The result was unprecedented. We do not leak the story to the national press; a local press agency were appearing on page 3 of the Telegraph offices were under siege, phone lines were ringing non-stop and national journalists have since become nationally notorious. It is hard to fault their response. Perhaps they should have spoken out earlier and laid to rest many of the wacky rumours about these initiation, but Varsity understands the risks of their words being twisted. One can certainly not accuse them of greed: a Sunday newspaper offered them £5000 for a picture and they turned it down. They, and the students whose pictures were taken from the Catz website, are the innocent victims of the press frenzy.

St Catharine’s JCR and fellows are no doubt feeling hard done by. Where people get out of hand and anti-social they should, of course, be sanctioned, but these are the righteous few. This affair should be a lesson to all college authorities to consider the potential ramifications before they issue edicts. Perhaps more to blame were the college authorities themselves. The Dean was apparently on holiday and even cancelled his meeting with the Alley Catz to discuss their future. He should have returned to Cambridge to deal with the aftermath of his letter. If he was prepared to issue such zero-tolerance rules in the first place, he should surely have had the courage of his own convictions and been prepared to justify his actions to the press. Furthermore, just as the national newspapers selectively used facts, the Dean did the same when he linked the college’s academic decline to drinking without taking into account any other possible causes.

After all the dust has settled we should not lose sight of the initial problem which gave rise to the story in the first place. We are all adults and should be allowed to do for the most part what we want. Where people get out of hand and anti-social there should, of course, be sanctions, but these should only be imposed on the guilty few. This affair should be a lesson to all college authorities to consider the potential ramifications before they issue edicts which directly affect student life.
**VOX-POPS**

**Do students drink too much?**

**Dr Gillian Evans, History Don**

Why does it need a special repressive comment if girls get drunk and misbehave? I think it is pretty stupid to lose control of those faculties which we possess as a sophisticated human being, and in doing so damage your physical and intellectual self in the long term, but that is not the point. The point is why the media have been having a field day with this story this week.

Most Cambridge academics would call themselves liberal (with a small t), but the unconscious assumptions that women are another breed are not far below that civilised surface. They may even mean to please. As I stood about at one of those parties after an inaugural lecture wearing the usual undistinguished dress garments from Oxfam, one colleague said what a pretty dress I was wearing. He intended it as a compliment. It seems to have thought that I would take pleasure in that kind of remark. But I did not notice him turning to another colleague to compliment him on the leather patches on his old jacket.

Nothing like I was queuing for coffee in the Batterhy on the Sidgwick Site. In front of me was a male colleague who was talking to someone about a seminar he was about to conduct. I heard him explain that there would be four girls and two boys. He then went on to describe the way the women could be guaranteed to approach the seminar and the way the men would react. I asked him whether he had occurred to him that he was stereotyping his students. His jaw dropped.

So when the Dean of St. Catharine’s made his famous remarks he was making himself into a stereotype of the unconstrained male don. He was classifying women and making assumptions. I do not like being categorised. If they ever treat me equally with numerous colleagues of lesser achievement and give me that Chair, I do not want to be a case of positive discrimination. That deems women and is unfair to men. I get quiet amusement from the report that someone said of all those speeches in the Senate, “The trouble with her is that she behaves like a man.” But it is not funny. When I make speeches or write books or work nationally for the reform of higher education it is the power of the words that counts not my ‘pretty dress’. People who tangle with me learn that.

**Liv Scarlett, Scudamores punter**

People do feel slightly pressured to drink too much because the bars are cheap. But getting drunk is a good remedy for stress and part of the enjoyment of university.

**Anvit Patel, Queens’**

We don’t drink enough, we can afford it!

**Andy Davies and friends, Caius**

**If I didn’t drink as much as I do, I’d go mad. There are only so many wave equations you can take while sober.”**

**Toby Lovell, Caius**

**Dr Jillian Evans, the History Don**

“I’ve spent my life working ten times as hard as any man and only get a tenth of the recognition,” she says. “Women are still expected to keep quiet and anticipate certain things just getting on with the job. Any attempt to speak out is met with a wall of resistance.”

Dr Evans points out that many female fellows are internationally famous and appear in Who’s Who, and that she herself is soon to receive honorary degrees from two prestigious academic establishments. But it appears that this is not enough and most female academics never reach senior level.

However, Professor Sandra Dawson of Sidney Sussex, the first female Master of any Cambridge college founded exclusively for men, says that this is due simply to a lack of women to be promoted. She points out that women only started going to university in mass quantities and that it is bound to take time for them to reach a level of equality with men that is acceptable.

“There are no overnight changes and no quick solutions,” she told Varsity. She remarks that the University should be, and is, encouraging women to seek out supervisions and high-lighting the Schneider-Ross report as a sign of its willingness to reveal areas for addressing. “Once we know where we’re starting from,” she says, “we can set ourselves a vision for the future and set to work building that vision.”

**Gavin Kermack**

Cambridge University has one of the country’s lowest male:female ratios amongst its professors and senior lecturers and research staff. In a survey carried out by the Higher Education Statistics Agency it was revealed that in the academic year 1999-2000 only 6% of Cambridge professors and 14% of senior lecturers and researchers were female.

These figures place Cambridge only a few places from the bottom of the table. The University has only recently published the results of an audit investigating its equality practices, which was carried out in conjunction with specialist consultants Schneider-Ross. This is one of the first of investigations of its kind to be performed by a UK higher education establishment, but these figures are worrying low for a university with a policy of positive change in the field of equality, especially as the number quoted for professors marks a drop from the previous year’s total.

Dr Gillian Evans of the History Faculty claims that conscious active discrimination is no longer the major problem it once was at the University, but that feelings such as distrust and nervousness are still aroused when it comes to overtime.

The point is why the media have been having a field day with this story this week.

**Anna Rogers**

A new company that charges pounds hundreds of pounds for Oxbridge application training, claims to have attracted more than 2,000 customers in its first year, and is now making “serious profit.”

Set up by Oxbridge graduates, Application Research markets an Oxbridge place as a “glittering prize” and threatens “major disappointment” for students who refuse to cough up the cash.

The company operates a “no win, no fee” policy, rejigging in their 62% success rate. Services include interview training, mentoring programmes, private tuition and help with application forms. But what was conceived as a great business opportunity may warm in access problems within Cambridge.

Alex Cary, a second year historian at Jesus, condemned the company as a “back door for thick rich kids.” When challenged by Varsity as to whether the fee would be low Ca or waived for low-income families, the company’s founder declined to comment.

Experts in the selection process, they boast a unique mix of tutors, graduates, undergraduates, teachers and communication experts to help customers fine-tune their performance.

However, Alasdair Brodie-Browne, Assistant Principal of Greenhead Sixth Form College in Huddersfield, one of the country’s top state schools, emphasises the fact that “individual schools and colleges know their students best.” He accused the company of preying on gullible parents who think Oxbridge provides the only university education.

Rachel Tripp, CUSU Access Officer, told Varsity, “CUSU has passed policy condemning the practice of privately ‘coaching’ applicants for the interview process.”

“One of the problems is that it is bound to take time for them to reach a level of equality with men that is acceptable.”

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**Hugh Cash for questions**

**Do fish?**

The manager of the Fez Club has condemned an article in the Varsity, which has been made out. But he understood that this was as far as he could go. He said, however, that he did not want to be a case of positive discrimination. That deems women and is unfair to men.

The article, written by two reporters who visited the club on Monday night, began: “At 2am, the air in the Fez Club in Cambridge is thick with marijuana smoke...” The article went on to describe the way the students could be guaranteed to approach the seminar and the way the men would react. I asked him whether he had occurred to him that he was stereotyping his students. His jaw dropped.

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**Judith Whiteley**

The manager of the Fez Club has condemned an article in the Varsity which suggested that marijuana use was rife in the night club.

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Winner

Tom Catchesides, Varsity Photographer, triumphed at the National Student Journalism Awards 2001 on Saturday 28 October. He was awarded the prize for Best Student Photographer of the year, beating off competition from Oxford in the form of his Nell Freeman. The top award of Best Student Paper, however, was awarded to Durham University’s ‘Relatieur’, chosen for its “clean design, newsworthy front page and properly researched articles”. The paper has recently gone broadsheet. The prize – the opportunity of work experience in the Independent’s offices, which runs the competition jointly with the NUS, and a cash bonus – were presented by Donald MacIntyre, the Independent’s chief editor. He claimed that “the best student papers … are written by students, for students and presented with flair.”

Afghan Aid

The Islamic Society’s fundraising event in aid of the women and children of Afghanistan raised more than £1900 at the weekend. The money will be split between Muslim Aid and Islamic Relief.

Grads say

Plans for the integration of the Graduate Union and CUSU have been put on hold following publication of the GU’s strategic review committee report. The report concluded that the process, which was in motion by two referendums last year, faced “serious problems” and “insurmountable difficulties.”

A range of concerns were noted in the report. Chief amongst them was the fact that the GU’s autonomisation would be threatened by the might of CUSU. Graduates were worried about “how the GU would react to the structural momentum of CUSU.”

CUSU graduates were also concerned that the strategic review committee itself was set up in response to growing resentment within GU Council about the way GU president Raj Joshi termed, “fuelling the fire of institutional self-interest.”

The report concluded that the strategic review committee was “not fit for purpose.”

The full force of this structural momentum was felt last week when the Cambridge Student published an article suggesting that the strategic review was the secretive work of a hard-line minority against integration. The article was forced to apologise for both the tone and content of the article in this week’s edition. Mr Tomaevic assured Varsity that the committee was vital to establish exactly what graduates’ views on integration were, and that membership of the committee had been open to all members of the GU Council. He also pointed out that the referenda results only provided a mandate to alter the respective aspirations of the GU and CUSU, not to go ahead with integration.

The manner in which CUSU has carried out negotiations has also caused disquiet within the GU. “These concerns related in particular to CUSU’s transactions with regard to Keynes House, which very nearly resulted in the loss of CUSU’s transactions with regard to Keynes House, which very nearly resulted in the loss of the GU’s separate premises” stated the report. This was in reference to a meeting held over the summer between CUSU and the University authorities at which the GU’s rapid displacement from its Keynes House base was mooted. A GU representative was not present. The strategic review committee was not fit for purpose.

A preliminary copy of the report was presented to the University Council on Monday. It criticised the £9 million system. The implementation of a new system was at risk from the beginning.

Demonstrator

The NUS’s East Anglia Regional Rally is to be held in Cambridge on the 26th November. It will be the focal point for CUSU’s Higher Education Funding Campaign this term, with students coming from many other Universities to join in. Pav said: “The rally will give students a chance to express their feelings at the government’s backtracking. It’s obscene that what looked like the return of targeted grants is becoming a Treasury scam to make students worse off.”

Commenting on the negative implications of the Treasury’s move, CUSU’s Access Officer Rachel Trigg said: “The return of the grant would be the single most important thing that this government could do to improve access to Higher Education. But the potential improvements must not be negated by a system whereby loans charged at a punitive rate of interest are a necessity to ‘top-up’ a grant that is not at a living level.”

Compiled by: Katy Long & Sophie Morphet

Losers

A damning report into the University’s CAPSA accounting system is to be published on Friday. The report is expected to show that very little has changed to improve the situation that was first revealed thirteen months ago when Varsity termed the project as the University’s very own ‘Millennium Dome.’

A preliminary copy of the report was presented to the University Council on Monday. It criticised the £9 million system. The implementation of a new system was at risk from the beginning.

CAPSA has gone over budget by more than 100%. Originally, the Planning and Resource Committee allocated £4.3 million to the scheme. The total has now balloonied to £9.192 million in total.

Universe in Brief

‘The Universe in Brief’ is Hawking’s new book on the “theory of everything,” will be published on 5th November. The book, which was set in motion by two referendums last year, faced “serious problems” and “insurmountable difficulties.”

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Funky Fruit

A stunning display of over 150 types of apple was on offer at the University Botanic Garden last Sunday at the fifth annual Cambridge Apple Day. A chance to find out all you could ever want to know about “the amazing diversity of apple shapes, sizes and tastes”, the Apple Day’s attraction included the presence of apple ‘experts’ to help visitors identify choice apples, garden apples among such varieties as the renowned Cal’s Head, Bradfield Nonpareil and Pittamston Pine. There was “even some hot apple toddy” as promised by Juliet Day, the University Botanic Garden’s Development Officer. Supported by the stalwart Woman’s Institute, who produced cakes, pies and preserves, and the presence of Ben Haggerty, an international storyteller who provided tales of “apple lore”, the day was presented as a classic “great family day out.”

Winners

Pav Akhtar, CUSU President, has received more attention from the national press this week. This time it was celebrating his role as an ethnic role model for aspiring students. He was judged to be the “Ethnic Student of the Year” in the G2G Leadership and Diversity Awards 2001. Pav won not only £2000 (which he has said will be spent paying off his student loan), but also recognition for his work in encouraging students from ethnic minorities and working-class backgrounds to apply to university. He commented, “I hope that it shows that ethnicity need not be a barrier. You can all aspire and achieve whatever we put our minds to.”

Wallies

Congratulations to the NUS which has launched a design website called “Ladies”. It is described as being “The Home of Future Fashion for the UK” where students can “keep up to date with the up and coming designers and latest trends” in clothing and home-wares. Varsity assumes that a ‘Bin’ will be the style accessory for any in the know student this winter.

Winner

Alex Swallow, CUSU’s Access Officer, has received the Winner of the GG2 Leadership and Diversity Awards of 2001. Student of the Year” in the GG2 Leadership and Diversity Awards of 2001. He commented, “I apply to university. He commented, “I...
I have something very odd to confess: I like ivy towers. I like the idea of living high up in the clouds, blissfully unaware of the real world below. I really, genuinely like the prospect of being able to think most things more clearly than at any point in my past, or at any point in the future. I love the idea of being able to change the world with thought alone, to stand defiant against the world. I just wish it was possible. It once was. Once, Cambridge was a place that teemed with radical individuals, a town that thrrobbed with intellectualism and fresh ideas. Ours was the university in which Nalobak, Russell and Wittgenstein rubbed shoulders; the place where Anthony Blunt met Gue Burgues and where both men first flirted with Communism, high living and each other. This was once a town where to live was to think. Here, ideals were the very air that was breathed and the breeze blew fast with inspiration.

Walk down from Magdalen now, cross the river and pass the gates of Johns, meander past the grandeur of Trinity, to Kings and beyond. Listen to the sounds of people talking, and strain for the words of conversations breaking from coffee shops. Stop by the book-sellers, leaf through a volume, read reviews and attitudes to worldwide terrorisms. Look, for the news. Like a tragic set in some theatre, actors, uncast, act out roles long after the play has ended and the audience has left. No longer can they remember the name of the production.

The talk was once of revolutions, the concerns of communism and democracies. In all of these scenes, the characters once spoke of the individual and his rights and responsibilities. Care counsled through our narrow streets and the issues of the world weighed heavy on the hearts of the many. But today, all are free from the worries of the globe that tears itself to pieces in moments of insanity, and our universi-
ty, once the home of those who shaped the world, has become but a lodging house for transients.

For why is there no talk of how things should be? Why no discussion of the ideal? Why concern ourselves with trivialities? Why, in these few privileged years, when our minds are opened before the world breaks in, must we think of nothing? It can't be that ideals aren't important. Obsessed by jobs and earnings as we all may be, there is a role for the ideal. History, after all, has not yet ended. This is no apocalypse; Armageddon has not yet arrived, but while the aged live in huddled cold, children cry for want of food and the sick go untreated in countries far and wide, solutions are needed. And are these maladies to come from reality alone? Are we to look around and find a compromise from within our liberal capitalist prisons? There is truth in the phrase that to reach the end of the road we must first look to the stars. I confess to a feeling of sadness. I have never been so fortunate as to find myself in such a rare environment: everywhere I turn, I find people of incredible academic calibre, yet no one seems to care anything for the uses to which intellect could be put. Idealists have died a sorry death at the hands of those who should be breathing new life into their tired bodies, or fanning flames to break free a new phoenix. I wish I could find a reason for why this is. I wish I could understand and forgive, but I cannot and for that I mourn. Perhaps it is because the world is more materialistic that we shun the ideal? It seems unlikely. Perhaps structures of wealth have changed against the old gentleman-philosopher that characterised the age for which I yearn. That scarcely seems a good enough explanation for such unpleasant apathy.

Hugh Collins

“I have now witnessed an event, which we regard as significant, in which the IRA has put a quantity of arms completely beyond use. The matter in question includes arms, ammunition and explo-

vatives. We are satisfied that the arms in question have been dealt with in accord-

ance with the scheme and regulations.”

This short, but hugely significant state-

ment was released last week by the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD). It is a state-

ment that many on both sides of the No-

thern Irish political divide thought would never arrive. As deadline after dead-

line slipped past due to Republican pro-

crastination, the graffiti with the simple
docent “Not a bullet, but an ounce” rang

more and more true. As Unionsist politi-

cians beat the decommissioning drum

louder and louder, it seemed all hope for

the Good Friday agreement would be
dashed.

Yet here we are. The IRA has “put a
quantity of arms completely beyond use.” So what happened? Obviously, the insis-
tence by Unionsists and the British Government that every element of the agreement, policing, demilitarisation, cross-border bodies, all depended upon the issue of IRA weapons was certainly a factor. But the Republican movement is not known for its willingness to appease Unionsists, much less the British govern-

ment. More significant would be the events of 11th September. When the plains crashed into the world trade centre, American attitudes to worldwide terror-

ism hardened even further. The American public, traditionally a source of tremen-

dous support for nationalists and republic-

ans, suddenly cooled towards Sinn Fein. Those in Washington wanted to see obvi-

ous commitment from Sinn Fein, and they wanted it quick. Car this gesture of

commitment.

This is not to say everyone is satis-

fied by the IRA’s actions. David Trimble has called the report from General De

Chastelain (the chairman of the IICD) “the clear evidence that we have been look-

ing for.” But the Democratic Unionist Party has called the IRA’s move “a mock-

ery”, since they don’t know how many weapons were destroyed, or when more will be taken out of use. This is a peculiar, and yet strangely insightful glimpse into the thinking behind decommissioning. The thought of sections of society being armed to the teeth is a horrifying one, but practically speaking, decommissioning is a futile process. No one knows how exten-

sive paramilitary arsenals are, so no one will know if they have fully decommis-

sioned. Even if we did know, nothing pre-

vents them from recreating arms. The only possible use decommissioning, could serve as is a symbol, a sign of commitment according to David Trimble; a sign of sur-

render according to republicans.

Many would call the republican view absurd, insisting that the agreement removes the need for weapons. But the Unionsist approach to decommissioning has been somewhat skewed. All elements of the agreement, and the establishment of a new police force in particular, have depended upon IRA decommissioning. Given we what we want, and we’ll give you what you want. The thought that a fair and representative police force should exist in any society was never considered. What’s more, the key has always been IRA decommissioning. Weapons in the hands of loyalist groups such as the UDA and UFF, whose activities over the past year have made a mockery of the ceasefire, were never an issue. Nor were the 150 000 pri-

vate weapons in Unionist hands. There has been no indication that either of these problems will be addressed. Decommissioning was in the agreement, we were told, and thus must be honoured. But the patent report on policing, which was also part of the agreement, fell well short of Republican hopes, has been dropped in an effort to keep the Unionsists on board.

It would seem, then, that decommis-
nioning was not as meaningful an issue as many had claimed. Already, sections with-
in Unionsism are insisting that unless Sinn Fein supports the policing proposals – an “emaciated” form of the Patten report according to Gerry Adams – they cannot be committed to peace, and therefore can-

not be allowed into the Executive. But the IRA has been forced into making a huge
gesture, one that goes against almost everything they stand for, all in the name of peace, and they could repudiate the rewards. Sinn Fein has taken over the middle-
ground SDLP for the first time, and is now the biggest nationalist party in the north. Decommissioning will alienate some hardliners, but it will increase their appeal to the middle-ground right across the island. In their attempts to bolt the door of government against Sinn Fein, Unionsism may find it has given them the electoral strength to break it down.
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Twelve angry men again

Dan O’Huigin asks whether Britain's system of trial by jury is the most effective system

In between decentralising cannabis and scraping asylum vouchers, David Blunkett found the time last week to remark that juror’s are people that you should not stop jury service, in order to try 'real criminals'. His comment, which raises the question: does random selection of jurors make the system fair? As forensic and legal specialists, this is a question we must answer. If jurors are a random sample of the population, the system is fair, but if the sample is biased, the system is unfair.

Blunkett is not alone in this view. An average jury, is representative. One can make it easy for them to evaluate the evidence, and they can act as a check on unfair procedures. At present juries do not know the law, and this is a problem. The government has been forced to relax the law on cannabis is that several situations where criminals to their death. And in 1985 a jury refused to convict the American system of voir dire, which allows lawyers to reject potentially biased or unsuitable jurors. Another would be to automatically  

In Britain, the proposition, despite the complexity of the law, is becoming hard for judges to understand the evidence. On top of this comes uncertainty about the basics of the legal system; one study claims that 86% were unsure what constitutes a guilty.

It’s not as if jurors want the job. For a start, there’s the emotional trauma. Condemning someone to life imprisonment, the complexity of the law, is becoming hard for judges to understand the evidence. On top of this comes uncertainty about the basics of the legal system; one study claims that 86% were unsure what constitutes a guilty.

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Propaganda
As CUSU’s former Services Officer I would like to take issue with John Craven’s suggestion that ‘ineffectiveness’ was the cause of Creaton’s losses. One wonders whether the management of a half-million pound portfolio could lead to an excess of 15,000 excluding the isolated incident of a fire. Creaton’s ‘ineffectiveness’ could be similarly described. Rather the issue was – and no doubt still is – the fact that Sabbaticals are ridiculously overworked. This is the explanation for virtually all of the problems recently outlined in Varsity, e.g. delays in the Publications and Student ID, however unfortunate these may be. I am sure the present Services Officer is working the 70-80 hour weeks many of last year’s team did and so to suggest that the problems outlined are due to ‘ineffectiveness’ is frankly a cheap journalistic stunt.

Martin Lucas-Smith
Former CUSU Services Officer

Glass Ceiling: Part II
Varsity asked a pertinent and overdue question in last week’s editorial (“The Glass Ceiling”). However, it is time for Cambridge students to cease simply asking these questions and to start proactively redressing the balance. JCRs and other similar institutions need positively to encourage women students to consider standing for positions of responsibility, not just lament their absence. For example, the woefully small number of female JCR Presidents does little to encourage women to take up what should be representative roles. And in our current culture women in such positions can all too often be caricatured as ‘battleaxes’ and ‘harsh’ (as I myself discovered when JCR President at Emma’s). Until such positions are genuinely accessible to female students Cambridge will remain an institution where equal opportunities may exist in theory but are seldom realised in practise.

Alison Ismail
CUSU Women’s Officer

Silly Women
Women get fewer firsts, they earn less and from your editorial last week it would appear that there are fewer who can claim to be part of the “ruling hierarchy” in Cambridge. While there are of course many explanations, one that appears to be ignored is by far the simplest. Men may just be more intelligent, more ambitious, harder-working and better leaders than women. There are, after all, several thousand years worth of examples that illustrate this. It’s almost tragi-comic that whenever this subject comes up instead of explanations we hear excuses, which I’m sure will appear once again.

Navin Sivanandam
St Johns

Letter of the Week
Tell me how to get the tickets to Rent! I’ll bribe or escort you for the show, just name it! By the way, I’m a Chinese girl, tall, slim...and of course I will love you more than Adam Rickitt!

J-H-S. Yang

Bird bating
I am writing to express my annoyance over your article ‘Catz in a Flap’. In my opinion, the piece tries to make a story out of something I’m missing, but it seems to me that everyone’s getting far too wound up about this Tompkins table. Okay, last year’s finalists here at Newnham got less firsts and more thirds than colleges like Corpus Christi. But being a non-novenarian and having only just fallen in from the real world, I’m thinking, “But these are Cambridge thirds! 90% of the UK population couldn’t even get a pass if they were born – why are we worrying about a stupid thing like grades?” I’ve noticed in my classes that men from other colleges seem to obsessively try and pick holes in whatever anyone else does, and women from other colleges seem to be very willing to believe the total myth that they are only here by a fluke and need to work themselves into the floor to be worth keeping. Newnhamites might have got grades at the low end of a very high-up spectrum, but at least we still have our feet on the ground and our heads in one piece when we leave.

Jo Doughty
Newnham

Debauchery
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Question?
A third reader ordering an item from the Daily Express called a FLEA ZAPPER.
At the bottom of the application form it states: “the result from this test is as good as or better than nearly all commercial chemical insecticides used against fleas” Medical Entomology Centre, at the University of Cambridge. I found a quote in Varsity online from Dr John Maudner, Director of Cambridge University Medical Entomology Centre dated 18.01.01, however this doesn’t give me the information that I am after, but I have no idea how to find the results of this test in particular. I would like to know if this is a legitimate claim before I spend £29.95.

Maybe you know how I can find out.

I do hope that I am not wasting your time, but I don’t know how to find the information.

I am not a University person, merely a housewife seeking information.

Susan E. Mason (Mrs)

Elitism
Congratulations are due to Varsity for its balanced reaction to the latest elitism allegation to hit Cambridge. Contrary to your editorial, however, the disparity between private and state-school representation is not a result only of the ‘squeezing feet’, introduced by the Labour Government (preventing the poorest students from going to university). The poorest students pay no nation fees, which should then mean that this charge would hit middle income harders. This is not the case because of a more damaging, more insidious factor than one charge levied by a hypocractic political party.

That students are being asked to provide their own houses for the summer before deciding if they want to stay here for 4 weeks, there might be something I’m missing, but it seems to me that everyone’s getting far too wound up about this Tompkins table. Okay, last year’s finalists here at Newnham got less firsts and more thirds than colleges like Corpus Christi. But being a non-novenarian and having only just fallen in from the real world, I’m thinking, “But these are Cambridge thirds! 90% of the UK population couldn’t even get a pass if they were born – why are we worrying about a stupid thing like grades?” I’ve noticed in my classes that men from other colleges seem to obsessively try and pick holes in whatever anyone else does, and women from other colleges seem to be very willing to believe the total myth that they are only here by a fluke and need to work themselves into the floor to be worth keeping. Newnhamites might have got grades at the low end of a very high-up spectrum, but at least we still have our feet on the ground and our heads in one piece when we leave.

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Jo Doughty
Newnham
Be there. The event that tells you what it takes to succeed in business consulting, but only gives you the facts you’ll be interested in hearing. It takes just 20 minutes but could eventually take you just about anywhere in the world of business and technology consulting. Come along and meet our team, ask them questions, say what you think, or just listen (they are, after all, some of the skills you’ll need to join us).

If you can’t make it you can always visit us at www.andersen.com/ukconsultingcareers

If you can come along, we’ll see you there.

Thursday 8 November 2001

University Arms Hotel
Regents Street, Cambridge CB2 1AD

Arrive 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start
The music was beautiful. It was such a nice evening, a perfect night for a walk in the park. I decided to take a stroll and enjoy the beauty of the surroundings.

As I walked along, I noticed a man playing a guitar on the street. He was wearing a cowboy hat and a red shirt, and his music was lovely. I stopped to listen and watched him play for a while.

The man smiled at me and nodded in my direction. I returned the gesture and continued on my way. The night was beautiful, and I was happy to be able to enjoy it.

As I walked further, I noticed a woman sitting on a bench in the park. She was reading a book, and I thought she looked very peaceful. I decided to join her and read my own book.

The evening was perfect, and I enjoyed every moment of it. I was happy to be able to experience such a lovely night.
Last week's winner was Kate Dickinson (Sidney) – your voucher is at NatWest Benet Street.

27. Ostentatiously

Down:

Cryptic Crossword
Across
1. Energetic legume? (6,4)
2. Midsummer night’s fairy hit playing ice hockey (4)
3. Abstract giant toot-pattern skinning (9)
4. Mr Capone second rate in love and lacks pigment (6)
5. Insect (3)
6. First class marines sicken from over-seas pest (6)
7. Wild horse gams in torture (7)
8. Detective Bill with short Emily makes cousin Wanda (9)
9. Thanks minister for knight’s over-garment (6)
10. Cake whisk rustled (7)
11. Few of these trees found in Holland? (3)
12. Sicilian olive (6)
13. Religious rest day cut short by 99 (11)
14. Explode Eton in time (8)
15. One who tests quality (7)
16. Italian young Alan in charge of slop (6)
17. Spice (6)
18. Relax out of world council draught (7)
19. Stretch myself before the Spanish dog (7)
20. Italian young Alan in charge of slop (6)
21. Atmospheric mixture of gases (3)
22. Six artists leave termagant (6)
23. Wooden puppet son of Geppetto (9)
24. Representing lamb cosily chopped (10)
25. Come before top teacher (4)
26. Unit of resistance (3)

Down
1. Point in armada, all at sea during month of fast (7)
2. Digit became less sensitive (6)
3. Balanced, being not odd-limbed (4-6)
4. Cheved in a horse’s mouth (3)
5. Miss Mia Gatt disfigured by eye defect (11)
6. Supply words to actor on time (6)
7. Fraud given monetary penalty and imprisoned (8)
8. Innocently put fault on Les, with imprisoned (8)
9. Mr Capone’s year off (10)
10. Innocently put fault on Les, with imprisoned (8)
11. First class marines sicken from over-seas pest (6)
12. Wild horse gams in torture (7)
13. Religious rest day cut short by 99, Mr Capone’s year off (10)
14. Explode Eton in time (8)
15. Young Alan in charge of slop (6)
16. Young Alan before company short holiday gets you drunk (7)
17. Relax out of world council draught (7)
18. Italian young Alan in charge of slop (6)
19. Stretch myself before the Spanish dog (7)
20. Italian young Alan in charge of slop (6)
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23. Wooden puppet son of Geppetto (9)
24. Representing lamb cosily chopped (10)
25. Come before top teacher (4)
26. Unit of resistance (3)

Answers to last week’s crossword:

Down:
Historic race (7)
11. Chemicals to help plants grow (3)
3. Celtic fairy queen (3)
5. Miss Mia Gatt disfigured by eye defect (11)
6. Supply words to actor on time (6)
7. Fraud given monetary penalty and imprisoned (8)
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23. Wooden puppet son of Geppetto (9)
24. Representing lamb cosily chopped (10)
25. Come before top teacher (4)
26. Unit of resistance (3)

ELIGIBLE?
Varsity are running the ultimate search, a hunt for the most sexy, charismatic, people hidden amongst our student population. We know they exist somewhere – and when we’ve found them we’ll tell the whole University about them in our “Most Eligible Bachelor and Bachelorette” competition. Think it’s a little vain? Of course it is; but by the evening of Sunday 4 November there’s a free dinner together at swanky Brown’s up for grabs and the chance to spoil the boys on how the date went in Varsity afterwards.
This is how the process works. If you want to be in it to win it, you need to be nominated by two people. The nominees need to email us (out- look@varsity.cam.ac.uk) saying not only the nominee’s name and college, but also a short sharp burst about what makes them irresistible (50 words max). Following this, the nominees just need to pop round for an interview and photo shoot (after we contact you) and the chosen top ten of each sex get featured in Varsity over the next couple of weeks.
The best bit, is that the choice of winner is up to our dating editors. By a quick e-mail you can vote to decide who are Cambridge’s most eligible bachelorette and bachelor, based on the profiles we’ve drawn up.
So think you’ve got what it takes? Ken your mate a holy killer or a mate checker? Get the style, the charm and the profile to make the grade? Or know someone else who has? Then contact us by the evening of Sunday 4 November and create a Cambridge legend or two.

For more information, please attend our Open Presentation at 7pm on Wednesday 7 November 2001 at Jesus College. To apply, send a CV and covering letter to:

Hannah Simpson
Oliver, Wyman & Company
1 Neal Street
Covent Garden
London WC2H 9QL
Tel: 020 7333 8533
E-mail: RecruitingLON@owc.com
www.oliverwyman.com

www.varsity.cam.ac.uk

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There was one TV show which between the ages of 10 and 15, I never missed: Desmonds. The story of a group of 1st and 2nd generation West Indians living in London and about the reasons for which they never made quite clear, spending as much time as possible in the local barbers, the shop where the medals were hung up, and in the garden of their embittered odd relatives, dressed in a way which seemed, to my unenculturated Mancunian mind, quite hip and exotic. Clothes that I'd seen and snarled at in Oasis shops, on them looked quite different. Patterned shirts, aviator sunglasses, brown and white front-pleated trousers. A glance at up and coming fashion icons The Strokes shows the characters of Desmonds to have been way ahead of their time as far as fashion goes.

One character stood out. Pork-Pie. He was hilarious, a cool, laid-back old dude who, in retrospect, was probably smoking too much of the demon weed. The best bit about Pork-Pie was his hat, the small tweed trilby which he wore constantly and after which he was named. It looked like the kind of hat the British landed aristocracy would wear, yet it sat perfectly on his head. When I was about 16, Desmonds ended, following the deaths of the lead actor. (Channel 4 ran a spin-off series, simply titled ‘Pork-Pie’ which it loved. It ran for five episodes. Apparently people were concerned by the fact the lead actor was black. According to him, Pork-Pie and his hat vanished from my life and, as happened, I forgot them. I got involved with girls, with drink, with poetry... and the adolescent fantasy of being a 60 year old black man...)

It was in my Cambridge first year I fell in love with a recently-deceased dude who, in retrospect, was probably smoking a little too much of the demon weed. The best bit about Pork-Pie was his hat, the small tweed trilby which he wore constantly and after which he was named. It looked like the kind of hat the British landed aristocracy would wear, yet it sat perfectly on his head. When I was about 16, Desmonds ended, following the deaths of the lead actor. (Channel 4 ran a spin-off series, simply titled ‘Pork-Pie’ which it loved. It ran for five episodes. Apparently people were concerned by the fact the lead actor was black. According to him, Pork-Pie and his hat vanished from my life and, as happened, I forgot them. I got involved with girls, with drink, with poetry... and the adolescent fantasy of being a 60 year old black man...)

I'm going to be that voluptuous or that saintly. No, I wanted something harder; something distinctive and beautiful for themselves simply through a personal passion.

...Barbie

Barbie is my style icon. You can dismiss her as the ultimate blonde bimbo, but my sister’s sense of sharp pretty casual fun still lies at the heart of my love for her. But her is inimitable size 8 figure, are able to slip effortlessly from daywear to evening wear. From her blond (rootless) hair through to her long (stubbleless) beard, she looks great. Stars are stars; they aspire to. From her blond (rootless) hair through to her long (stubbleless) beard, she looks great. Stars are stars; they aspire to. From her blond (rootless) hair through to her long (stubbleless) beard, she looks great. Stars are stars; they aspire to. From her blond (rootless) hair through to her long (stubbleless) beard, she looks great. Stars are stars; they aspire to. From her blond (rootless) hair through to her long (stubbleless) beard, she looks great. Stars are stars; they aspire to. From her blond (rootless) hair through to her long (stubbleless) beard, she looks great. Stars are stars; they aspire to. From her blond (rootless) hair through to her long (stubbleless) beard, she looks great. Stars are stars; they aspire to.
CAREERS INFORMATION FAIR

Wednesday 7 November
Thursday 8 November
12.30–6.00 pm

● 130 organisations attending

● Different employers each day

● a MUST for your diary

Full details on
www.careers.cam.ac.uk

Careers Service
The guardian of the original broadsheet gives Natasha Grayson a lesson in history

To begin, then, I ask to hear what it was like at the other University. But Stothard is not interested in nostalgic reminiscences about his student days – indeed, he seems disappointed in me for starting out in such an obvious manner. This man has seen a few too many upstart young journalists pass through his office, and it quickl feels like he is assessing me as another one of them. "When I interview people now, at 17 or 18, they've got more cuttings than I had when I was 30. You really are of the determined, career-conscious generation. We had some idea of what we might do, but it was a completely different atmosphere from the one I detect amongst students today.

He also denies that his generation was very politically active at Oxford. "There were protests, but it was a terribly tame and indolent pursuit". He conceded that Cambridge in the late sixties and early seventies "was slightly more political."

He was Editor of Cherwell, however. "Yes, I did. I shared theship with the guy who's now the head of the Financial Services Authority, Howard Davis. We edited it for about four weeks, then there was one of those student financial crises that beset student newspapers from time to time, so for the rest of the summer term we did something else."

He compared his experiences at Cherwell to his experiences as a journalist in the upheaval of 1886. "I had yet to discover the historical significance of what happened in Fleet Street in that year, when, according to Stothard, 'the British newspaper industry was saved by Rupert Murdoch.'" Despite the fact that I had been only five years old at the time, Stothard seemed again disappointed and unimpressed, as a school-teacher might be, when I did not immediately know what he was talking about. Obligingly he explained. "Before 1986 the whole of the newspaper industry was produced around Fleet Street; by corrupt, overmanned, politicised Trade Unions, who made it almost impossible to produce newspapers. The newspaper industry of this country was pretty much a shambles."

Stothard feels about Socialism, politics, children?

Naturally I jump at the opening to probe the legend of Rupert Murdoch, who owns The Times and is often widely reputed to have a great deal of control over its content. "Of course Rupert Murdoch was around at that time; a lot in England, it was a very important time, and this myth arose of his being involved in everything that was going on. Well that's a small price to pay, really, for what was achieved for all newspapers at that point. He'd never told me what to put in The Times, he never would."

So, having been educated at Oxford, does he think Oxbridge graduates still have an edge in the careers market? "I still have quite a lot to say, the way your people are taught at Oxford and Cambridge. I think if we could afford to educate everybody like that it would be better, but we can't, and Oxford and Cambridge do do it.

Does that mean you are an elitist? "Do I think that intellectual先进 is best served by everybody knowing exactly the same thing? No I don't. So if that makes me an elitist, then I am one, and Stothard regards it as his job to have out

The Times over there" (gesturing towards the painting) "so to The Times we have now. We appeal to the decision-makers of this country, who, instead of being 30,000 white males based around London clubs, are now millions of people, spread all over the country, making decisions about their lives."

Indeed, how interesting. So why are you no longer the leading broadsheet, where does your arch-rival the Daily Telegraph fit in? "The Telegraph management in the early years of the century were much quicker than the management of The Times to realize that there was a big mid-class audience out there, and decisions were being made by different sorts of people."

Ah, those damned decisions again. "In 1830, when that was done" (the painting again), "all the decisions in this country were being made by a small number of men, and they read The Times."

If, ok, that worked, Peter Stothard is an elitist! I got a juicy comment!

Ex, haven't we covered this ground already? Oh well. So what about today? Charles Moore told me he feels absolutely no danger from The Times, he knows he is winning the sales war. What do you think Mr Stothard? "Yes, he is from me to suggest that my friend Charles Moore is deceptive...but one might easily be misled by his boast that the Telegraph is the best sell

er while "all the time" costing more than The Times. More than 30% of the Telegraph's daily sale is to those who use cut-price subscriptions and money-off vouchers. Some 300,000 Telegraph purchasers pay less each day for their newspaper than those who buy The Times. By adjusting the price of these cheap deals the Telegraph can maintain its million-a-day sale for as long as the owner is prepared to foot the large and onerous bill."

Stothard is, on the surface, no less confident about his paper's future than his rival, but he does seem to cling to a hazy nostalgia about the long-lost days of The Times' supremacy which he is striving to revive. What can he say about the future of The Times and the newspaper industry? "On the 11th September, the sales of newspapers – The Times sales rose most – but the sales of all newspapers rose, and that shows to me that when there are important issues that people want to try and understand and get their heads round, they go to The Times."

A friend of mine described The Times as "the most tabloid of the broadsheet newspapers. Stothard is not even offended by this. "One may think we are the most tabloid, in the sense that we are the most visually attractive, then you."

Sounds like Sir Intro to me. Which makes this a good time to offer Stothard the Varsity–TCS doorstep challenge. Which paper looks more impressive, in your professional opinion? Looking at TCS, he asks, "Is this the one funded by the Union? You can always tell when something is not part of the competitive, commercial process – if it's a trade union magazine, or something which is given out free to all employees of a company – they always have a certain look, which you can tell immediately. If it really mattered to you how many people picked up your paper, and read what you wanted to say, you wouldn't put that picture on the front. It seems only fair to say that he was looking at a copy from last term, but still...
FRIDAY

FILM
• CU Jewish Society: ‘Friday Night Experience’ – meal + entertainment, followed by Cufani Ovah. The Student Centre, 3 Thompsons Lane. 7.30pm.

MUSIC
• Bahai Society: Prayers for World Peace and Unity. Friends Meeting House, Jesus Lane. 7.30pm.
• CU Jewish Society: ‘Friday Night Experience’ – meal + entertainment, followed by Cufani Ovah. The Student Centre, 3 Thompsons Lane. 7.30pm.

MISC
• Baha’i Society: Prayers for World Peace and Unity. Friends Meeting House, Jesus Lane. 7.30pm.

SOUTH WEST 9
• 10.30: Life Is Beautiful (PG). 8.00: It Is (U). 1.30, 6.00: The Circle (PG).

SATURDAY

FILM

MUSIC
• Ensemble Zarah: Cambridge’s elite music ensemble performs Beethoven’s 6th, Mozart piano concerto no. 27, Emanuel college, The Queen’s Building. 8pm.

THEATRE

Kettle’s Yard:
• 7.45pm. £4. 

SUNDAY

FILM
• ARTS: 12.50, 3.20, 5.50, 8.20: The Man Who Wasn’t There (15). 1.00, 3.40: Annie Hall (15). 3.00, 8.00: Amelie (15). 10.00, 6.00: The Circle (PG).

MUSIC
• Ensemble Zarah: Cambridge’s elite music ensemble performs Beethoven’s 6th, Mozart piano concerto no. 27, Emanuel college, The Queen’s Building. 8pm.

THEATRE

Kettle’s Yard:
• 7.45pm. £4.
2 November 2001
www.varsity.cam.ac.uk

- Peace Gathering – meditation and sharing: Calling all spiritual people: let’s join hearts. Ralph S/0442.
  www.cam.net.uk/home/00315/peace/ Bharat Bhawan, Old Library. 117 Mill Road. 8pm. £Donation.

MUSIC
- Fat Poppadaddy Presidential Suite: Student night playing Hip hop, indie, jazzy tunes and funky stuff. Po Na Na’s, 8pm. Exercise b4 10 with NUS, £1 after.
- Kettle’s Yard Music: Subscription Concert: chamber music in the beautiful setting of Kettle’s Yard House. Kettle’s Yard. 8pm. £8.50 per term, £20 per year.

TALK

FRIDAY 9

- Film: New Hall: Festival of films on the Classics – Cleopatra (1934) directed by Cecil B DeMille. New Hall, Emmanuel College. Queen’s Building, 8 and 10pm. £3.
- Misc: CU Jewish Society: ‘Friday Night Experience’ – meal + entertainment, followed by Culau Oreg. The Student Centre, 3 Thompsons Lane. 7.30pm.
- Theatre: CADS: A captivating production of ‘Ecstasy’. A play by Mike Leigh. Corpus Christi College, New Court Theatre. 7:30pm. £5/£4.
- Show and Tell: Mix of everything live on stage – bands, guests, previews, more... Emmanuel College, Queen’s Building, 8 and 10pm. £3.
- Music: CUOperaS & the Bene’t Club: A recital of arias and duets from Mozart’s opera. Corpus Christi College, Chapel. 11:15pm.
- The Junction: 70s and 80s disco extravaganza and karaoke bar. The Junction, 10 – 2. 10pm. £3.50 b4 11.

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Legalisation of the leaf

The insular nature of Cambridge reduces most students’ knowledge of current affairs beyond Girton to a very low level. So it may come as a surprise to learn that last week David Blunkett announced his intention to downgrade the classification of cannabis, the class A substances, lysergic acid, that Albert Hoffman derived LSD in 1938. They reduce substances, lysergic acid, that Albert Hofmann derived LSD in 1938. However, recent reanalysis of the results suggests that events that were triggered by the mycotoxicological and physical symptoms of ergotism in Salem 1692 have been made famous by their dramatisation in Arthur Miller’s The Crucible. The phenomena were real events, which have been a cause of controversy. Perhaps we can look to a small fungus, like ergot, which grows on rye, as the source of these sensations rather than attributing them to the work of Satan’s followers. Ergot can infect many cereals and grasses, especially rye, and can be seen as a cause of the symptoms of ergotism. The natural production of serotonin, leading serotonin-target sites to compensate by producing extra receptors to increase their sensitivity to any remaining serotonin. However, the large amounts of serotonin-like hallucinogens that can reach these receptors instead, over-activating the target area, which can cause matic mood-swings and hallucinations. It is this form of the disease which best accounts for testimonies of strange shapes in the fireplaces which looked like jellies and quivered with a strange motion or a vision of an animal spectral. ‘The body of it looked like a monkey, only the feet were more like cock’s feet, with claws and the face somewhat more like a man’s face.’

The second form of the disease leads to gangrene by causing blood vessels to constrict, restricting the blood flow to hands, feet or even limbs. The intense burning pain experienced with this disease led to the term “Hell’s Fire” or “Holy Fire” in Eleventh Century Europe. Fortunately, outbreaks of the disease are now rare, with the most recent being in the small French village of Pont St Esprit fifty years ago. The local farmer, a miller and a baker turned a blind eye to this disease, explaining why little attention was paid to it. Since 1976 when Linda Caporael first suggested ergot as a factor triggering the Salem witchcraft accusations, other research has supported her hypothesis. Mary Monteiro traced similar reports of psychotic illnesses (often interpreted as bewitchment) across Europe and found their geographic distribution followed dietary patterns, being highest where rye, the most susceptible grain to ergot, was used to make bread. Furthermore, the dates of the illnesses outbreaks, both in America and Europe, correlate with the climatic conditions that favour rye infection: cold winters followed by rainy springs. Even the victim profiles point towards ergot poisoning because women, especially young women, are known to be more prone to developing the disease, explaining why the young girls in Salem were amongst the worst affected even though other members of their households escaped unharmed. Finally, Caporael refers us to the villagers’town’s history as they them- selves initially judged the girls to be suffering from a physical condition and sought doctors’ opinions for two months before resorting to the belief that the girls must be bewitched. There is convincing evidence for ergot’s role in the inexplicable illnesses and peculiar behaviour previously ascribed to witchcraft. But can it account for the old myth of flying broomsticks? Well, as yet ergot doesn’t seem to have any gravity defying properties but it might well lead you to believe that you can fly.

Blunkett’s effective decriminalisation has caused uproar from anti-drug campaigners, who, as well as citing the detrimental physical and mental effects, claim that cannabis is an addictive “gate-way” drug, leading to harder drugs like ecstasy and heroin. While most cannabis users heavily dispute these claims, and only 15% of cannabis users are fully dependent on the drug, research has shown some connections between smoking cannabis initially, and then progressing to stronger class A substances. Blunkett does, however, have valid reasons for wanting to decriminalise cannabis, the main ones being that it will divert police time to less trivial operations and reduce smuggling and underground sales. Additionally, cannabis is in great demand as a treatment for pain in cancer and arthritis. It can also relieve nausea for those undergoing chemotherapy and reduce muscle spasms in MS sufferers. It should be considered though, that cannabis causes smoking related diseases, and so this treatment leads to a vicious circle, while the drug gives on one hand, alleviating the pain and nausea associated with cancer, it also takes away, causing the disease in others.

Emma Sherwood

NEWS IN BRIEFS

How do you determine the true size of a man’s penis? I think most men, and perhaps men too, would recommend that you don’t ask the man! Indian health officials have taken this point on board in their current investigation to map the regional variations in penis size. The study, ordered by the Indian Health Ministry, will be using a digital camera to take measurements at full erection. The project stems from growing concerns over the failure rate of condoms. N C Saxena, of the Indian Council of Medical Research, hopes that an understand- ing of the variations in length and width of the male organ across the country could allow the production of tailor made condoms. This would hopefully reduce the 20 per cent failure rate because of breakage or spillage. Success of the project may only be slight, as a recent survey put contraceptive use in India at just three percent.

Liz Wilcockes

The fungus with project

Was a fungus a factor in the notorious Salem witchcraft trials? Leonie Sloman investigates

A few centuries ago, if you were accused of witchcraft your outlook was bleak, especially as a popular way of proving of witchcraft your outlook was bleak, especially as a popular way of proving witchcraft your outlook was bleak, especially as a popular way of proving...
What the ...? Unless you have had some form of contact with it, that’s often the reaction. Even in our art-saturated surroundings where almost any student is likely to go and watch a Ionesco play or take up splatter painting for the weekend, contemporary dance is often side-lined as “inaccessible”.

What is contemporary dance, though? Exactly. It’s one of those annoying umbrella terms that covers every movement type from hip-hop, mime, martial arts and ballet, to African, jazz, capoeira, Indian and yoga. But just because it can’t be easily pigeonholed, it doesn’t mean it can’t be easily enjoyed. Funky, funny, obscure, absurd, literally moving, and sometimes, yes it’s true, it can be a bit pretentious. Let’s face it, all art has the potentially pretentious factor, but at its best it’s so much more than that and it shouldn’t be a put-off.

You could sit through a contemporary dance piece and feel excluded by the Secret Protocols Code. If only you had been handed a decoding sheet on your way in, you too would be able to say “Mmm wwwonder... ful, oh the symbolism, so profound!”. But the chances are you’d be blagging. Contemporary dance is not about secret codes, and in this way it is just the same as any other type of art. The old chestnut that every interpretation is a valid one hasn’t become old and chestnutty for nothing. Contemporary dance is there for everyone to experience and enjoy.

In fact this country is undergoing a steady swing into making contemporary dance even more accessible. Nearly every company now has an education or outreach department organising workshops, residencies and talks. And they aren’t just for dancers and school kids. They often come out to groups of actors, sports people and anyone who just fancies a go. Moreover, it’s much easier for complete beginners to learn than any other dance form. It concentrates on enjoying movement, becoming more body-aware and confident as well as communicating ideas and feelings.

Yet last time there was a professional workshop in Cambridge only a paltry handful turned up. Random Dance Company came, who are one of the most innovative and exciting companies around. People really missed out because they didn’t know about contemporary dance or they didn’t have the confidence to try it.

Apart from being sad, this type of reaction is hard to believe from students at this university. Everyone here faces world experts whose minds are every bit as honed as the dancers’ bodies, but no one thinks “oh, can’t go to Cambridge, loads of scary experts will be there”. Of course there’s always the initial oh-my-gosh-I-don’t-understand-anything first week fresher syndrome, but after that we all recognise the value and (here comes the cheese) the fun in what we do. So why not take the same approach to contemporary dance as you do other art forms, and give it a go yourself!  

Amy Bell
Doctor doctor I think I’m a voodoo bluesman

Dave Thorley shook, rattled, checked his pulse and blew away a few cobwebs with Dr John at the Corn Exchange

A bout 35 minutes into his set the old, fat man stands up and runs around. He just about manages to spread his arms to something like their full span and he gives his aged hips the faintest of swaggers. Dr John rotates on his axis and pours himself back over his pianostool. Inevitably, the old, fat man overflows. He stretches out his hairy arms and his stubby fingers and resumes his twelve-bar blues shuffle.

“Ain’t nobody says an ol’ man can’t be cool no’more”, I wish he’d crawled; but he didn’t. Actually, he might have done but his New Orleans brogue, so deep, so rough, so cool, was simply imperceptible. Syllables, words and whole sentences merged into one long, languid, tributary of sound.

Backed by two leftover cops from Z-2 Cars (bass and guitar) and a gargantuan white-capped oddball from twenties gangster films (drums and dog barks), the Doctor rules his burlesque kingdom of the voodoo swamp blues.

I call him the Doctor because he must be a Time Lord: the cowboy hat, the ponyslant, the jewellery, the mystic cane, the skull on the piano, none of them from this world. The travelling Mardi Gras tra-la-la foursome range, musically, across Duke Ellington, ‘Smoky Joe’s Cafe’, ‘70s funk, old fashioned love song, country ‘n’ western, something that sounds like African percussion, bodles and pipes and other things with bit from Stick Music from Mars.

This curious hitch-potch of the futurists-already-dated lechers like acid from the needle, bullet-scarred skin of the old fat man. He swats the blues; and when he blows his nose, that psych-jazz that comes shooting out. A cocktail of shuffle and shuffle courses through his just-about-living body. His heart beats in syncopations. He teeters off-stage, gingerly, by degrees, waving his magical mystery cane. Give it up for old fat men.

The music is recorded in Joe’s bedroom, songs produce themselves from Alexis’ guitar playing, Joe experimenting with his computer, and the two collaborating whenever they are both in the same place. When they do play gigs, Alexis is sure that he doesn’t look happy on stage. He claims that live, “we are all struggling a bit, anything might happen because there are so many different parts. Dan and Emma are accomplished musicians and know our songs better than we do. Joe still has pieces of实实在在 on the keys of his Yamaha to remind himself what to press’. Such modest comments should be thrown to one side. The rough and ready live experience, the thought and consideration that has gone into every song on the CD... if they can achieve so much in university holidays, a part-time enterprise, who can say where this could take them when it becomes a full-time job.

Louisa Thomson discovers a new world chatting to local band Hot Chip

A few years ago, I would have imagined myself curling up with the paper on my bed, and list-ning to something so quiet that I could actually concentrate on something else. Maybe it’s my age, perhaps it’s the consequence of one too many nights at gigs where all I have to take home with me is an incom-fortable ringing sound in my ears. It always seemed as though noise was equated with power; thrashing away at an acoustic guitar was more appealing than sitting on a stool, looking miserable and wearing odd pieces of knitwear. Hot Chip don’t exactly fit into this last description, but they are certainly more new acoustic than nu metal. Suddenly a degree of intelligence has been placed back into music. Artists like Smog, Royal Trux, Bonnie Prince Billy and Jim O’Rourke are reclaiming a sound that uses everything at its dis-posa. Lyrics can be heard, guitars meet electronica, band members swap instruments with alarming ease and the listener is forced to step back and consider what is presented before them. It’s mature and uplifting, and all the more powerful for that very rea-son.

Hot Chip consists of five people, though the songwrit-ing partnership of Alexis Taylor and Joe Goddard is at the core. They have both been writing and recording since they were at school, and after spending a gap year in Mexico, released ‘The Mexico EP’ on Victory

Garden Records. Over the summer, with the other band members, they have recorded enough songs for an album, and are in the process of looking for a record deal. Listening to the promo of ‘Brooke Summ the sound is even more bare and stripped down than it appears live. As Alexis explains they are “perfec-tions with high standards and are not pre pared to do anything just for the sake of it”, so they are still deciding whether the album is finished or not. Alexis wants to con-tinue with Hot Chip when he leaves univ-ersity next year, and appears serious about “getting somewhere”.

This curious hotch-potch of the future managed to sound powerful and wasn’t at all seems so simple, so effortless. People can’t help but sway and nod their heads.

C CRS have acquired a reputation as one of the most intense live bands in Cambridge. It is clear that they are (undoubtedly) a talented band; their expressive music manages to sound carefully crafted, ferocious and intermittently breathtaking. Unfortunately they are also devoid of any originality. CRS are seeking content to piller the quietest LOUD template that Mogwai pioneered nearly half a decade ago on Young Team. If things tend to become predictable, CRS’s vast ranges of comedy facial expressions provide a welcome source of light relief. This is not to dismiss CRS completely out of hand, compared to most bands plying their trade in provincial pubs, they are exceptional and well worth checking out.

Not fitting into any particular musical genre, and not really classifiable as a band, or solo artist, the all convention defying UM is the most original thing you will ever see in Cambridge. He (Um, the genius) stands on stage, sometimes in a shell suit, other times in a suit and tie. He presses play on a tape, sounds come out. He then attempts to sing along in time. Or read poems. Or extracts from his diaries. Trust me. You will leave the room changed person, and want to take Um with you, prop him up in your bedroom, and just have him there on constant tap. Visit Um’s website at www.umbusiness.co.uk.

Much lauded a couple of years ago, The Stars Of Aviation (nee Florence) have returned with a News(e)h and a Gig. The new “Greatest Disappointment” EP marks a progression from what Versity once described as the “almost superific” to what Versity now describes as the “trap-poppy progressiive” Choo this improved pigeon-holing for yourself as Stars of Aviation play a free gig in Selwyn bar around 9.30.

Jim Hinks, Louisa Thomson

Photo: Tom Catchesides
Hilary Tacey reflects on the sad passing of the pop icon

J ohn Lennon, Jimmy Hendrix, Brian Jones, Janis Joplin, Sid Vicious, Freddie Mercury, Kurt Cobain – names which all indisputably scream "icon" and conjure up some of the most seminal sounds and images of musical history…Cast your idol-hungry eye over a newspaper's shelf or a teenager's bedroom wall nowadays, however, and you're more likely to see footballers, actors or superstars than musicians. What's gone wrong? Are we witnessing the death of the musical icon and, if so, why?

The 21st century music scene has "pop stars" aplenty, but who's really going to describe Steps, S Club 7 or even Britney and Kylie as icons? They're just a bit too sanitised and squeaky-clean for that. Real icons got their hands dirty. Paradoxically, though, it's also the increasingly demystified nature of the pop market, headed up by reality TV shows like Pop Stars and its bastard spawn, Pop Idol (a misnomer if ever there was one) which are to blame. The aim of democratizing pop is a fine one, but truth be told, the girl or boy next door is never going to have the necessary inherentowaway, its excitement contained and defined by three minute bursts of adrenaline disposability. It would seem more obvious to look beyond the mainstream, to lesser transitory genres, for twenty-first century icons. But the post-millennial age has thus far been one of iconoclasm, of the breaking down of barriers and an increasing unwillingness by musicians to put themselves on a pedestal. Most artists of musical merit tend to show extreme reluctance to buy into stardom, too aware of the fact that this endangers their privacy and risks the watering-down of their art. The sad fact is that it is becoming rare to the point of non-existence to find that potent combination of musical credibility and star quality. Iconography of musicians therefore has an increasingly necrophiliac feel – those who are idolised tend to be dead and buried – history distorting and blurring their deficiencies and flaws. Members of groups that once had iconic status (see Paul McCartney), or icons who have survived their sell-by date (Jacko, Madonna et al) are nowhere near as venerated now as they once were. It's not that musicians no longer have it within them to be iconic and inspirational, but more that our three second attention-span, soundbite & slogan-oriented TH-IPC-MTV culture just doesn't allow it, reducing everything down to the lowest common denominator. If the true mark of a star is that you want to be them and/or shag them, then there's no shortage of possibilities, but the icon, who transcends either of those things…well, when was the last time you truly revered a popstar, rockstar, or icon? It's perhaps unfair to invent a new denominator.

The new scene on the block and great hope for new music is this: stouter funk. Flanger are the new exponents of this cut up reproprocessed brand of scuzzy, squarly jazz. Inner Space/Outer Space is a musical col- lage of things cut from Mojo magazine and pasted (crumpled and encrusted with Copydex) into alternative music Bible, The Wire. I could say boring stuff about influences ranging from someone you haven't heard of to someone else you haven't heard of but that'd be boring. Far more fun to invent a new "scene" and then you can make your own people up who I've never heard of.

So here are some thoughts for starters: stutter funk is the new thing, bridging the modern and post-modern era. It takes its root in the works of such inspirational as "Bubbly" Joe Sugg, Dennis "the hat" Stevens and early period Enrol "the reptile" Lizard. You see how it works now? Try it yourself.

Playgroup
Tompaullin
Various
Flinger

On the plus side, if you've ever been curious to see what happens when you put a CD in the microwave it's this: Guy Fawkes night turns up for the second time this year. You have the right CD to do it with.

The Gaelicly named Chocolate Fireguard are back with their second compilation 'Taster' album, hoping for the success that 5th Gen attained for the Ninja Tune label. If you slot the first CD of the double album in your player, you'll get 14 tracks of eclectic randomness; here, French rapping and break beats go easily hand in hand, only united by the wicked baselines and jazzy sampling. And it's mighty fine. However, the second CD is unforgivably weak. Somewhere along the production line a whole lot of confused "musi- cians" stumbled upon a recording studio and thought it would be a good idea to impress upon us their skills (or lack of).

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On the plus side...
Hilary Ford is present at new-music society ISIS' inaugural orchestral concert

### Sunday 4 November

**Emmanuel Choir and Chamber Orchestra of Celje, Slovenia, Emanuel Choir and Chamber Orchestra of Celje, Slovenia**

*Ensemble Transa, Queen's Building, Emmanuel College 8pm, £3 – Chelsea Clickers friends and Anna Smith leads in a programme featuring Stravinsky's Sixth Symphony alongside Mozart's last piano concerto played by John Reid.*

**Fitzwilliam Museum Promenade Concerts**, 2.30pm, free – Patricia McGill (cello) and Nicholas Rimmer (piano)

**CUMC Chamber Concert, St. Catz, 8pm £15/£10 members and under 18s free – Lizzie Ball (violin) and Hilary Ford (piano) performing Beethoven, Debussy and Tchaikovsky.**

**K239 Chamber Players, Pencebroke Old Library 8pm, 57/£15 including wine – All Mozart programme including Variations for piano duet.**

### Monday 5 November

**Lunchtime Recital, Clare Chapel 1.15pm free.**

### Thursday 7 November

**Kettle's Yard Subscription Series, Kettle's Yard 8pm, subscription – The Guarnieri Trio from Prague.**

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### Previews

**Hilary Ford makes it's debut 2 November 2001 www.varsity.cam.ac.uk**

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**Enjoying a bed and a bath, Joanna MacGregor’s UK tour**

I have been to five or six events at the Cambridge University City of Music and have come out of every single one an inspired, dangerously enthusiastic happy person. Considering this the case last Wednesday after hearing Joanna MacGregor, Ensemble Bash and the Britten Sinfonia in their UK tour, Light & Shade. I wondered once again, why don't more students end up here?!
Playing a role: Issam Kourbaj

Vanessa Hodgkinson finds out what it takes to be Issam Kourbaj; artist, teacher and suspected outlaw.

You've probably seen him around Cambridge a few times, walking up the road wearing a hand-rolled cigarette, or riding around on his bike with a rather retro black cap on. Or you may have heard about the exhibition that he had last year in his studio, in conjunction with his three-year-old son. There is something of the continental artist about him too. And anyone who has been to the ARSCOC life classes on a Friday afternoon will know his name.

This is Issam Kourbaj, artist, but also possibly the Jackal, the criminal, the Russian military are convinced he actually is (so much so they even arrested him, quite a few times). However, it's not the amazing life this man has led, living in Syria, Russia, Azerbaijan, and Mexico that I wanted to find out about. Nor the way he was discovered, or perhaps we are closer to Mourad, the artist's son, than we are to the Academy. And this is what Kourbaj is attempting to extract and encourage; the idea of playing again, and learning through play.

"I often play with what the left hand can do, because the left hand is uncultured. So much of the logic is taught in one's life, represented by the right hand. As soon as we get educated, there is something that is not familiar, I think here is the chance to hold up a new mirror to see oneself.

For Kourbaj, perhaps these students at Cambridge, so capable and so advanced, that for one week present an opportunity to develop a new practical, creative side, which could be just as important. "You can get to a stage when you sort to yourself okay, you have done it once, twice, these hundred times, what else? Now I need something to provoke new emotions.

In his classes, he suggests, but never orders, a way of approaching the subject of his classical education, like so many before him, his direction went to the Academy. As he admits himself, this was an extremely classical, even erudite approach to the subject, where the study of the Nude extended into an examination of the skeleton and muscle groups. Although this did interest him to a point, it seems that this approach also lacked something more meaningful, to him, namely the personal, imaginative expression of the subject. And so after six years of this classical education, like so many before him, his direction went to another extreme, to the deeply anti-academic, subverting his natural draughtsmanship, twitching nipples and taping nipples and...I was Hot in Cold St Petersburg, 1990.

However, he appears to find himself back again, amongst the learned and the schooled, back in the Academy as it were, in Cambridge. If Kourbaj has come full circle, this time he appears to have brought back with him some very important lessons.

If Kourbaj has come full circle, this time he appears to have brought back with him some very important lessons...
**Joshua Perry identifies with cinema's foremost navel-gazer**

There are a few artists for whom life and work are inseparable. Michael Jackson is one, in that all critical opinion seems to be along the lines of: “Thriller was great, but he’s now clearly insane; and I wouldn’t trust anyone to make a hit album whose best friends are U2 Geller and a chimpanzee.” Now, in almost all cases I reject this type of judgement. Whether I like art depends on my emotional reaction to the art in question, with the sanity/all-round-bloodyknocksiness of the artist being irrelevant. Woody Allen is another, but with him things get more complicated. You see, we identify with Woody; he speaks directly to us, glorifying the lot of failure and making dysfunction seem endearing. Moreover, with Annie Hall, Allen first hit on the idea of filmmaking as therapy. This was his self-professed ‘picture about me’ in which, he said after its original 1977 release, he hoped to display “my life, my thoughts, my ideas, my background.” As viewers, we are simultaneously friend, psychobucket and voyeur, and as such it seems pretty important that we should like Allen’s film. Given that Aby – his film after Annie Hall – is a clear representation of self. Yet Allen is the man who once hired a shrink for one of his old child, and who, with Annie Hall, Allen first hit on the idea of filmmaking as therapy.

moved in with Soo-Yi, his foster-daughter young enough to be his grandchild, after his then-wife Mia Farrow found polioheaks he had taken of Soo-Yi naked. Ultimately, this might affect our judgement of the film more if we were not so unduly bewitching. Aby Singer is turning 40, and the film reconciles his thoughts on breaking up with Anna, who is played by Diane Keaton, his real life partner at the time. Keaton won an Oscar for her sensitive self-portrayal, yet the true focus is on Woody (or Aby, with himself, with the film taking the form of a collection of musings on his life so far. The script is co-written with regular collaborator Marshall Brickman, and designed to give Allen all the best lines, with the impressive ensemble cast that surrounds him serving only to detail his life. Hamour is worn so intrinsically into the fabric of the film that there are laughs everywhere, from the skits during which Allen addresses the audience directly to cinematic devices such as subtitles whilst characters are speaking to convey what they’re really thinking. This gets to the heart of why the film is a classic. We admire Annie Hall for its directorial innovation, its awesomely dense comedy, and its expert delivery. At one point, Allen contemplates semi-rhetorically: “You know how you’re always trying to get things to come out perfectly in art, because it’s really difficult in life?” The film is asking to be seen as cinematic compensation for the reality of his life as a constantly self-questioning, socially autistic nervous wreck. On the basis of the film’s commercial success, the four Oscars it picked up and an adoring fanbase established in the twenty-four years since its release, it would seem that the cinema-going public, myself included, are more than happy to accept this reerelease.

** Blues Brothers

8 Nov, 10pm, Chris

Jack and Elwood Blues (John Belushi and Dan Aykroyd) are brothers born and brought up by blues not by birth; two washed up blues musicians, wanted by the cops, who reform their band to raise money in order to save their community. They grow up together, John Landie comedy cipher is a bit of an eccentric, sings music and laughs that shouldn’t work, but does. Why? Because Landie gives Aykroyd and Belushi licence to enjoy themselves, play the characters and adopt their passion for American soul and blues music. Blues Brothers is the film, for most camerons in one film – Janes and or Twiggis. The best of the best.

**Urban Ghost Story**

26.3 Nov, 10.30pm

Arts Picturehouse

There’s a trend at the moment, certainly kick started by The Sixth Sense, for paranormal chillers taking a more subtle approach to their subject matter than the splatter-movies of the eighties. Urban Ghost Story is a one-a low-budget, British independent film. It’s a ghost story in a British sense. It pits paranormal chillers taking a more subtle approach to their subject matter than the splatter-movies of the eighties. Urban Ghost Story is a one-a low-budget, British independent film. It’s a ghost story in a British sense. It pits a British family against an evil spirit that terrorises them. The story is told through flashbacks, interspersed with present day events. The family’s son, Tom, has a premonition that something bad will happen on the night of the full moon, and he warns his parents of the danger. The family starts to experience strange occurrences, including a ghostly figure that haunts them. The son’s premonition proves to be true, and the family is forced to confront the ghostly presence. The movie is a mix of horror and drama, with a dash of comedy. It’s a film that will keep you on the edge of your seat, wondering what will happen next. Tom Armitage
Art in motion: Avant-Garde

Charlie Phillips looks at the 1920s avant garde season at the Arts Picture House

Tiptoeing into the cinema, the ivories tinkle and the screen flickers as smoking men in smart suits and kohl-eyed ladies in pearls use their bodies to express silently to us what is going on. It sounds really weird, I know – instead of being deafened in the multiplex by explosions and the roar of cars, you’ve stumbled upon an art installation and nobody warned you. But, this is what it used to be like. Forget “I love 1990s”, here’s an opportunity to love the twenties. It’s not a chance you get very often.

The Picturehouse is currently running this season in conjunction with CUMIS, the notorious film cult hiding near the architecture department, and the “République Française” cultural delegation. It’s brilliant, and not just because it makes you feel slightly nostalgic for a bygone age of cinematic innocence before war tore the century and aesthetic idealism apart. The joy of watching collage after collage of perfectly-executed images is that it is avant-garde and it is proud to claim so.

The mechanical ability to immortalise the moving image made film, in the ‘20s, the most relevant possible medium. Superstar sociologist Walter Benjamin wrote in the thirties that avant-garde film possessed the possibility for genuine emancipation from dictation by the holders of cultural power. Whether you’re a Marxist or not (and everyone in the twenties was either a revolutionary or an aristocrat, so beat with me), these films are a testament to an attempt to harness that creative autonomy.

As an example, the first film in the season, Jean Vigo’s *A propos de Nice*, gradually developed one shock to the system after another. Starting with pretty shots of the Nice shoreline, which would have made a great film anyway, suddenly we were bombarded with wealthy men and their moustaches, fat women on chariots being pelted with flowers and a saucy Charleston in slow-motion performed by manic young girls, all watched by an intrusively-placed camera. With no sound, and the expense of film and editing, each frame really does appear to have been carved expertly. Léger’s *Ballet Mécanique* is even better, a testament to Futurist optimism about the detritus of urban living relying on a pummelling headfuck of juxtaposition.

All the films are extremely fun too, even if they don’t make you want to storm Hollywood’s Winter Palace like me – everyone should experience hearing a live soundtrack to the film they are watching once in a while. But it is wonderful to see their commitment to the avant-garde before anybody knew what the phrase really meant. I don’t know either – I think it’s something to do with fragments from the future world showing us the way to go forward. But you should go and see the rest of the season and glimpse hopeful outsider art from a less perverted age on film.

The Avant-Garde season continues until 14th November and films are shown on Mondays at 7pm at the Arts Picturehouse.

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See the future as it happens
Tom Royston and Angela Grainger find out if Mark Thomas is as funny as he thinks he is.

Mark Thomas doesn’t like the war, but his brand of political comedy is certainly doing very well out of it: from TV post-pub student favourite to high profile anti-war spokesman since his tour began on September 17th. If George Bush wanted to stop all this cissy opposition to the war he could have done worse than to napalm the Arts Theatre last Monday. Cambridge’s conscience was gathered at the very reasonable £14.50/head to watch public-school, drama-school educated Mark Thomas lead them in celebration of their own ‘f***in’ victory’.

The Arts Theatre gave him a standing ovation early on, and this is apparently not unusual. “We went to Hereford—an SAS town. People go, ‘F***! There’s actually 300 people in the room that feel like me! We hate the war! And he just said it!’” He states at a lot, when he talks – you know he means what he says. He also tries hard not to “sound like a wanker” and overstate his importance. He pays tribute to the “fucking magic” people he works with and bases his shows around, but at the same time his sense of personal integrity is very important to him. Chris Morris once said he “made a living out of terrifying receptionists” but often his energy and never hit the mark, as when he persuaded representatives of the Indonesian military to confess for the suits. “People go, ‘Wow, this guy is an amazing play. It is a musical about a guy named Bobby who isn’t quite sure if he is ready to tie the knot. The audience is treated to a series of vignettes of married and is running from 1 November – 15 December.

I’m not fighting them again, the IRA’s one.” Optimistic words for the IRA of the moment. These are not the words of a terrorist, however, but a ten year old Belfast kid from Owen McCafferty’s Mojo Mickybo, the BATs fifth week Late Show at Queens’. He speaks after a childhood fight, in the summer of 1970, when Northern Ireland’s “war” was far from over. Referring to this conflict week, it echoed pompously across the decades.

1970: The year after the Summer of Love. The World Cup was kicking off in Mexico. In Northern Ireland the Troubles were just beginning to explode and at the end there were 1,500 people killed by the British Army. Ten years later, the Hunger Strikes. Nearly 20 years after those, the Omagh bomb. And things still aren’t over even if the IRA has renounced arms.

This summer saw the worst rioting in Belfast for decades, pipe bombs and punishment hearings were again a daily reality. The international response to Northern Ireland is often one of incredulity at the province’s inability to break the cycle of sectarian violence. Perhaps this attitude in England is especially shocking as Northern Ireland is a part of the UK. But then again, not such terrified and lack of understanding about any part of the world is shocking.

Mojo Mickybo is an amazing play. It is a fast paced and exciting what through the summer friendship of two Belfast kids (Mojo and Mickybo). A two-man show with 17 characters on stage—ballies, par- ents, drinkers and neighbours. But the Troubles don’t matter for most of the play, not to the audience especially not to the kids! All they know is that Mojo loves “up the road” and Mickybo “over the bridge”. Friendship, fun and life all go on but we are left asking if the peace process is still “over the hill”.

Ben Elton – just a f**king insignificant f** king corporate knob-polisher.

He might not be worried about label right now, but I am. Surprisingly, though, he’s never been taken to court. “We try really hard not to. I’ve never been arrested and I’m really proud of that.” Oh? “If I get arrested, I’ve got a team of lawyers from Channel Four that could have been better, but basically, you can quote me on that.”

Company is on at the ADC from Tuesday until Saturday at 7.45pm.

Dubious Company?

Majo Mickybo runs 6-11 November in the Fitzpatrick Theatre, Queens’ College at 11pm
Beckett at the ADC: Trick or treat?

Sarah Brealey reviews a Beckett double bill, the latest offering from the company responsible for Disco Pigs

I saw Krapp’s Last Tape and Not I on Hallow’en, which turned out to be peculiarly appropriate. It was a little like watching a trick-or-treat devised by the inmates of a lunatic asylum. Beckett’s characters are sometimes funny, sometimes sad, but more often macabre, inhuman or even in bits: in Not I, the protagonist is simply a Mouth. The Halloween analogy grew more striking as Krapp’s Last Tape progressed and Krapp’s makeup, which had initially made him a reasonably realistic old man, began to warm up, giving the impression that he was slowly melting before our eyes. This caveat apart, Krapp (Michael Molloy) was extremely convincing. He moved like an old man, the human equivalent of a rusty old car with its exhaust falling off; one could almost hear his joints creaking. As the play begins, he staggers across the stage, somehow managing to make the audience as fixated as Krapp: one could almost hear his soul being wrung out, one could almost hear his inhuman, almost terrifying laughter, which is Shill screams followed by silence. One audience member laughs, uncomfortably.

If this is your idea of good theatre, you are in for a treat, but I suspect that for most people it isn’t. In all honesty, Not I is a bad Beckett masterpiece. It was made a little more inaccessible by Horton’s aggressive delivery. There is a narrative in Not I, but it was hard to find. Fragments of emotion did come across, especially towards the end, but mostly they were lost, the ears overwhelmed by the verbal assault. But maybe that’s the point. The set did work well: the Auditor was more human than the Mouth.

Unfortunately, however, the Mouth moved out of the square of light early in the performance, so it could more accurately have been called the Chin.

I saw Not I on the last night of the run and I was…well, tall. The original score does much to add an element of darkness and tension to the production, playing on the expressive and poigniant clarity of the strings, but when the background music was absent, the cast somehow strained to fill the space. As Halvard Solness, Nathan Pyne-Carter was impressive, successfully conveying the conscience of a man racked by the guilt of the death of one who was forced others to suffer for his achievements. He staged the scene with conviction and some wonderfully contorted facial expressions and did much to engage the play with its darker side.

The young temptress Hilde Wangel, played by Aisling O’Neill, was a little chary: all skinny red dresses, and perksy good mornings. Though she engaged well with Pyne-Carter, she seemed unable to portray with any belief the truly redemptive elements of her character, drawing Solness from the mire of doubt and pain that he enveloped him as if she were attempting to convince an unwilling friend to go shopping. Michala Colombo as the wife does a great line in quiet bitterness although at times a little too quiet, and David Hart as the doctor was...well, tall. This is a play where you get exactly what you expect (or most of it): namely, Beckett in all his brooding and affecting glory. It’s ambitious, bold, and if it is not entirely successful, the production can certainly not be accused of backing down from a challenge. For the committed theatre-goer prepared to see a glimpse of dark tragedy, there is much in the production to reward a visit. And at the end, there’s always the solace of a late licence in the ADC bar.

Jeremy Leman

Sarah Brealey is an arts journalist. She is currently working for the Observer. She is the author of the novel The Reality of You and the forthcoming play, Not I, a Beckett masterpiece which is being performed at the ADC Theatre until Saturday 11pm.

Kropp’s Last Tape and Not I are on at the ADC at 11pm until Saturday.
Tim Stanley scoops an interview at the Union Bar with novelist Fay Weldon, and gets quite red in the face

Miss Weldon is not afraid of controversy. She read us passages from her book, leaning with one hand resting on the dais, looking at us like a class of naughty schoolboys, and talked about oral sex. She was of course plugging her new book – “I think it’s good!” she said once or twice, while denying its product placement – “I’m shocking you really want to talk about. There is no product placement in The Bulgari Connection – but if there is, it’s about as glamorous as product placing landscapes. Her characters, though, are not what one expects from a Weldon novel. They’re the elite. I asked her if, since Big Women, she’d abandoned working-class feminism. “I fought for it then out of anger. People were stilled and crushed,” she explained, “but these battles are largely won.” Have the preoccupations of society shifted? “Definitely. This is a new generation we’re writing for.” On the process of writing she is frank and down to earth. “I’m looking forward to the robotic age when everything will be done for us. We’ll just be catapulted and told what to do without any fuss. There’ll just be cameras watching us to make sure we do it properly.”

Like all good things the evening came to an end. Her chauffeur was waiting and she skipped out with the President on a plane and then often, ‘whoosh’, a car goes past. Most surreal.” Often is pronounced ‘oftter’. Miss Weldon then shares with us dreams and visions of the future. “I’m looking forward to the robotic age when everything will be done for us and thought out for us. We’ll just be catapulted and told what to do without any fuss. There’ll just be cameras watching us to make sure we do it properly.”

Wine ‘n’ Women per Weldon

“Please, I am married,” she chuckled as I gamely nudged her with my elbow. “You’ve gone all red in the face,” which she silenced by telling us her real age. My lips are of course sealed, but it is a wildly implausible number when her countenance is considered. Miss Weldon did shock me. She has a chauffeur. I told her that I imagined her only riding buses, and then giving up seats for ethnic minorities and people in wheelchairs. This she found amusing. “They are absolutely fascinating. The inside of a Mercedes has a television and everything. At first you think you’re sitting on a plane and then often, ‘whoosh’, a car goes past. Most surreal.”

Miss Weldon then reminded me oddly of the narrator in Mad About the Boy and she skipped out with the President to an end. Her chauffeur was waiting and she skipped out with the President reminding me oddly of the narrator in the song Mad About the Boy as she skips across Trafalgar Square. But was I her James Dean? As she left I realised that it was who I was mad about her. We waved goodbye and as we left I breathed a sigh of relief. “You’ve gone all red in the face,” someone said.
And the Beats Go On...

Sameer Rahim approves Barry Miles’ new biography of the Beat Poets, The Beat Hotel

In many ways the collective creative and social group known as “The Beats” are a perfect subject for biographical investigation. William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg and Gregory Corso are the main subjects of Barry Miles’ The Beat Hotel, which also features Jack Kerouac and Peter Orlovsky. All these artists constantly transformed their own lives and those of their friends into art. Miles concentrates on the period 1957-63, at number 9 Rue Git-de Coeur, Paris, a freethinking establishment that came to be known as the Beat Hotel. Here the beats could smoke-dope, play music, have both boys and girls over for “prolonged orgies” and generally live up to the free spirited beatnik stereotype.

An early story sets the tone: The poet Gregory Corso, recently released from jail, spies a beautiful woman making love to her boyfriend through his window and tells his new friend Allen Ginsberg. Ginsberg finds the description peculiarly familiar and realises that the ‘boyfriend’ is himself, the ‘girlfriend’ is his. Miles takes up the story: “You want me to introduce you? Allen asked mysteriously. ‘I have magical powers.’ The next day he took Gregory to meet her. Gregory later commented, ‘My first lay when I got out of prison.’”

The Beats were also big fans of psychotherapy and used their poetry as self-analysis. One of the more bizarre stories of group therapy is when Burroughs analysed Kerouac and Ginsberg by making them act out role-playing games, exploring the stereotypes of their own characters: Jack as innocent American abroad, Allen as scheming Art dealer and “Bill dressing up in drag and turning into a mad lesbian countess.” Just like Shelley, Wilde and Rimbaud (the group’s literary heroes), the lives of these extraordinary men seem to be of as much interest as their work. But that is my main criticism of this book. Each poet’s work is skimmed rather than analysed and too often the book turns into a literary soap opera charting who slept with whom, and who injected what and where. Whilst entertaining, this disregards the true purpose of any literary biography.

Miles has also written biographies of Kerouac, Ginsberg and Burroughs. He does not seem to be earning cash in on his previous research; there are too many assertions that are not sufficiently backed up. For example, Peter Orlovsky was Ginsberg’s boyfriend for many years; despite this Miles asserts that “his (Orlovsky’s) preference was for women. His fantasies were always of women, even when he was in bed with Allen.” This is merely based on the fact that Orlovsky sometimes slept with women, a sexual preference that Ginsberg was also susceptible to.

This book stimulated me to look beyond the lives and into the work. All the main protagonists have died, leaving behind a corpus of great imaginative depth. Despite the opportunistic nature of this book, it is a good introduction to a bohemian world. One must look into the “wild cooking pedantry and iconoclast” of their lives. This book is an elegant footnote to that line of Ginsberg’s which must be to examine the work in the context of the life rather than vice-versa.

Barry Miles’ biographies of Kerouac, Ginsberg and Burroughs. He

Literature on the bedside table

Susan Lennox interviewed Patrick Wildness, a Cambridge poet, who’s won prizes in the Guardian and is hoping to publish his first collection...

Current Reading: I’m reading quite a lot of poetry, but I’m mainly dipping in and out of Ivor Cutler’s Fresh Carpet. It’s short, snappy and funny. Sometimes, quite prosaic. Really direct.

Recommended Reading: I’d have to be Life on a Sudden Sitting Room, again by Ivor Cutler. It’s short pieces depicting his childhood in Scotland. Quite surreal stuff...

Influences and Inspirations: Simon Armitage’s Zones. The writing is complex, full of symbolism and hidden meanings. A lot of poets today are very similar in style, but reading them can be hard work.

With Armitage, you can enjoy the poetry on a basic fun level, but at a deeper level, its intricacies are just as rewarding. Very accessible.

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A Patrick Poem:

Works on Paper

A new magazine, Works on Paper, is also getting ready for press, and promises to inject some variety into the magazine scene by exploring what “works on paper” – what one can publish successfully be it architectural designs, painting, or prose. They are working with Jim Le Fevre (the animator) and Bless, concept-fashion designers. The pieces so far range from essays (on the contemporary art scene in China, for example), short fiction, and photography. If you’re interested in getting involved with Works on Paper, e-mail Helen Slater on helena@liv.ac.uk.

Tallulah, the magazine from the Cambridge University Creative Writing Society (CUCWS), is launching its third issue at the end of November. It welcomes all and every creative work (poetry, prose, drama, art, etc.), with a deadline of 6th November and a Launch Party/Writing Festival on 26th November to celebrate its publication.

If you want information, or want to submit anything, e-mail creativewriting@yahoo.co.uk. Barry Miles’ new biography of the Beat Poets, The Beat Hotel

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The Beat Hotel

And the Beats Go On...
Netball

55 Cambridge 2nds
10 Northampton Uni 2nds

Clare Herrick

Having defeated Nottingham Trent very convincingly last week, the netball seconds were keen to prove their worth once again. It was going to be a hard task for Northampton not to rise to the challenge but merely sat back and watched their team being taken apart.

A slow start meant that after ten minutes Northampton had been gifted a goal. Defence Helen Skidmore and Anna Kabakova were untouchable. Obviously the trend continued despite the fact that by now Cambridge were leading 2-0. The pace continued leaving the opposition bewildered. Excellent feeding to the circle by Emma Ashworth meant that every reception was converted to a goal. Confidence growing as the score increased, the difference between the two sides was becoming glaringly apparent.

At the lead goal, so too did the frustration at Northampton's seeming ignorance of any of the rules. Marking off court, contact, off-sides, dropped balls, difficulty in catching, running, throwing, the list goes on. As the Cambridge shooters kept their heads despite the opposition's ill-founded belief that marking tactics are both tactical and allowed. There were frequent looks of bewilderment from the opposition when called up for catching the ball outside the court. Cross looks were exchanged with the umpires for calling either for fork and replaced balls. All correct calls, but when the rules are a mystery then breaking them is understandable.

By half time, they had been allowed to score 5 goals in comparison to Cambridge's 35. Energy replenished, the seconds assauged boredom by setting themselves goal targets. Needless to say these were reached easily with fantastic shooting from Ruth Simpson and perception fed from Jo Michou. The lack of any competition sapped Cambridge of motivation, nevertheless the final goal tally is testament to hard work from all.

The Seconds hope that this week's BUSA match against Nottingham University will prove to be harder fought and won. Having said that, last year Cambridge were victorious twice against this talented side and they are not so sure why this year shouldn't bring the same success.

**Modern Pentathlon**

Laura Davidson

Modern Pentathlon has its origins in Napoleonic France's search for the perfect soldier. It comprises riding, running, swimming, shooting and fencing, the disciplines in which French gentle- men-soldiers required proficiency. This event began to receive more recognition when Stephanie Cook and Kate Allenby won gold and bronze medals respective- ly for Great Britain at the Sydney Olympics last year. Both of these women went to Olivier, with Steph, a former rower and runner at Cambridge, only taking up pentathlon on down- grading to Oxbridge to complete her med- ical training. It is an achievable full- blue sport at Cambridge for those at the top level who are strong in all five events. Half-blues are also awarded on the basis of competition high, as evidenced by the large number of internationals who have passed through the club.

Last week was the advent of Modern Pentathlon Coppers, and despite the range of events, there was an excellent turnout by both current club members and numerous novices who naturally varied in ability depending on the discipline. This made for some superb competition and also provided some great comical moments! The show jumping took place on the Friday evening, catering for a range of abilities. Special mention should go to Rodi Beales competing for Trinity Hall, who, never having jumped previously managed to negotiate a small (but beautiful) course. There were clear rounds over the highest course of ten fences from two novice competitors already capable rid- ers, Alex Harvey for Selwyn and Camilla Johnson for Robinson. On Saturday morning, pistol shooting took place at the range. Unlike the novice women embarrassed some of last years' team members to compete in the highest scores. Last year's men's captain, Cahir King, however, was well ahead of the field in the men's competition with a 1147 points. Despite the pressure, New Hall were narrowly in the lead, with Trinity Hall closely behind. The swimming at Garton pool that after- noon produced some very fast times, notably by Cahir King and Jamie Firr in the men's event, and in the women's, by this year's women's captain, Jenny Arrand for New Hall.

After an alcohol-soaked evening at Chopstix and a blissful extra hour in bed due to the clock change, the three kilometre cross-country run took place at midday on Sunday. The men's race pro- duced an exciting finale, Richard Sargent for Robinson just pipping Andy Colling (from Emmanuel, but compet- ing in the Trinity Hall team) at the post. This year's President, Laura Davidson, won the women's run convincingly for Trinity Hall, with novice Sarah Brewer for New Hall just beating her fellow team member Jenny Arrand into third place. The final event was the fencing, but due to time constraints only the novices fenced, leaving Andy Colling (a Junior International fencer) and his team frustrated! (Still, it's the taking part that matters, Andy...). Some of the novices' techniques were certainly interesting, but Tim fencing for Garton and Clare Church for Selwyn both scored well.

At the prize-giving that evening, New Hall were the victors, with Selwyn close behind and Robinson in third place. Madness points go to Rachel Elkins who played hockey for Selwyn immediately before the run, and Sarah Brewer who went after the last event, not content with having spent the weekend doing a mere pentathlon! Congratulations must go to all those who participated and the Cambridge University Modern Pentathlon Club (CUMPC) is always keen to recruit new members of all standards. Please note, though, that true pentathlon involves two extra events, drinking and pulling. This is surely no great hardship, since as Astaire so astutely observed, "pentath- letes have the most beautiful bodies because they were constructed for both speed and strength together". Care to partake?? If so, email the Secretary Claire Thomas on cv21@cam.ac.uk or visit our website on http://www.cam.ac.uk/associations/cumpc.

**Women's Football**

3 Cambridge
1 Belper Town (AET)

Nico Hines

Now I might be wrong, but I suspect I wasn't the only football fan completely ignorant of the level at which the Cambridge women's team plays. So far this season, in a moderately successful start by their standards, they have beat- en Charlton, West Ham and Gillingham. Cambridge University sit mid-table in the South-Eastern Combination League, the highest divi- sion in the region, and regularly com- pete against the very best teams in the country. Their FA Cup campaign began on Saturday with a difficult tie against Belper Town, top of their divi- sion in the Midlands and with a strong history in the Cup. In the end they were lucky to leave with pride intact. Cambridge dominated from beginning to end and should have run out com- fortable winners.

The downside to playing in real FA competitions is that you get real FA ref- erees. The stereotype did not end with the appearance of the squat-school-foot- ball-coach referee, or his requisite lanky "assistant referees", but their over offi- cious, pernickety and, at times, bewil- dering attitude to the game. Its amaz- ing that either team was standing upright even seven minutes into the second half of extra time. Another of her powerful and unmissable blows closer, but there is the potential for this squad to be very good indeed. When asked if they fancied Arsenal in the next round Laura Pugdeley replied, "We'd rather meet them in the final." If this ambition could be channelled onto the pitch they certainly have the talent to upset some massive teams on the road to Wembley (or wherever the hell they play these days). Come On The Blues!
Triumphant Blues beat Brum

Football

3 Cambridge 1 Birmingham AFA

Tom Warburton

A somewhat depleted Blues side made the trip to Birmingham on Monday to play their relatively new annual fixture against the Amateur Football Alliance. Absent most noticeably, through injury, was captain Paul Dinmore, though several other key players were similarly forced to stay in Cambridge. Sports on arrival were nonetheless high, buoyed by a string of convincing performances, and the timely call-up of soon-to-depart PhD student, and last year’s himan, Damian Kelly. Spiritually vice-captain Dave Harding meanwhile took over at the helm on his ‘home turf’.

Harding’s knowledge of the local dialect consequently proved vital in face, with the same old pressure for further delays to kick-off time and negotiation required. When proceedings did eventually get underway, they were on a heavy pitch, and it was clear from the outset that once more, this would be primarily a physical challenge from the AFA, as much as anything else. The Blues had just about had the better of the first twenty minutes of play, however the only real threat from the opposition in the opening period suddenly met with success. From a Birmingham goalkeeper distinguished by his aids and use of the route one, bombarding the Blues central defence with every kick, now came a ball that cleared even their heads, bouncing rounded a slipping Joe Garrood, for the AFA striker to run on to and duly convert. It was as straightforward and painful a blow as could be, for a team otherwise starting to assert themselves in the match. Yet it was not the first time in the last few weeks that the Blues had conceded an unnecessary early goal, and nor will it be the last time this season and heads did not drop.

Despite clear aerial advantage, with a mountainous number eight towering above Harding and Lewis in the centre, the Blues continued to recycle the ball in the opposition half. Reverting from 3-5-2 to a more usual 4-4-2, chances gradually came Cambridge’s way. Tom Lodge, partnering Kelly up front, found the target but also the goalkeeper with an effort from the right before running tantalisingly close to a through-ball shortly after. Kelly himself was by now launching into several marauding runs with the ball, running full circle round three at one stage before shooting wide. Half-chances fell also to Harding and Owles, though both had shots that climbed over the bar already started to take the lead in the Birmingham side.

Tom Hall’s sterling work down the right was eventually rewarded when a ricocheted cross across the face of goal fell straight into the path of the incoming Kelly, who made no mistake in adding his second.

Now in pursuit of more, that combination of Hall and Kelly linked up again, once more in the six-yard box, and the goal-line this time only miraculously and inexplicably remained unbroken after some exasperating pin-ball. Foiled though he had been, Hall was clearly man of the moment in the dying minutes, more hard work down the right eventually presenting him with just the goal-keeper in front of him at the right of the six yard box. Looking up to find no passing option available, Hall simply bypassed both incoming defenders and keeper, deftly d stubbing along the by-line to slot home at an acute angle. Goal scorer Hall reflected after the game in which the Blues might have hoped for more, but in which, “for all the normals not here, the team had its familiar commitment and spirit.” Kelly, meanwhile, stopping by for the day, will take pleasure in equaling the goal scoring record at the club, at the very least until its other holder, Glamock, returns at the next fixture.

Women’s Rugby Union

34 Cambridge 5 Oxford

Amy Allen

Rugby Union is one of the fastest growing female sports in the world at the moment, and here at Cambridge University we have two accomplished teams who are making a huge name for themselves. This past weekend was no different, as the Blues once again faced Oxford. Despite being in possession, integrating well-worked moves with good ball handling skills in the backs, was unfortunately followed by a long period of scappy and organised play. Oxford managed to capitate on this by scoring a try towards the end of the first half.

The second half saw a much brighter Cambridge side in action. After about five minutes, a call from the line-out about seven yards from the try line saw Amy Chandler take the ball in. She was then driven over the line by the forwards for Cambridge’s second try.

The defensive work by the Light Blues was second to none, with some fantastic tackling from all the players, especially Rachel McCarthy, Trin Laing and Michelle Schaffer, making the Oxford forwards life difficult. Unfortunately, with a try scored, the Blues went into the half 11-5 down, but the team had clearly improved from the first half and were hungry to come back in the second.

In the second half, Cambridge came out in full force, and after some good work down the right flank by Rachel McCarthy, Oxford were left with a 17-5 deficit. The Blues continued to control the game, and once again, a well-worked move saw the ball fed to Trin Laing who put in a perfect cross. The Blues forwards were in their usual places ready to pounce on the loose ball and Oxford goalkeeper couldn’t get near it, giving the Blues their third try of the match.

As time ticked on, Oxford managed to score a try, but the Blues continued to dominate the game, and after some good work down the left flank, the Blues were about to score a try when Oxford managed to palm the ball away. Despite Oxford’s continual pressure, Cambridge managed to keep Oxford at bay and the final whistle went with Cambridge victorious, 17-10.

Women’s Rugby Union

Triumphant Blues beat Brum

Oxford rucked over!

SPORT 31

The Blues should be encouraged by this weekend’s golf, even if the 20.5-11.5 scoreline seems likely to dishearten. The unusually strong society side, comprising the likes of David Marsh (capped many times for England), was held at nine points all on Saturday and this scoreline represents a massive step towards the kind of self-belief necessary to make this team into a very good one indeed. Even with the absences of Weston, one of CUGC’s most experienced performers, and MacDonald, Cambridge had enough firepower to subdue a powerful opposition.

Special mention must be made of Richard Bell’s stellar performance against the dogged David Dill. Bell was five under par for the back nine, and performed admirably again on Sunday morning. The silent assassin, Chris Southworth, also had a good weekend and James Harvey was unlucky not to win his match, as his opponent eagled the last via a bounce from the road. Cousin James also did well to sneak a point as the shadows lengthened over the Sacred Nine, and Gold showed blistering form to beat Tickell.

The quality of golf all weekend was high and valuable lessons have been learnt. For starters the importance of experience to the development of another fine Cambridge side was clear.

Golf

11.5 Cambridge 20.5 COGS

Tom Dawson
The Blackstone Group

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Presentation:
Wednesday, 7th November 2001
6:30 p.m.

University Arms Hotel, Cambridge

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