxford. It would all be decided by the relays. The women's medley team – Emily Bottle, Caroline Gordon, Emily Darley and Jo Lister – won with ease. However, the men – Mike Garner-Jones, Tom Hill, Brad Dixon and Henry Marshall – weren't able to hold off Oxford, leaving the points in favor of the dark blues.

The women's freestyle team – Chloe Spiby Loh, Kat De Rome, Ale Goh and Henny Dillon – took an early lead and maintained it throughout the race to beat Oxford by just under a second. The men – Joel Carpenter, Tom Rootsey,

Andy Corley and Waterhouse – needed to win the relay to win the match. Cambridge and Oxford were neck and neck for the duration of the race. No team ever managed to be more than a stroke ahead, or behind.

Cambridge were leading for the most part but one wrong move would've cost either team the victory. After three incredible swims, it was all down to the anchor leg, Dale Waterhouse going head to head against the Oxford captain, Tom Booth. After turning simultaneously after the first and second length, Waterhouse managed to pull through after the final turn to touch first by just 0.4 seconds in what was the fastest swim by any Cambridge swimmer seen in a Varsity match ever.

Unlike team games, swimming is a sport of mathematical probabilities, but not inevitabilities. On paper, Oxford were the stronger squad. And this is not surprising considering they have their own sports centre, complete with swimming pool, allowing them to afford to employ a coach. Both of these luxuries are lacking at Cambridge.

When it came down to it, it was the a combination of the camaraderie of the Cambridge team and the presence of the (appropriately named) man of the match, Dale Waterhouse, which led Cambridge to victory.



“The post-Ashes utopia is well and truly over...the Netherlands brought England crashing back down to Earth”

Chris Humpleby on England's uncertain display against the Dutch in the cricket world cup, page 15



Double Varsity win for netballers

JAMES CORCUT



The Light Blues dominate in thrilling match to reap the rewards of their hard work

CAMBRIDGE 40
OXFORD 34

LIBBY BREWIN
netball correspondent

The Blues were faced with a great deal of expectation as they came onto the court for their 2011 Varsity match. The Leys School in Cambridge was the arena for the two nail-biting netball Varsity matches played out by the Blues and Jays. Jam-packed with supporters from Oxford and Cambridge, the atmosphere at the court was buzzing.

A slightly shaky Light Blue start to the match came as a bit of a surprise. But soon the Light Blues showed the fluid and accurate play expected of this talented team. Captain Vicky Colgate dominated the centre court. She was always there to offer back-up pass options and endlessly tipped Oxford balls beyond their grasp. Charlotte Penney was at hand to provide consistent assists to the shooters on the side of the circle while defenders Livvy Robinson and Antonia Akoto worked

well as a unit to force the Oxford shooters into taking difficult shots on goal.

However, for all their obvious skill they went into the second quarter down by one goal. The Cambridge team had to alter their attacking tactics. Shooters Elizabeth Wheeler and Jess McGeorge smartly adapted to exceptional Oxford defensive players. Their near faultless shooting soon saw Cambridge take the lead to finish the second quarter 18-14 to the good.

Oxford came back from half time determined to regain the momentum and they were able to draw the scores level once again. At 27-27 it was all square at the end of the third quarter, but a late Cambridge surge soon quelled any Dark Blue hopes. Some stellar shooting by Jess McGeorge and incredible goal keeping by Antonia Akoto enabled the Blues to pull ahead and win the match 40-34.

Player of the Match for the Blues was wing defence Sophia Anderson who, according to Captain Vicky Colgate, “had the game of her life”. Her constant pressure on the ball and flying interceptions meant the Blues could ensure a large deficit as the game developed.

The Jays were in action just before the Blues and were keen to defend their title from last year against the Oxford Roos. From the start the teams were evenly matched and a close contest appeared to be on the cards.

The Jays' ability to work the ball con-

“The Blues showed the fluid and accurate play expected of this talented side”

fidently around the shooting third meant they finished first quarter with a two-goal lead. Tall defence players Jess Creak and Emily Lester ensured rebounds were theirs and solid movement down the court by centre players allowed the turnovers to be capitalised on.

But the tables were turned at half time with Oxford leading 20-18. A surge

of energy together with tight marking resulted in a run of Cambridge goals. However, a slight drop in momentum left all to be fought for at end of the third quarter with a tied score of 27-27.

The support of the home crowd pumped up the team and they kept their nerve to hold on to an early break in the last quarter. With every loose ball being claimed and excellent shooting from Laura Gibson and Captain Sarah Gill, the Jays managed to hold off the Oxford Roos to take the game with a score of 36-34. The speed and precision of Hannah Pennicott earned her Player of the Match for the Jays. Jays' Gill was proud of the hard work shown by the whole team and their ability to withstand heavy pressure in such a close, high-tension game.

Delighted club captain Vicky Colgate was proud of the true CULNC fighting spirit, which saw every girl giving everything until the final whistle to give two stunning victories. She said of the wins: “Today's success is a testament of both teams' amazing seasons. It was a true team performance and I was so proud to be their Captain.”

SPORT IN BRIEF

A round up of the week's sport

CAMBRIDGE II'S AND III'S UNLUCKY IN VARSITY HOCKEY MATCHES BUT MEN TAKE SOLID WIN

Cambridge IIs and IIIs were unfortunate in their Varsity matches to fall to three defeats out of four. Despite displaying superior hockey throughout they were let down by their finishing. The women's III's were unlucky to concede shortly after half-time, which gave Oxford the momentum to take a further two goals and win 3-0.

The men's III's also opened their match strongly and were dominant throughout but were undone by a deflected shot on goal and a converted short corner.

The pattern was the same in the women's II's match where the Light Blues had all the pressure and succumbed to defeat. However in the final match of the day the Men's II's attacking formation and strong defending gave them a 4-1 win.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL FALL TO QUARTER-FINAL DEFEAT IN CARDIFF

The Women's Basketballers lost 67-38 in Cardiff in their quarter-final match of the BUCS Trophy against University of Wales Institute on Wednesday.

Despite only five players being able to travel, the Blues fought hard and rallied at the end to outscore their opponents in the final 13 minutes.

Wing Carolyn Beniuk was positive about the display: “We're really pleased with how our defence came together and we're excited to finish our season strong on Saturday at the Varsity match.”



Search: Using your head cricket catch



England's fielding was dismal against the Netherlands. Trescothick and Geraint Jones team up here to show us how it should be done: use your head.