

VARSITY



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Home office attacked over University's animal testing record

Amy Goodwin

A CASE BEING brought before the High Court by an animal rights group may have a major impact on the future of animal experimentation. The British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV) claims to have 'overwhelming' evidence that laws to protect laboratory animals at Cambridge University are not being properly enforced.

BUAV believes that the systematic abuses reported to them by an undercover investigator contradict the general public's perception that animals are adequately protected under current legislation.

The investigator spent ten months at the Huntingdon research facility, during which time she discovered monkeys the tops of whose skulls had been sawn off. Toxins had been injected into their brains to induce strokes and the animals were then left for up to fifteen hours overnight whilst no staff member was on site. Some of the monkeys were found dead in the morning and others were in "a very poor condition".

A report on primate research at Cambridge University published by the Home Office in February 2003 concluded that there was no evidence that existing safeguards were in any way defective.

A University spokesperson said in response to the BUAV allegations that the 2003 report "confirmed that the welfare of animals used in research at Cambridge is of the utmost importance, that good science and good animal welfare go hand in hand, and that the value and importance of the science here should be acknowledged".

At present, research licensing operates under the Animals

(Scientific Procedures) Act of 1986. A 'cost-benefit test' carried out by the Home Office weighs up the anticipated suffering of animals, categorised as mild, moderate or substantial, against the benefits likely to accrue from the research.

The pain experienced by the Cambridge primates was judged to be 'moderate', a decision that BUAV's solicitor David Thomas believes calls the entire system into question. "If there is routine underestimation occurring in the cost-benefit assessment at Cambridge, this raises the possibility that similar decisions are being made in some of the 4000 licensed research exercises across Britain".

As the anticipated suffering was considered 'moderate' rather than 'substantial' by Home Office inspectors, the project license was not referred to the Animal Procedure Committee. That this safeguard was easily bypassed by Cambridge University does not surprise Thomas. Although he is quick to stress that he does not wish "to cast any aspersions on the objectivity of inspectors", he points out that most are ex-vivisectionists themselves and thus "immersed in that culture".

Cambridge scientists themselves admitted that the monkeys might suffer 'serious neurological consequences' such as epilepsy, which BUAV believes should have been classified as substantial suffering "on a common sense basis".

If a research project is able to stop substantial suffering it can still be classified as 'moderate', and animals must be euthanized if a certain pain threshold is reached.

But the 24 hour veterinary care that animals are entitled to was not available for this project. Scientists involved typically worked a 9-5 day

with occasional evening work and so no-one would have been present on site to call for a vet in any case.

Thomas is arguing in the High Court that this meant the licensing was unlawful. For Cambridge group In Defence of Animals, the issue is one of trust.

The case is currently in stage one of judicial review. The Home Office is using procedural evidence in its attempt to stop the case going any further, a move that Cambridge group In Defence of Animals finds 'disappointing'.

"The public entrusts the Home Office to ensure that scientific progress through animal experimentation proceeds ethically," said Jeff Skopek. "Given this relationship of trust, the Home Office should facilitate moves that would lead to greater transparency. In this case the Home Office may not have acted in accordance with the values of the people who entrusted it with power to make ethical decisions on their behalf".

Written submissions were demanded by the judge on Monday. The case is being brought against the Home Office and Cambridge University has no representative in court.

However a spokesperson stated that, "There are good ethical, scientific, legal and economic reasons for making sure that animals are looked after to the highest possible standards and as few used as possible. It makes good scientific sense to house animals in the best possible conditions and make sure the best possible care from skilled and experienced carers is available... research must continue if we are to make essential life-saving advances in medicine".

A judgement is expected in three to four weeks.

The latest in Cambridge fashion: PREP, available with Varsity



As Valentine's Day approaches, take a look at different aspects of romantic life in Cambridge. Survey of sexual behaviour: page 8. Sexual health: page 16. Selling Sex: page 19. Editorial: page 11.

RAG blind date success

Brigitte Bookayastha

TUESDAY'S MASS BLIND Date was declared 'a huge success' by RAG President Dominic Hinton. Over £8,000 was raised for charity on a night which saw 2,000 Cambridge students stepping out to meet their mystery matches with varying expectations and degrees of nervousness.

Having provided descriptions and a drawing of their ideal date on their forms, JCRs across Cambridge were full of datees demanding their friends' opinions on whether their match's replies were 'tongue-in-cheek' or 'just plain odd'. Many had high hopes of securing a perfect partner for the evening as entrants were encouraged to bribe their college RAG reps. Whilst some simply paid up in order to get a higher 'date rating', others requested to

be paired off with a specific individual. One nameless student slipped their RAG rep £20 to guarantee the company of their long-term object of lust.

The 1,000 straight, LBG, graduate and undergraduate couples proved a visible presence on the Cambridge nightlife scene as they flocked to special offers nights at thirteen clubs and pubs around the town. Both Life and Ballare nightclubs provided cut-price entry to those who showed their matching RAG forms, and Ballare helped add that note of sophistication with free champagne for couples who arrived early. Even Gardies got in on the act, promising a free Polaroid photo of the first hundred couples to cross the doorway in search of end-of-night sustenance.

Although the story of the Cambridge couple who got mar-

ried after meeting on a RAG Blind Date a few years ago is a perennial heartmelter, most people who took part saw it as an opportunity to meet people they might otherwise never lock eyes with across a soul-sapping library or a smoky college bar.

One student was more cynical. "I saw it as good practice for life in the wider world, when you never know how long you might have to spend being falsely jolly with someone awful". Although this attitude stood the student in good stead when their date turned out to be "an evil northern goblin", most people seemed to have a great time which was hopefully something "a bit different from the usual". Students described their nights variously as 'a barrel of laughs', 'the beginning of something beautiful', and 'an excuse for drunken hilarity'.

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News in Brief

MEDIA SUCCESS

The creative talents of Cambridge students have been recognised in the Emap Fanzine Awards shortlist. *Meat* magazine has been nominated for Best Student Publication and Jessica Holland was nominated in the Best Student Writer category. Winners will be announced on March 1st.

NEW LGBT EXEC

Elections for a new executive committee were held at a CUSU LGBT open meeting on Monday night. Olly Glover is the new Chair, David Phillips has been elected Treasurer and Alistair Fair will be handling Communications. No-one stood for Campaigns Officer or Graduate Representative.

INDIE SOC CD

CU Indie Music Society has put together a compilation CD of student bands which will be sold to raise money for the Tsunami appeal. The CD will be launched at a gig at the Man on the Moon pub this Saturday.

PAGE TURNING

Cambridge student Helen Oyeyemi's first novel 'The Icarus Girl' is to be featured on the BBC's new television arts show, 'Page Turners'. The show's brief is to combine the populist structure of the Big Read with the wide appeal of Richard and Judy's book club and the literary clout of peer review. The judges who selected 24 books from the 300 submitted by eager publishers were looking for something 'distinctive or surprising'.

TSUNAMI EYEWITNESS?

Researchers at Cambridge are asking for holidaymakers who were eyewitnesses of the Asian tsunami to contribute their own account of events. Professor Robin Spence hopes that collecting such accounts will help give a better understanding of the tsunami and its effects. Anyone who can help should call 01223 460475.

ABORTION DEBATE

CUSU have asked for an extension to Wednesday's deadline on the Pro-Life legal letter, citing the annual turnover of the CUSU executive as an impediment to the timely preparation of a legal case. The University's Pro-Life Society and its solicitors have agreed to their requests.

Students attacked in Lion Yard



The car park at Lion Yard shopping centre, Cambridge

Chine Mbubaegbu

TWO CAMBRIDGE students have told of how they were attacked by two men after being thrown out of Ballare Nightclub in the centre of town.

The two female students from Emmanuel College, had been enjoying a night out on January 27 at Rumboogie, the Hawks' Club's Wednesday night event at the popular club in the centre of town.

The girls, who wish to remain nameless, admitted that they had consumed a significant amount of alcohol and were subsequently ejected from the club by a bouncer who, according to one of the girls, picked the girls up, one under each arm. They were then forced to leave the club, not by the usual exit at the side of the club where queues normally form, but

through the upper storeys of Lion Yard car park where they said they were "thrown to the floor". The bouncers then held the doors shut so they could not get outside.

Both girls were then approached by two men, one on a bike, who proceeded to separate them and then try to steal their bags. One of the girls, a Philosophy student, said she remembers that they ended up on the floor. The men were stopped from harassing the girls any further when a car, noticing the disturbance, stopped to lend assistance. The two attackers fled without taking anything from them. The students were then taken to Parkside Police station by the two women in the car who had stopped to help.

Sgt. Jon Hutchinson, heading the investigation, said: "Neither women were injured during the

incident, however, they were left shaken."

The girls were critical of the doormen at Ballare, who ejected them from the club. One of the students said: "We were drunk but weren't actually doing anything. We didn't think we'd done anything wrong... If they hadn't chucked us out, we wouldn't have been attacked."

She added: "The bouncers are knobs. To throw us out down a car park is totally irresponsible."

The assistant manager of the nightclub, however, disputed the fact that they had been thrown out for no reason, saying: "It sounds like they had done something naughty. The issue was not that they had just had too much to drink."

Anyone with information should contact Sgt Hutchinson at Parkside Police Station on 0845 456 456 4 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Vagrant exiled Cashpoint warning

Chine Mbubaegbu

A CAMBRIDGE homeless man has been ordered to leave town by the county council for begging on the streets.

The order came after Cambridge County Court had awarded a civil injunction against Kalman Lucacs, 20, which forbade Lucacs or anyone acting on his behalf from loitering within 10 metres of any cashpoint or bank, or begging within the local government area of Cambridge City Council.

Lucacs, however, did not keep to the court order and frequently breached the terms of the injunction. He was therefore sentenced to 49 days in prison for 4 instances of disobeying the order.

Judge O'Brien, who presided over the case held on Wednesday 9, was persuaded to suspend the sentence, however, on the condition that

Lucacs left Cambridge by noon the following day. If he enters Cambridge before October 2005 when the order expires, the prison sentence will be activated.

Alastair Roberts who heads the City Anti-Social Behaviour Section said: "This should send out a very clear message to people who think begging is an acceptable form of behaviour in Cambridge."

"Support agencies working with beggars say that giving money directly to them is not helpful as it often goes to sustaining their lifestyle problems, which can include the misuse of drugs and alcohol, rather than going towards the help they really need. There is also an assumption that beggars are street homeless when, in fact, our research shows that a significant number are in some form of settled accommodation."

Lucy Phillips

POLICE ARE warning students to be on their guard against cash machine fraudsters following an incident last weekend.

A Churchill student discovered that money had been stolen from their account after using the ATM machine at the Texaco Garage, Huntingdon Road, which had been tampered with by the fraudsters.

Porters from the colleges nearby are urging students who have used the machine recently to check their accounts for any discrepancy and inform their bank accordingly.

Nationwide, who own the cash machine, said: "Be vigilant when you are around a machine. If you suspect that it has been tampered with or notice anything wrong with your account, make Nationwide aware. In the case of fraud, transactions can be refunded."

A police spokesperson confirmed that a case of fraudulent behaviour had been reported at the Texaco cash machine and are urging bank customers to be careful when performing transactions.



Eating Disorders Awareness Week

Lucy Phillips

EVENTS HAVE been taking place across Cambridge this week to mark National Eating Disorders Awareness Week. This year's theme is 'getting better'.

King's and Homerton were among the colleges to hold workshops and talks given by dietitians. On Wednesday night a discussion entitled 'Supporting Friends with Eating Disorders' was held at Queens' College. Guest speakers included Penny Hayman of the University Counselling Service and John Brice from Adequate National Treatment for Sufferers of Eating Disorders.

Anyone can develop an eating disorder, regardless of age,

sex, race or background, but women are ten times more likely to be affected by eating disorders than men, and it is more common in 15 to 25-year-olds.

Ms Hayman said, "Eating disorders flourish in a perfectionist environment, such as Cambridge, where there are many highly successful people. Image is very important."

The meeting highlighted the importance of trying to catch an eating disorder in its early stages. Perhaps this can be done by raising awareness through psycho-education and education about nutrition."

She continued, "If you have a friend [in whom you recognise a problem], challenge them with respect and care. Don't ridicule them or just accept it."

"This year the message is one of hope and that it is possible to get better."

She added, "Men are showing more signs of eating disorders, as they become more aware of body image."

CU Counselling Service runs a series of specialist groups for people with low weight, bulimia and binge eaters.

Jo Read, CUSU's Womens' Officer, said: "Whilst the idea of eating disorders as a phenomenon is relatively well understood by many in the University, it is important to raise awareness of the wider spectrum of disordered eating and to debunk many myths surrounding 'normal' eating patterns."

"Many popular ideas about eating can cause direct or indirect harm to individuals. For

example, binge-eating due to stress and consequent fasting to 'make up for it', or compulsive fasting and exercise as part of a training regime."

Surveys have suggested that 16 to 72% of female athletes are affected by disordered eating, with the incidence being greater in those sports where a low body weight - aesthetic, endurance and weight class sports - is preferential. With appropriate treatment, recovery from an eating disorder can be achieved in under five years.

The Eating Disorders Awareness Week follows last week's critical publication by National Eating Disorders Association (EDA) to the House of Commons on the provision of eating disorder treatment services. The report compares the

treatment services that are actually being implemented with the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines for the treatment of eating disorders.

EDA Chief executive Susan Ringwood explained, "We welcomed the NICE Guidelines when they were published just over a year ago. However we are very concerned that across the NHS, services are still very patchy and some areas have little or no service provision. Our snapshot survey shows that, amongst other things, 42% of GPs did not make an early diagnosis, 55% of people are not being treated by a specialist and only 17% of young people are treated in an appropriate setting. This unfortunate situation must be resolved quickly to prevent more young lives being lost to these deadly disorders."

Kilroy living as traveller in Cottenham

Anna McIlreavy

ROBERT KILROY-SILK, independent MEP, has been criticised for plans to 'live like a gypsy' for a week with a traveller community near Cambridge as material for a new Channel 4 reality TV show - a move widely condemned as a weakly disguised publicity stunt in the run-up to the general election.

Kilroy, who launched his new political party 'Veritas' on Wednesday, has been spending this week in a small caravan on a traveller's encampment in Hatch, near Sandy. But even after claims that he will be 'living like a gypsy,' Kilroy has been caught sleeping in a nearby Holiday Inn on the A1 for the first few days of his stay at least. It is thought that council rules are preventing him staying on the site.

The material from this experiment is due to result in a one-hour programme aiming to address one of the most contentious social issues facing

the UK today - the travellers' cause and their impact on local communities.

The former member of the UKIP is also known for his previous pronouncements about travellers and his forthright views on immigration. In the past, Kilroy has said: "What gypsies are getting away with in certain parts of the country is totally wrong and must be stopped immediately." And at the launch of Veritas, he said Britain is being 'stolen' by mass immigration.

Initially the programme had based Kilroy in Smithy Fen, Cottenham, but the location was changed to Hatch at the last minute. Residents of Cottenham were originally sceptical about the proposed stay. Pierre Marx, who lives in Cottenham, said: "It is purely a publicity stunt with no benefit towards the residents of Cottenham."

Now staying in Hatch, Kilroy has been spending time with travellers' campaigner Cliff

Codona, who has been involved in an eight-year legal battle to stay on the Woodside site there. Mr Codona recently lost a High Court battle and may now be evicted from his land.

Mr Codona said: "I'm trying to give Robert a real view of what it's like for Roma and Irish travellers so he can make his own mind up. He trusts me and my family and has been sitting down and eating with us. He is here as a guest of my family and at the end of the day he is helping me by keeping my mind off what is going on. No-one has ever come on the inside to have a look but Robert has made that choice, he has made a step that no other politician has made."

Kilroy will also return to Cottenham to chair a meeting between residents and travellers as part of the experiment. Rick Bristow, from the Cottenham Residents Association, welcomed the move saying no-one had previously been successful in getting travellers and residents to meet together. But he



An example of what's in store for Robert Kilroy-Silk as he gears up to 'live like a gypsy'.

said he hoped Kilroy's famous ego would not get in the way.

Andrew Lansley, Conservative MP for South Cambridgeshire, said: "Is there nothing Robert Kilroy-Silk won't do for publicity? I don't know why he is doing this but it is certainly not to highlight solutions to the problem."

Cambridge City Council has recently announced plans to open up a new site for travellers at the edge of Cambridge. In a move to give an authorised place for travellers to stay, the council is tackling the issue of hostility between travellers and residents. The government also provides a free helpline for trav-

ellers, offering advice on how to handle eviction. Residents have criticised the lack of legal advice for those who feel targeted by travellers based on their land.

Watch out for Kilroy and his perma-tan on Channel 4 next season.

- See Features, page 12

Sanjeet Chana enjoys an impromptu holiday



Sanjeet Chana reclines on Waikiki beach after winning the annual RAG Jailbreak competition

CAMBRIDGE RAG raised £4-5,000 after last week's RAG Jailbreak, in which challengers from three top British universities needed to reach a destination as far away as possible within 36 hours, without spending any money.

Hawaii was the winning haul for two Churchill undergraduates, who were closely followed by Sheena Shah (Newnham) and Simon Small (Trinity), reaching Tokyo in a repeat of last year's winning attempt. No-one from Oxford got beyond Germany, while Durham was more successful with a couple reaching San Francisco and thus third place.

59 students set off at 9am from Parker's Piece on Friday as part of (what has now been termed) the 'Doxbridge Jailbreak 2005', with strict

rules demanding that no-one spend any money or arrange transport with family and friends, and that they keep in constant mobile phone contact with the organisers as they make their attempts at intercontinental travel.

Topping last year's Jailbreak coup, the winners Alana Vogt and Sanjeet Chana, both from Churchill, managed to reach Hawaii on the Saturday after pre-arranging a free private car to Heathrow and a free Virgin flight to LA from where they contrived more free flights to reach Hawaii.

The Cambridge RAG Jailbreak started last year though similar events have taken place in Bristol for the last few years. This year, with the inclusion of Oxford (who entered 10 students)

and Durham (who entered 44) it has created some invaluable publicity.

But even with the added competition Cambridge was clearly victorious, taking both first and second place and entering a full 15 more student than the other two institutions.

Dominic Hinton, RAG President, said it had been 'fantastic,' adding 'it was definitely much better than last year. We managed to get two teams off the continent.' Cambridge also had teams make it to Amsterdam, Brussels, Essen and Paris.

The winners will receive £250 travel vouchers from STA travel and the winners from each individual university will win £100 STA vouchers.

Oliver Tilley

LSE student sells head

John McHugh

A STUDENT from the London School of Economics has put his forehead on the market for £5,000.

Travis Hayes, an American post-graduate student, hopes to raise money to make a film about his experiences of being a walking advert.

Hayes has been using eBay to sell his forehead advertising space. He has put particular emphasis on the way in which his central London advertising route will maximise exposure. On the last check, he had received one bid matching the £5,000 asking price.

Hayes' film project is entitled 'A Word From My Sponsor'. The American



Lacy Phillips

intends to send the piece to film festivals around the world with the hope of getting it widely distributed. He will also be running a website which will have daily updates of his experiences.

A quick eBay search reveals that Hayes is not alone in seeing money-making potential in body advertising. Numerous others, mainly in the USA, offer a similar service.

A week ago Andrew Fischer from Omaha sold his forehead to SnoreStop, a US company which produces a snoring remedy, for £20,000. Although some advertisers have offered to be permanently tattooed, Hayes has rejected any such suggestion though he would 'consider having one on my bottom.'

Though many of the Americans seem to be utilising the novel concept of body advertising, an Aberystwyth Student has put a Buy-It-Now price of \$10,000 to advertise on his head.

He is offering to put a credit card-sized advertising banner on his forehead for one 9-5 day and then wear a T-shirt bearing the logo of the advertisers for a month. Someone has already bid \$100.

'Yobs' hinder access

Edwin J Lane

CHANCELLOR OF Oxford University, Chris Patten, reopened the debate on access to Oxbridge colleges last week when he blamed 'public school yobs' for damaging the university's efforts to attract more state school applicants.

Speaking at the 25th anniversary of the founding of Green College, Oxford, Lord Patten, the former Conservative party chairman and Governor of Hong Kong, admitted that Oxford has a problem attracting 'able sixth-formers' from the state sector. He argued that students were put off applying by the image of Oxford as a playground for privileged students.

He said, 'It cannot be good for recruitment of able sixth-

formers in Yorkshire comprehensives when a bunch of yobs with more money than sense do what young yobs have always done and will always do, that is to behave in ways that shame the families and schools that have lavished advantages on them.'

His comments follow reports in the national press of unruly behaviour by members of Oxford drinking society 'The Bullingdon Club', who were arrested by police in December last year for trashing a pub. The case reflects the eagerness of the national media to portray both Oxford and Cambridge as living up to their stereotypical image.

The issue of image has become more important in recent years, with the govern-

ment exerting more pressure than ever on the UK's top universities to admit a greater proportion of state school students. In 2003, 55 per cent of the students admitted to Cambridge colleges were from state schools, falling well short of the 'benchmark' of 77 per cent set by the government.

Although many university authorities have rejected these benchmarks, claiming that top universities are being forced to make up for a failing education system, there is still concern over the fact that many state school students with three A grades at A-level do not apply to Cambridge colleges - a situation not helped by Oxbridge's 'Brideshead Revisited' image.

A week of Weeks

Experience Islam week

The University's Islamic Society (ISOC) has organised a series of events this week for "Experience Islam Week" to promote the image of Islam and give students the opportunity to find out what the religion entails.

As the world's fastest growing religion, Islam has increasingly been under the media spotlight and many feel that it is often portrayed inaccurately. This week's events will give Cambridge students the chance to hear internationally-renowned academics and lecturers speak on Islam, speak to Muslim students about their faith and have their questions on the religion answered.

Mohsin Badat of ISOC feels that "only by understanding one another's beliefs can we hope to live in a multicultural society, and so the engenderment of not only mutual tolerance but mutual appreciation is the ultimate aim of the week... We have been given help in achieving our goals by the Cambridge City council and Cambridge University, who have very kindly supported the week."

This year ISOC has adopted a varied approach, ranging from talks on diverse topics given by renowned figures such as Karen Armstrong to 'Layla,' a cultural event at the Guildhall with live music, martial arts, poetry and a Moroccan style bazaar.

The week culminates on Friday night at the Law faculty on the Sidgwick Site, with a talk given by Yvonne Ridley, the British journalist who was captured by the Taliban, was released and then subsequently converted to Islam. A full list of events can be found at www.isoc.co.uk/civv.

Rumina Hassam

CICCU week

It was revealed that over 800 students attended the first series of morning 'Direction' talks, as the organisers of CICCU's annual mission responded to criticism of the event.

Direction, which is on a smaller scale than last year's triennial two-week mission, has centred around a series of talks, the last two of which take place tonight and tomorrow evening. Around Cambridge, college Christian Unions have also been running events to coincide with the mission, such as gospel choir performances, 'grill a Christian' Q&A sessions, and pancake parties.

However, the mission has not passed without criticism. One student told *Varsity*, 'you just can't get escape being proselytised, I don't like the aggressive way these people want to stick their message in our faces'. A number of poster campaigns were sabotaged by graffiti, met with complaints to deans, or ripped down. At Newnham, several posters were reportedly smeared with swastikas.

Direction's Publicity Officer Alice Keen was keen to point out in a statement that "we've used lots of different types of publicity, such as street drama and gospel singing, along with the usual posters. We just want to tell other students in Cambridge the truth that Jesus loved them so much that he died on a cross so that they could be forgiven and to be honest, if you believed what we believe, I'm sure you would want to tell everyone too."

Last year *Varsity's* front page, entitled Predator Pray, sparked a series of letters when it examined the 2004 mission, and the same seems likely in 2005. But following this year's talk on Is God Real, one student said, "I think CICCU have a right to publicise their events, and I think people have a right to not turn up to them, or to turn up as I have done and not be converted. It's a free country after all."

Sam Richardson

One World Week

The week kicked off on Sunday with enthusiastic supporters handing out leaflets in Market Street and a Samba band rounding people into an event in King's called the Global Village, featuring stalls representing different countries and cultures, and giving viewers the chance to sample foreign cuisine, listen to some exotic music, or watch a film about a current political issue. That evening the Global Village was followed up by a talk on the links between Geography and Christianity, and a discussion around the subject of 'Does religion do more harm than good?'

Wednesday marked the celebration of the Tibetan New Year with a traditional Losar Party (in Tibetan, 'lo' means year and 'sar' means new).

CUSU held an Ethical Meeting on Tuesday, giving students the chance to see what the University and Colleges are doing concerning ethical and environmental issues.

This coming Saturday it will be possible to sample the delights of the 'Rich-Poor Dinner', where guests are randomly allocated either a sumptuous feast or a meagre portion to emphasise the global disparities between rich and poor.

In a world where there is no longer a clear distinction between sides, and where religion is an increasingly contentious issue, the Religious Fair marks the end of the week on Sunday. Check out www.oneworldweek.co.uk for the official blurb, news and events to come.

Helen Lindley

St Andrew's BNP debate



Joe Gosden

ST ANDREW'S University Debating Union has been forced to withdraw an invitation made to BNP leader Nick Griffin to speak in a debate on multiculturalism amid a furore of protest from student bodies, the local community and the university.

The motion "This house believes that the multicultural experiment has failed" was due to be debated on Wednesday but the choice of speaker met with strong opposition from NUS Scotland, which sent an urgent fax to urging St Andrews to withdraw their invitation. Peter Blair, St Andrew's Debating Union President, said

that it was important to "get debate out into the open" rather than "sweeping such issues under the carpet. The extreme views of the BNP challenge the orthodoxy of the main stream political parties but it is important that these views are challenged. It is very much a case of freedom of speech."

NUS Scotland President Melanie Ward highlighted their "No Platform", saying "there can be no place for fascists or racists in the student community or Scotland".

The BNP hit back at their critics, with press officer Dr Phil Edwards accusing the NUS of being undemocratic and wanting to "stifle debate". He went on to

claim that the organisation was "outrageous, out of control and full of lefties who need to grow up".

Griffin, who read Law at Downing and was awarded a Blue in boxing during his time at Cambridge, was convicted of Incitement to Racial Hatred in 1998 and has a long history of involvement with the far right, including the National Front.

A debate run by the Forum in Cambridge on the motion "What is Extremism", which featured Nick Griffin speaking against Lembit Opik of the Liberal Democrats, had to be cancelled in 2002 in the face of strong opposition from the Jewish and Islamic societies.

Oxford pushes for uncapped fees



Varsity Archives

The Bridge of Sighs at Oxford University. Lord Patten has pleaded "Remove fees caps for Oxford."

Amelia Worsley

OXFORD UNIVERSITY should be able to charge unlimited tuition fees in order to remain a world-class institution for teaching and research, Chancellor of Oxford University, Chris Patten, said last week.

In a speech at Green College, which outlined his views on where the university would be in 25 years' time, he said that he hoped tuition fees would be uncapped by 2030.

He criticised the government's present "brave but limited policy", stating that "the cap makes a nonsense of what all students

know from the moment they complete their university application forms, namely that universities and courses are different.

"That does not mean that some deserve less than others. Any institution that does its job competently deserves praise. But not every university, for example, can undertake world-class research."

He expressed his concern that because of the "squeeze" on its budget, Oxford is "clinging on" to its "international standing", with its teaching and research ratings suffering recently. "We are still in the race, but there is not much petrol left in the tank", he added.

From 2006, universities will

be allowed to charge up to £3,000 a year for undergraduate courses. According to government policy, the amount charged is up to the university and could vary by subject. But in a survey conducted by the *Guardian* last week, 34% of Vice-Chancellors said that they will charge the maximum top-up fees across the board.

The government has pledged not to raise the £3,000 cap until 2009 at the earliest. Any change to the present policy will require a vote of both Houses of Parliament.

Lord Patten's speech comes in the wake of Oxford's strate-

gy paper containing plans for restructuring the university, published last week. It included cutting back the number of UK- and EU-based students from 11,000 to 10,000, and increasing those from outside the EU, whose fees are not subject to a cap.

The speech has prompted concerns that increases in fees will damage access, with students choosing courses based on their ability to pay rather than their academic potential.

The Chancellor conceded that a removal of the cap on tuition fees "would highlight again the issues of access."

CU students battle for NUS seat



Wes Streeting



Robin Sivapalan

Amy Goodwin

TWO CAMBRIDGE students are going head to head in their efforts to be elected to the NUS National Executive Committee.

Current CUSU President Wes Streeting and Homerton finalist and ex-CUSU Higher Education Funding Officer Robin Sivapalan are both standing for the position of Vice-President for Education.

Elections will be held in April for the post, which encompasses co-ordination of the NUS's campaigns and initiatives on educational matters and representation of the NUS in national decision-making. The 27-strong NEC

is the main body charged with implementing NUS policy.

Streeting is standing on a three-pronged Labour Student platform promising a 'free, fair and funded education system', 'fair and equal access' and 'a better student experience'. He wants to be part of a 'fighting Union', although he admits that the NUS is still 'clambering out of a bad period' and that 'years of mismanagement' mean it has been inefficient in influencing and challenging recent government policy. Streeting stresses the 'tremendous amount' he has learned through his experience with CUSU. "Students are very much affected by national pol-

icy. This year I've learned that there are endless opportunities to influence government decisions on matters ranging from fees and funding to support for international students."

Sivapalan agrees that the NUS has an 'immense amount of potential' but that there is 'lots of work that needs to be done'. Sivapalan denied that there was any significant political distance between him and Streeting, although he admits he might be perceived as more left-wing. Streeting described the mass of militant left-wing factions in the NUS as 'Pythonesque' whilst declaring his intention to 'work across factions' if elected to the post.

Shooting fundraiser - CUWBbC raise £700 in charity shoot-out



The Cambridge University Women's Basketball team recently raised over £700 when they held a shooting fundraiser in Waitrose car park, Trumpington. The money raised by the event, which was held last Sunday, was split between buying the team's new kit and 'Friends of Addenbrooke's', the charity supported by Waitrose. The aim of the event was to try and shoot 1,000 foul shots, uncontested shots taken 15ft from the basket. A smaller net was set up for young children to have the opportunity to learn how to shoot properly with the help of the team.

New exhibit HEFCE grant

Claire Mawer

ON FEBRUARY 11, the Churchill Museum, London, will open to the public for the first time. Based at the Cabinet War Museum, the exhibition forms part of the £11.5 million Churchill project, a major restoration programme designed to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the death of our 'Greatest Briton'. A commonly unknown fact is that the 1,000 documents and images on display have been gathered from the Churchill Archives Centre that is based here in Cambridge, at Churchill College.

The aim of the museum is to present an "intimate and multi-faceted" view of Churchill, to the extent that exhibits include a teething rattle that Churchill used as a boy. However, the inclusion of one such relic, a christening gown worn by Churchill, has sparked controversy and received widespread coverage in the national press as its three month loan from a private collector has expired but the director of the museum

wants the gown to remain in the exhibit, against the wishes of the owner.

Natalie Adams, Archive Manager at Churchill, said the new museum is a "wonderful resource" and that Churchill are "delighted" to have been able to contribute.



Churchill College was one of the first national and common-wealth memorials established to celebrate Sir Winston's wartime leadership. Churchill bequeathed the college its motto 'Forward' and in 1959 planted two trees in the gardens of the college. Moreover, Sir Winston Churchill's desire to promote technological education is reflected in the college's statutory bias towards science, engineering and technology.

Gwyneth Harrison

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY was awarded the largest single payout by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) last week. The organisation announced its largest ever funding award - a payout of £1.4 billion, with Cambridge receiving £77.5 million.

The HEFCE money is awarded to universities for the construction of new buildings or for the renovation of old ones, as well as to fund research and teaching. The amount an institution receives from the HEFCE is determined by the standards of teaching and resources an institution provides and, most importantly, the research facilities and reputation of that institution.

Cambridge has been recognised as a leader in these areas by the HEFCE who have chosen to give the largest amount to the university in recognition of this. A total of £68.8 million of the award has been earmarked for research capital expenditure, a clear indication of the high standards of research undertaken by the

University. Cambridge received the highest award over other prestigious research centres such as University College London and Oxford University.

Ian Leslie, the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, said: "The University of Cambridge is delighted that the excellence of research at Cambridge has again been recognised and supported by the government. This funding will help us to continue our investment in quality facilities for our world-class research, which will benefit the region, the country and the wider community."

He outlined the way in which the University planned to use the money awarded, saying: "[It will] allow us to refurbish and upgrade more of our currently unsuitable or obsolete laboratory space, as has been the University's policy through successive estate plans over recent years."

"It will also help the University to dispose of and replace certain lower quality facilities, thereby allowing better and more sustainable use of some of the land in the city."

Science Matters

Sex wars?

A controversial soon-to-be-published article which claims that men can think faster than women will add fuel to a debate sparked off by Larry Summers, President of Harvard, last month. Summers claimed the reason that women were less successful in careers in science and maths was due to the fact that they are inherently less able than men. The study, carried out by Professor Edward Reed, a zoologist at Toronto University, and two psychologists at the University of Western Ontario, found that men's brains can transmit nerve impulses up to four per cent faster than women's.

The study involved tests on 186 male subjects and 201 female subjects which included a battery of cognitive assessments to measure their intelligence and skills. The size of their heads was also measured. Electrodes were used to time how long it took for an image that was flashed in front of the eye to send an impulse back to the visual cortex.

The study has stirred up less than positive reactions amongst many and the research credentials of the scientists have already been questioned by other neurologists. Professor Steven Rose, director of the brain and behaviour research group at the Open University, said previous studies suggested no difference in decision-making between men and women. "It is true that men and women use different parts of the brain for similar tasks but the time taken to complete the tasks is identical."

A study carried out in 1997 suggested that it was the ability to juggle ideas in the mind, which depends on the brain's systems for briefly holding and processing words and objects in short-term "working memory", that was the real definition of intelligence. Feminist writer and historian Bea Campbell has questioned the findings of the report, saying: "The distribution of intelligence is much the same for all genders and all races. Our experience and common sense tells us that the quest to prove one or another biological group is brainier than the other is really a vain exercise."

Charlotte Keane

Chevalier Award

Professor Ekhard Salje FRS, Head of the University of Cambridge's Department of Earth Sciences, has been awarded the prestigious title of 'Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques'. Literally "Knight of the Order of Academic Palms", this honour is one of the highest distinctions in France, bestowed by the government on those individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to arts, languages or science.

Professor Salje received the award at a ceremony held on January 25 at the residence of the French Ambassador and attended by representatives of the House of Lords. Olivier Chambard of the French Embassy thanked him for his support of the UK-France dialogue, as well as his scientific achievements.

The Professor works within the Mineralogy and Mineral Physics Group of the Earth Sciences Department, a group with strong links to the Interdisciplinary Research Centre in Superconductivity, the UK's national centre for research into the origins and applications of superconductivity. His research focuses on developing "a mathematically correct and physically meaningful description of the microstructures in minerals" and his discoveries have led to "a new understanding of how atomic and electronic transport occurs in minerals with structural phase transition." His recent award recognised this work on the formation of mineral microstructures, and also that on the statistical mechanics of phase transitions.

The work was undertaken in collaboration with scientists in France, and Professor Salje was honoured in particular for his support of scientific co-operation between the Department of Earth Sciences and the Institute de Physique du Globe in Paris. He stressed the importance of alliances between individual academics and "designing a European Research Council in such a way as that it maintains the advantages of person-to-person co-operation."

Zoe Smeaton

Global warming

With global warming, summer rainfall could drop by more than half and scorching summers may become increasingly frequent in breadbasket regions of East Britain. On February 8, Ministers of the Environment Elliot Morley and Lord Whitty met with top farmland officials to hear reports that climate change may lead to acute water shortages and serious damage to farms.

The warning highlights the attention given to global climate change preceding the Kyoto Protocol implementation next week.

More than 200 leading experts on climate change attended the summit 'Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change' in Exeter last week. The Secretary of State of the Environment, Margaret Beckett, opened with a message that climate change "is already occurring" and that "the risks are more serious than previously thought". Reports found that catastrophic events once thought highly unlikely are now seen as possible or probable. Professor Chris Rapley, director of the British Antarctic Survey, presented database results of instability in Antarctic ice sheets, which could potentially raise sea levels by 15 ft. Climate change scientists reported on the acidification of seas, thawing of tundras and the melting of ice sheets affecting weather patterns, water resources and ecosystems.

Yusuke Shimizu

Sixth formers to start early

Rachel Cooper

BRIGHT SIXTH formers should begin studying for a university degree while still at school, a government White Paper will say later this month.

In her first major announcement since taking on the role of Secretary of State of Education, Ruth Kelly will declare her intention to stretch the most gifted state-school pupils.

University degree 'modules' in science and maths would be offered alongside conventional sixth-form classes. Such modules would count towards degree courses once the students start university.

The proposal could see bright pupils attending Saturday morning sessions at local universities or taking Open University courses, a move which has been welcomed by headteachers.

Pupils will be encouraged to sit A-levels and GCSEs early if their teachers believe they can pass them. Teachers' leaders have expressed their support for such a step which would enable them to meet the needs of the brightest students.

James Keeler, Tutor for Admissions in the Sciences at Selwyn College agreed: "Many of the brightest students find A-level maths and science

courses rather limiting and unsatisfying. Being able to make the next step by taking a part of a university course should help to stretch and stimulate such students."

But Dr Keeler was fearful that the scheme may only benefit those who are "lucky enough to be attending 'good' schools who will be able to take up such an option and that those in less advantaged schools will not so easily be able to take up this option." He added: "Unless there was a widely adopted and understood national system, it would be very difficult to use the results of such courses as part of a conditional offer." A

few schools are already experimenting with the proposed scheme, namely Monkseaton Community High School in North Tyneside - where Laura Spence, denied a place at Oxford University despite 5 As at A-level, studied.

The White Paper, written in response to Sir Mike Tomlinson's report into secondary school reform, will be published at the end of the month.

Ministers are also keen to introduce another of Sir Mike's recommendations which would see A-level students writing a 4,000-word extended essay to develop thinking skills.



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An extended license for destruction?



ANALYSIS
HENRY BOWEN

As was revealed in *Varsity* at the end of last term, nightlife in Cambridge will undergo a major overhaul this year. Coco's nightclub is changing hands, and new ventures such as Ta Bouche on Market Passage are trying to attract students away from their traditional venues.

With the upcoming changes in the licensing laws, it is possible that opening hours will be extended and there is an opportunity for establishments to offer 24 hour drinking. But these plans may well come up against opposition from local authorities, which are being given greater powers by the new legislation.

This week, for the first time, pubs and bars have been able to apply for new extended licenses to sell alcohol, which will not come into force until November this year. But the responsibility for administering those licenses has been transferred from Magistrates to local councils. This is a welcome change, because local councils have to pay

for some of the costs associated with the unsociable side of it such as vandalism and violence.

But the Cambridge City council has already demonstrated that it may not be very generous with the new licenses. Po Na Na nightclub, which applied for an extension in its opening hours from 12.30am until 2am in January, has had its application rejected on the basis that it will cause too much disturbance to local residents. Café Afrika had its license withdrawn last year after allegations of underage

Opportunities for 24 hour drinking

drinking and crowds gathering outside the venue, which is in a residential area. In attempting to reconcile the needs of a modern city centre with the concerns of local residents, the Council runs the risk of stifling what little nightlife we currently have.

The Licensing Act, passed in 2003, was promised before the last general election in 2001. The current licensing laws date back to World War I when they were aimed at increasing the produc-

tivity of munitions workers. Although some of the original legislation has been gradually changed (pubs no longer have to shut for a period in the afternoons, for example), the cut-off time of 11 o'clock has still remained. British society has changed significantly since these laws were codified, and the changes are long overdue.

So what model should we adopt for our drinking hours? Many look to Southern Europe, where countries allow drinking until early in the morning and suffer few of the effects of alcohol-induced crime which are so common in this country. But planners in cities such as Manchester who hoped to cultivate a relaxed 'piazza' atmosphere by allowing city centre bars to open late during the nineties found that the English did not behave as they had expected. Instead of sipping retsina and discussing Sartre, hundreds of binge drinkers crowding onto the streets indulged themselves with violence and vandalism. The city centres were revived, but at a heavy price.

It is clear that the English drinking culture bears little relation to the Spanish or French. Perhaps we can learn the lessons of other Northern European

states. Scandinavia's astronomical high alcohol taxes have engendered a culture of private drinking, so although they may binge, the problem of drunks roaming the streets after hours looking for trouble is much less severe.

In Ireland, when the drinking hours were extended, the increase in alcohol-related crime was so bad that the opening hours are currently being rolled back again. But it would be foolish to stick to our archaic opening laws for fear of repeating the Irish mistake. The changes in licensing will be a positive step as long as they are administered carefully.

One of the strongest arguments for the changes is the fact that thousands of ordinary drinkers are sensible enough to choose when and how they drink without having it dictated to them. In a political climate where the government is becoming increasingly prescriptive about what we eat and where we can smoke this legislation marks a rare transfer of responsibility back to the individual.

The current 11 o'clock cut-off has two negative consequences. Firstly, drinkers facing such an early deadline often try to drink as much as possible while they

still can, so rather than getting slowly wasted over an evening, they binge hard and are completely battered when the pubs shut. Secondly, because nearly every pub closes at the same time, hundreds of drunken people are disgorged simultaneously and frequently get in fights on the streets and in taxi ranks.

Ordinary drinkers are sensible enough to choose how they drink

The first of these may well improve, at least after a transition period. Students from England in Scottish universities are notorious for spending their fresher's weeks drinking at a frenzied pace despite the later opening hours there. But this doesn't take long to settle down as they adapt to the drinking hours. Furthermore, the Office of Fair Trading this week ruled that local councils could impose minimum prices on drinks to curb bingeing during 'happy hours'.

The second problem is of more concern. In the nineties, police forces initially heralded later-opening bars as a solution, but quickly found that there was no decrease in the level of street vio-

lence, even though it was spread out over a longer period. It is for this reason that police are one of the strongest detractors of the new laws. Sir John Stevens, the country's top policeman, has warned that police forces will have to deploy more patrols at night to deal with alcohol-related violence. This is a serious point, particularly as the police are funded from a government level and their extra costs will not be borne by the local councils which make the licensing decisions. There must be a mechanism by which some of the extra revenue from the late licenses is channelled back to the police who have to deal with the consequences.

These concerns are serious, but they must not be allowed to obscure the fact that the new drinking laws do represent a significant improvement. The majority of people will benefit, and City Councils such as Cambridge should not allow a minority of violent drunks to excessively influence their allocations of the new licenses. Many students will undoubtedly continue to drink heavily, but they will soon have the luxury of a choice of late-night venues, instead of having to repeatedly endure the delights of Cambridge's nightclubs.

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Survey raises sexual health questions

Rachel Willcock on the consequences of students' sexual habits.

A survey conducted by *Varsity* has revealed that an alarming number of students are still ignorant of the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases. Only 36% of students asked actually knew what Clinic 1A was (just to let the other 64% know, it is the local sexual health clinic).

This is a figure described as "disappointing" by Dr Chris Sonnex, a consultant in Genito-Urinary medicine (GUM) at Addenbrooke's. In a culture of openness about sexuality it is surprising that so many students remain oblivious to the potential risks which they are vulnerable to.

There is still a reluctance to talk about the more unattractive aspects of sex – though many are willing to discuss frankly their use of vibrators or handcuffs, few will confess to having genital warts, a virus that a massive 70% of sexually active young women will have at one time. This leads to a lack of knowledge, and more importantly embarrassment about visiting the hospital for a check up.

Maggie Hartley, college nurse at St John's College admits there is a massive variance in students' awareness about STIs; though "some people are extremely clued up, some people haven't got a clue." With a national rise amongst young people of chlamydia (an infection borne without symptoms in the majority of cases), the use of the condom as the primary method of contraception for preventing STIs is vital. However, there seems to be a worrying trend among Cambridge students, like others nationally, to use the

Pill rather than the condom as their sole method of contraception. 44% of people answering the *Varsity* survey were open to infection from STIs and a shocking 11% said they sometimes went without any protection at all. Only a negligible 6% of students used both the condom and the pill. This combination is described by Dr Sonnex as "the ideal and what should be the most common method of contraception." Perhaps these figures can be attributed to what Richard Reid, CUSU Welfare Officer, ascribes to a general feeling "that pregnancy is the only risk." Clearly this is far from true.

Dr Sonnex also points to a potential risk for Cambridge students in the trend for travelling from Cambridge (a low risk area for life-threatening sexually transmitted infections like HIV) to higher risk areas such as London. The nightlife, particularly for the gay community, attracts Cambridge students who are perhaps ill-catered for here, to venture further afield. If this is coupled with unsafe sex it does not bode well for Cambridge sexual health.

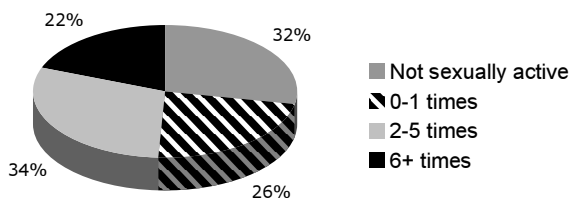
To reiterate a now hackneyed mantra from sexual health talks: the greatest danger is ignorance. Richard Reid stresses that CUSU are "trying as hard as we can" to increase students' awareness of the potential dangers, by promoting services like the GUM clinic at Addenbrooke's and by giving talks to freshers. But on such a personal issue there are limits to what the University can enforce students to do, and at the end of the day people will



Lucy Barwell

The sexual habits of Cambridge students are not so much under renewed criticism as new scrutiny

How many times a week do you have sex?

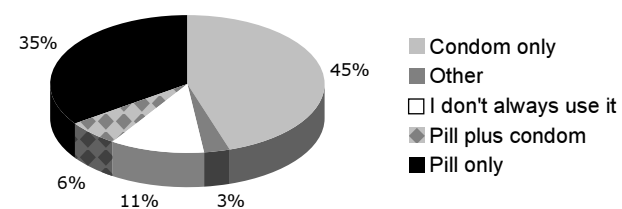


make their own choices. It is clear from the results of the *Varsity* survey that some people have the compacent attitude that being young and healthy they cannot be at risk.

With 68% of Cambridge students sexually active and

living as we do in such a closed community, sexual health and the transmittance of STIs should be something that concerns everybody. People do swap partners and within the small collegiate community, STIs have the

What contraception do you use?



potential to spread like wild fire. The basic fact is that though it may be awkward to bring up these issues with a potential partner, it will be a lot more embarrassing to confess to your Rag Blind Date that you have herpes.

Clinic 1A may not be where many people want to be this Valentine's Day but openness about sexual health and application of this knowledge is what will lead to long term physical, and fundamentally romantic, happiness.



Kate Ward

Our very own '30 second sex survey' flew its way around the inboxes of Cambridge this week. STIs (sexually transmitted infections, for those of you dangerously out of touch) were high on the agenda. 70% of you said you felt well-informed about them and yet 11% of you use no contraception, and 44% of those who do use contraception are not protected against transmitting or indeed catching STIs.

But there is one question that the survey failed to address: the question of love,

Is love the worst STI of them all?

sex and relationships. Next Monday is Valentine's Day – the day in which the commercialisation of love arrives, at your door, with twelve red roses, pink champagne, and a barber-shop quartet singing Madness' 'It Must Be Love'. But only a week before this auspicious event, there was good news for singletons.

According to one leading psychologist, love is officially bad for you. That's right, you are better off without it. Frank Tallis, author of *Love Sick* says that "for the vast majority of people who don't suffer from mental illness, love-sickness is the closest they come to suffering from a psychological condition". He argues that the symptoms, which include

mania, depression, insomnia, and obsessive compulsive behaviour, should be treated alongside any other kind of psychological condition. Love-sickness, according to Tallis, is so serious that it could have deep-seated and long-lasting repercussions for our society. The longer love is idealised, Tallis argues, the more we set ourselves up for the kind of disappointment which will then create the aforementioned symptoms.

So being in love makes you behave in a way which is irrational (and akin to psychological disorders), and being out of love or searching for love also makes you exhibit these symptoms (depression, insomnia etc). Some of us exist in a con-

stant state of love sickness.

So love is mad, it's irrational, all-consuming and, lest we forget according to the love-sickness report it's potentially physically dangerous (as your heart rate increases whenever you lay eyes on your beloved).

But why does this kind of behaviour now have to be sanitised and analysed by psychologists? Love makes us lose touch with rationality, reason and as my mother once sympathetically noted 'all common sense.' But who says that is a bad thing? Surely we should be open to all kinds of human experience, without constantly analysing everything from a distance?

'All's fair in love and war.' But if love can only be of a pre-

scribed, detached kind, with strict social codes of behaviour how can it be true love? For love is not only blind, it is barking mad. As we drag it from the realm of madness to

Tallis warns of the idealisation of love, but should we fear the commercialisation of love more?

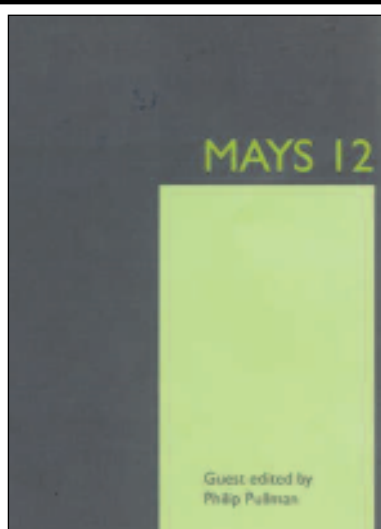
the white box of the mundane all that is achieved is the loss of the essence of love.

Tallis warns of the idealisation of love, but should we fear the commercialisation of love more? For it is through this commercialisation of love that

we control its uncertainty, and in doing so its danger. In a society driven by the commercial and material, has love become the latest commodity? By taking love away from its raw and irrational roots, by making it another tick in the box of society's increasing number of disorders surely we just ruin it.

Yes, getting dumped is really shitty, but if love is reduced to a Clinton's card then surely it should be called something else (like 'luv'), a version that is incomplete, and missing the vital ingredient. Love-sickness has existed for centuries, and will continue to do so. But sadly love itself looks like it is increasingly under threat.

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In Emmanuel Bar and in my imagination, rave will never die

I'm not pining for a girl this Valentine's Day; I'm mourning a lost age

I will lie to my children. I will tell them I was there in 1987 and 1994. I will tell them I remember the rave era. And when they're a bit older, they'll realise the dates don't match up. But they'll work that out long after they work out that I didn't really teach Elvis to play guitar and that I wasn't really the model for Batman, so they probably won't be speaking to me anyway.

I would like to think that all of you wish as fervently as I do that you were ten or fifteen years older so you could have been there for the rave era. But I worry that, somehow, most of you loveless drones just don't really care.

My only real memory of the rave era is a poster on the wall of my big sister's room protesting the Criminal Justice Act; but I think she was just trying to be cool, because she was barely old enough to be affected by it. Do you even know what the Criminal Justice Act was? Christ. When that Tory MP complained recently that nobody knows any history any more, he was right, but about the wrong things. The name of Nelson's ship at the Battle of Trafalgar? Fuck off. Post-Thatcherite tyrannies: that's what kids ought to learn in schools. The Criminal Justice Act passed in 1994, airlifted into Parliament by black helicopter gunships. It altered almost every area of criminal law, but it was most notorious for banning any night-time gathering of more than a hundred people to listen to 'amplified music... characterised by... repetitive beats'.

In other words, it banned raves. Police were also allowed to stop, search, and disperse anyone who they thought was on the way to the rave or hanging around waiting for a rave to start. A hundred people might seem like a lot,

I watched a girl with a belly like a snake dance until the sun came up



Ned Beauman

but some raves used to attract thousands (the biggest ever, at the peak of the Second Summer of Love in 1992, was a techno festival at Castlemorton Common which drew nearly forty thousand people). John Major knew he could get away with the sinister Act, including its snide implicit judgement about the aesthetic value of a generation's most beloved music, because the age-group who went to raves were also the age-group least likely to vote.

(Did rural folk fight for our right to party? Of course not, they pushed for the law, in league with the tabloid press and their 'SICKO NOISE-WEAPON DRUG-HELL FILTH-CARNIVAL' headlines. But now we

I will tell my children I was there in 1987 and 1994. I will tell them I remember the rave era

have Blair's fox-hunting ban, they're saying that any such attempt to destroy a misunderstood subculture is a 'crisis for democracy'. And the funny thing is, ex-ravers, by now, are exactly the kind of *Guardian*-reading thirtysomethings that the ban is intended to please. Well, bad luck hunters. Democracy giveth and democracy taketh away. The ravers

have had their revenge.)

The Act was intended to put a stop to a movement that had begun in 1987 when a lot of influential DJs came back from holidays in Ibiza, bringing with them acid house records and an evangelical excitement about a drug called Ecstasy. (But, however many people assume otherwise, it's just not the case that you have to be on drugs to enjoy dance music - yes, the Internet only got so popular because of porn, but you don't have to be hunting for porn to find the Internet useful). The scene spread from warehouses in the trendier districts of London to teeming muddy fields all over Britain.

It's been argued that without the Criminal Justice Act, we wouldn't have had the anti-globalisation movement, because the Act turned the hippies militant. And it couldn't kill off raves entirely - shrunken ones still take place around the country. Last summer I went to a rave in a clearing in Trent Park, which are some woods at the top of the Piccadilly Line in north London. The bass shook the leaves from the trees and I watched a girl with a belly like a snake dance until the sun came up. It was great, but it was too small, and it made me wish even more that I'd been there back in the day. And I know I'm not alone. For the last half hour of

drum'n'bass nights in Emma bar, you see people sweat and cheer just as if it was 4am in a field somewhere near the M25 in 1991. You're telling me you don't like the music? All right, shamble back to your indie disco and pogo to 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' for the millionth time. But no *NME*-sponsored 'New Rock Revolution', or anything else they've tried to sell us over the last few years, could ever be as thrilling and consuming as the rave era. (Well, I don't think it could. Like I said, I wasn't actually there.) Raves, at least at the beginning, were usually put on at a huge financial loss, just for the love of it.

Post-Thatcherite tyrannies: that's what kids ought to learn about in schools

When was the last time you were part of something so genuine, so optimistic, so heedless of all the silly things that they tell us to care about?

Something could still come along - something as good as rave. But it will probably need a new form of music and a new drug to go with it to emerge at the same time. Or maybe the next incarnation of whatever immortal hedonistic spirit drove rave will be some new form of behaviour which we can't even imagine. Perhaps it will have something to do with this growing fashion for organising mobs and concerts in Tube carriages and department stores. But until any of that happens, I'll carry on being nostalgic for an era I never even experienced. It's a sad way to live, but it's better than being satisfied with the vapid ringtone advertising that passes for youth culture today.

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Varsity

Selling sexual awareness

The headline has it: Sex still sells. But in spite of its prevalence in almost all modern marketing strategies, and in student productions on and off stage, it remains true that student ignorance over sexual health influences the behaviour of those who practise sex in Cambridge to a dangerous degree. The result of this is a paranoia and anxiety that even a marginal increase in knowledge would displace. And with knowledge comes that holy grail of all student unions: awareness.

'Awareness' over matters of admissions policy, tuition fees, election campaigns, and student union activities continue to dominate the headlines of a great many student newspapers. In theory, increasing awareness means filling the public space with knowledge over issues of concern to the public. Our survey (Analysis, page 8) and Science section (page 16) is designed to do precisely this.

But this newspaper is conscious that, in practice, increasing awareness amongst students often amounts to no more than encouraging apathy, because the danger with such orchestrated campaigns is that they can make awareness a dirty word. Freshers are bombarded with information campaigns upon arrival; the CUSU offices swim in leaflets commissioned by CUSU staff; college bars are awash with pamphlets designed to 'say what others don't dare to'. Such a deluge has two principal consequences: firstly, to desensitise students to the very worthwhile information carried in those pamphlets; secondly, to make the task of those trying to increase awareness (such as this editorial team) significantly more difficult.

But this is not to do any discredit to the theory, and those who look to implement it. Sympathy, then, for Richard Reid, the proficient Welfare and Graduates Officer for CUSU, who has worked diligently to combat student ignorance and spread information. The services CUSU provide ought not to be dismissed lightly: free pregnancy tests, in particular, are a service insufficient numbers of students know about. In so far as it is a function of newspapers to add weight to the project of increasing awareness, but to do so through a different medium, it is to be hoped that the concerns raised in this publication will help Reid and his colleagues achieve their aims.

Buying Kilroy-Silk's message

The link between Robert Kilroy-Silk and Cambridge might seem tenuous at best. He is moving to a nearby village to live with a travelling community, as part of a Reality TV show to be shown on Channel 4.

But Kilroy-Silk is a modern master of courting the camera. He will certainly arouse publicity around both the wider Cambridge area and the town centre, which he is likely to visit, especially if 'travelling'. When this process is initiated in a few weeks' time, there is a question that the students of this town must ask themselves, and this is it: should he be taken seriously? Archie Bland (Features, page 12) makes it clear that, at present, not many journalists really do so. But as he goes on to explain, the rise of Kilroy-Silk from failed television presenter to caricatured political rascal is symptomatic of a wider degeneration in our public life - and this is a degeneration that Cambridge must not succumb to. It is a degeneration manifested most vividly in the silencing of genuine political debate in our country. What passes for public life is increasingly filled with private agendas, or personality trials; Kilroy-Silk is precisely the sort of politician our current climate calls for, all smiles and tan, but little substance.

Those in the public sphere who have dismissed Kilroy-Silk as no more than a publicity-craving extremist have generally provided him with that very thing he requires to sustain his political ambition: vacuous publicity. There has been no serious interrogation of his ideas, no honest appraisal of the intellectual ground on which he skips; but, quite to the contrary, there has been plenty of dumbing down, and unhelpful bashing. If he should consider it necessary to air his ideology in this town, this newspaper will scrutinise the basis of that ideology ruthlessly - a very different kind of publicity. Similarly, Cambridge City Council and CUSU will be required over the course of the next few months to monitor their own reaction to him, and the manner of that reaction will say a very great deal about the health of those two institutions. It will be to their mutual discredit if they pander to the current, censorious climate; but if they can confront his arguments face on and show them to be irrational, it will be more than just the citizens of nearby Cottenham that have reason to be thankful.

Men of all seasons

Cricket is the greatest sport. It is unique amongst the games devised by lower-upper-middle class men of the West for afternoon amusement in its capacity to combine intellectual stamina with artistic beauty. It shares with all sports the capacity to produce men of glory; but perhaps it differs from other sports in consistently producing polymaths as skilled physically as they are adept intellectually. Sycophancy is an ugly thing, but it seems right and proper to recognise that in Adrian Shankar Cambridge has been witness to an exceptional talent, who fits such a description. His success is to Cambridge and England's benefit.

Letters

letters@varsity.co.uk

Letters may be edited for space or style

Discord

Dear Sirs,

Perhaps I missed the sarcasm in Charlotte Hodgkinson's review of the Others (Music, Feb 4); maybe she very much liked the album. Maybe she did not, and of course, she is entitled to her opinion. It is, however, with her assertion that everyone agrees with her that I must take issue. This is a band "whose hands are worth placing your life in" said the *NME*, who the *Guardian* thought "risky, thrilling and free" and according to the *Observer* created "something extraordinary. My friends and I like them too. So Miss Hodgkinson is entitled to her opinion, but I'd be grateful if she would refrain from tarring the rest of us with her tasteless brush.

Yours sincerely,

Jamie Corby (Caius)

Dramatic irony

Dear Sir,

Has Yvonne McDevitt (Arts, Feb 4) considered undertaking a one-woman-show? It really is all in the way she tells 'em. From, "Neil Bartlett, do you you know who he is? He should be given a throne to sit upon..." to the inspired "Who is the best director working today? The Russian, Vassiliev" (Oh, that Vassiliev! not of the Lincolnshire Vassiliev then?). I was entranced by her amazing talent for self parody - a true case of 'New life' imitating art. Long may she enunciate!

Yours sincerely,

D. Marusza.

A Question of Sport

Dear Sir,

Has it escaped your notice that in last week's sports section, there appears to have been a considerable error on your

behalf. Dare I venture to suggest that hat-trick hero Miles Away is a misnomer, an alias, a *nom sportif*? Perhaps an amendment in a future issue might be suitable recompense for this error.

Your sincerely,

Ben Morgan

Image-conscious

Dear Sir,

I write as a Dutchman and as Feyenoord football supporter also. As much as I enjoyed the articles concerning the lack of support for parent students within Cambridge, I felt your picture on page 10 to be an unfair representation of my country and my football club. I understand it is in the interests of newspapers to be provocative, but surely printing the image of a child swearing in such a way is going too far? I think that perhaps your pictures editor is a Sparta Rotterdam fan!

Yours sincerely,

Bart Van den Haauwe

Praiseworthy Priestess

Dear Sir, Madam or anything of your choosing,

Amidst all the doom and gloom of modern life it is comforting to know that there exists at least one island of sanity, tolerance and respect in this world. I refer to the wonderful story of the parish priestess (News, Feb 4) revealing her true past and receiving nothing but unanimous support from her colleagues, parishioners and wider community. Disappointingly though, despite this backing, certain irresponsible segments of the national press cannot help but scandalise and ultimately denigrate this brave woman. I am glad to see that *Varsity* treated the story with such professionalism.

Sincerely yours,

F. W. Roostoy

Exam in Progress

Dear Sir,

Your report on the advances made in simulating animal testing with gene microarrays (News, Feb 4) reveals an important leap forward in several fields, from product testing to drug development. However, it is imperative to recall that rigorous animal testing rules exist for a crucial reason. Quite simply, the alternative to animal testing is human testing. Not to say that biotech firms or pharmaceutical companies would resort to capturing human guinea pigs. But, if animal rights activists have their way, the lack of animal toxicity trials will simply result in replacing the risks to animals with risks to human users.

Now, I don't know about SPEAC but being a human myself I would be fervently against this. It is fortuitous though that developments in technology have resulted in the possibility of an alternative to the practice of product testing on animals. But to simply exclaim that such technology relegates animal testing to the scientist's closet is short-sighted.

Animal trials are run for much more than checking whether new drugs are toxic, in many cases animal trials can play an integral role in the development of these drugs in the first place. Gene microarray technology is unlikely to diminish the need for animal testing in drug development because, as any animal rights activist will readily reveal, animals are a lot more than just DNA. Medical advances in any number of degenerative and terminal illnesses are still, and will for the foreseeable future, be dependent on animal testing.

Yours,

C. Y. Barnard

Correction

We failed to credit the front page image last week. The photograph was taken by Phil Wigglesworth. We apologise for the error.



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The Grand Narrative and the Big Tent

Archie Bland wonders whether the future of British politics is as orange as Kilroy-Silk

For all the thundering rhetoric, the press pack simply isn't taking Robert Kilroy-Silk seriously. He's not surprised, of course; since the outcry over the Sunday Express article, he's learned a thing or two about how the media operates – not that he didn't already have a pretty shrewd idea. But he is, understandably, saddened, because knowing something's inevitable doesn't make it any less frustrating, and all he wants is for them to tell the truth: "I know you come with your agenda. I understand your agenda. I know about that, remember. I've been around a long time." There is a moment's pause as he surveys the throng.

"What you have to understand," he ominously adds, "is that we reach beyond you."

So much for Kilroy-Silk, perhaps. A sad figure trying to find the best way of maintaining fame despite the rapid descent of an orange-tinted twilight

Another pause while the attendant hacks take this in. And, a little later, it comes – the inevitable question, on the lips of every follower of Britain's orangest politico: "Is your tan Veritas?"

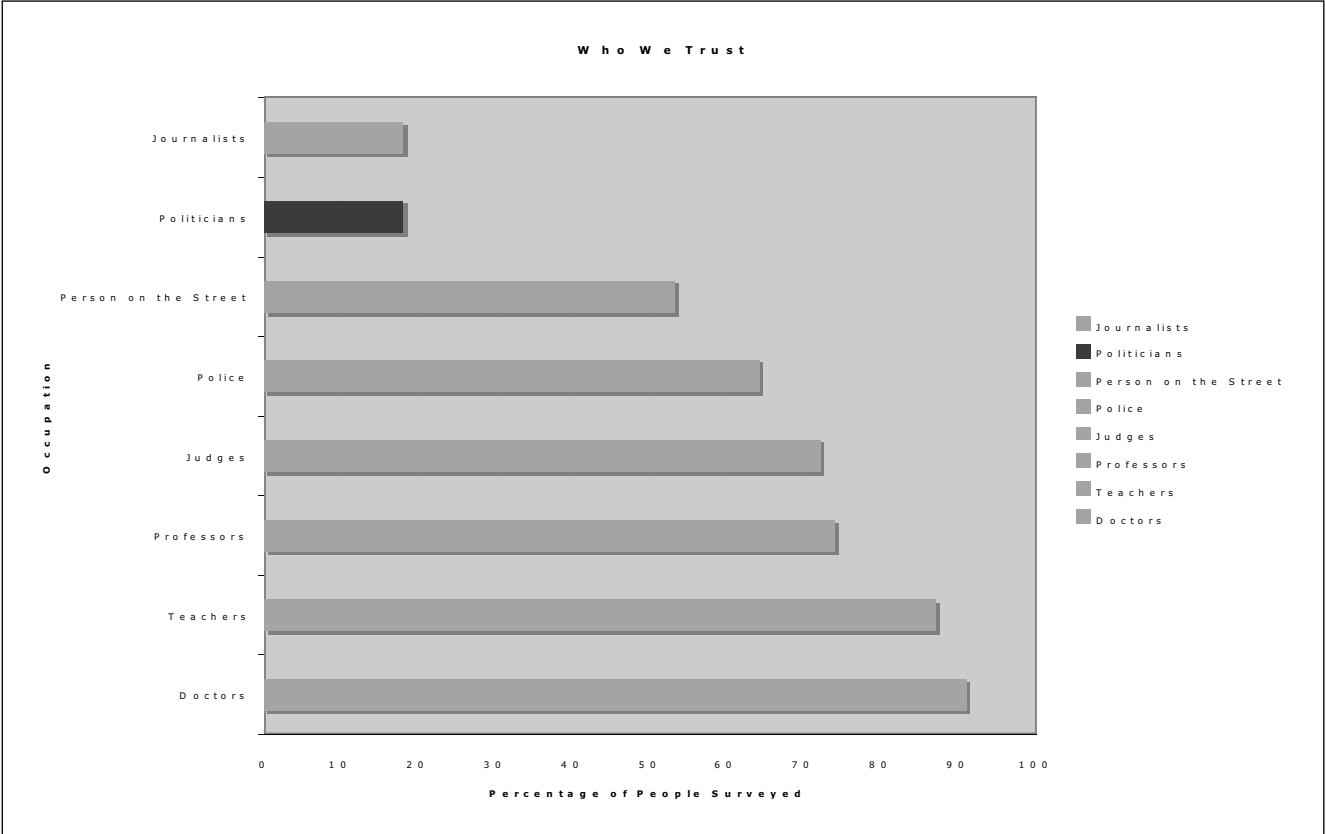
When Robert Kilroy-Silk launched his new party last week, it is safe to say that the attendant members of the press were not suitably impressed. But even if the raft of policies (which, so far, consists of: "We have a mass immigration policy in this country! It's out of control!" And, "They lie all the time! They are still lying today!") rather lacks breadth, it would be foolish to

dismiss Veritas out of hand: like it or not, plenty of people think Kilroy has a point on the EU, and immigration, and lies, and he's certainly more telegenic than UKIP's cravat-wearing buffoons. Standing at the podium at the press conference with adoring followers gazing at him and hanging on his every word – do these look like patsies to you? Are you patsies, he demands? No! the not-patsies respond, as one – he does look every inch the airbrushed, coiffeured, and – yes – fake-tanned modern politician.

It's all an awfully long way from Knowlesley North, the Labour seat which Kilroy-Silk occupied back in 1986. That was the year his life (and, incidentally, the future of the right-wing shoestring of British politics) veered in a different direction, when he stood down from the constituency he had held since 1974. Kilroy decided television was a better gig – "I am not into news or current affairs," he said at the time: "I am into entertainment. That is my business." (Some would say that remains his policy now.) His colleagues were not best pleased.

They don't like him much now, either; but it's safe to say that the likes of Kilroy-Silk are rather more worrying to Michael Howard than Tony Blair. The Tories are being squeezed from both sides, and it doesn't give them much room for manoeuvre. The key question, according to one *Guardian* journalist who attended the Veritas launch, is "whether they're just a joke, or whether they're slightly scary... I lean towards the latter." But, he adds, "the evidence of his personality is that his ego will get in the way of doing anything practical."

So much for Kilroy-Silk, perhaps. A sad figure trying to find the best way of maintaining fame despite the rapid



A telling tale; but the current trend of disengagement is subtly - but significantly - removed from the popular conception of voter 'apathy'

descent of an orange-tinted twilight; a mildly-racist-call-a-spade-a-spade-some-of-my-best-friends-are-limb-amputators-the-European-Commissioners-want-to-straighten-our-bananas quivering mass of clichés. Veritas, barring a very rapid infusion of some people who aren't Their Glorious Leader, look destined to remain principally a cheer-leading operation. But the wider question of the emergence of a pick-your-own political category is a knottier one.

There are 276 parties listed with the Electoral Commission, and most of them can be counted out as A Bit Crazeee, like the Church of the Militant Elvis Party, or properly mental, like the Telepathic Partnership. Somewhere in the middle is the potentially troublesome group, just earnest enough not to get laughed at, and just articulate enough not to get sectioned. Kilroy-Silk, it is widely rumoured, tried to link up with two such parties before founding his own: the New Party, and the English Democrats. The New Party claim to be all about politics by consensus, and have a policy raft driven principally by opinion polls; the English Democrat hook is a devolved English parliament with the same powers as the Scottish version. Both are anti-European and anti-asylum seekers, but that should be taken as read.

Whilst neither has caught the public imagination yet, there's evidence to suggest that, if you were trying to recruit supporters for a new ideology, now wouldn't be such a bad time to be trying. Recent ICM research shows that the proportion of people who identify with a particular party has dropped from 80% in 1964 to around 50% in late 2003. On the other hand,

new research published on Tuesday (by MORI) suggested that 81% of young people say they feel strongly about political issues. So it isn't all apathy: it's disengagement.

When asked for an explanation of this mysterious disconnection, John Harris, author of *So now who do we vote for?*, points to an end to the political tribalism of previous generations: 'It used to be either of the main parties could say, given three facts [about your lifestyle], whether you would vote for them or not. That's not true any more: you ain't gonna get the voters by dealing in the old rhetoric of, say, trade unions versus bosses.' The big tent has eliminated the grand narrative, and now politics is more an argument over who can micro-manage the best than it is a great debate over competing visions of a better future. Harris remembers a meeting with Mark Oaten, Lib Dem MP for Winchester, in the course of research for his book: 'he said, basically, you'll find the three main parties agree on a lot of things now – and I said, did I miss a meeting? I found that chilling, to be frank.'

And that's where a new political force might find a foothold. The big tent might be peaceful, but it leaves gaps at the edges: the thing that will stir voters into action, according to the Electoral Commission's Gemma Crosland, is an effort to 'try to make people connect the issues they feel passionate about with voting. People want politicians to come from the same backgrounds as them, to have led the same kinds of lives as they lead.' Not for nothing did ITV recently run *Vote For Me*, which was widely known as Politics Idol: things are getting weird when we trust TV to choose our legislators more than we trust the democratic process.

The winner was on an anti-immigration ticket, incidentally.

This is, perhaps, evidence of one universal trend in modern politics: anti-politics. There are two versions: anti-politics from the inside, which is when George Bush or Tony Blair or Michael Howard say that there's too much adversarial rowing for the sake of point scoring, and their administration will be one which

The big tent has eliminated the grand narrative, and now politics is more an argument over who can micro-manage the best than it is a great debate over competing visions of a better society

listens to ideas from all across the spectrum, and don't really mean it; and there's the outsider version, which is when Charles Kennedy or UKIP's Roger Knapman, or George Galloway (leader of the Respect Coalition, which is like a left wing UKIP, only fewer blazers), or Robert Kilroy-Silk, says, 'this left-right thing is nonsense', or 'everyone in Westminster's the same', or 'the politicians are out of touch, and we're the real voice of the people.' And they don't mean it either. In the end, as Harris says, 'all industrial societies are built on the same faultline – the split between individualism and collectivism. Soon enough normal service will be resumed.'

If Gordon Brown's likely (though by no means certain) ascent to the Prime Ministership will pull things a little more into the old perspec-

tives, though, we still haven't an explanation for why these odd little parties keep cropping up. What's so peculiar about them is how strong the resemblances are: you'd struggle to fit a cigarette paper between UKIP, Veritas and the English Democrats, and even the New Party follows a broadly conservative agenda, for all its talk of consensus-building polls. Their quarry owning benefactor and chairman, Robert Durward, rejects this interpretation, calling the labels of left and right 'virtually useless to describe the much more complex issues of today,' and blaming it on 'lazy journalism'. (Politicians, or would-be politicians, talk a lot about lazy journalism, just like English people complain about the weather when they leave their umbrella at home.)

Slack hacks or no, what's clear is that the people most engaged by the new parties are... well, themselves. It's simple, really: mainly, they're people who like being in charge of stuff. IT'S TIME FOR CHANGE, the New Party website blares; WE WANT OUR COUNTRY BACK, UKIP counters. PUTTING ENGLAND FIRST, leer the English Democrats. None of this is any more meaningless than FORWARD NOT BACK, Alastair Campbell's slogan for the forthcoming election; but Labour has the significant advantage of already being in charge.

These are not, ultimately, the strikingly original taglines of movements with a new vision of how the world should work. If they were, one of them would probably be in government by now. As it is, they'll have to settle for the occasional glorious press conference; and, better still, the burning, certain knowledge that they're right.

WHO THEY ARE & WHAT THEY WANT

UKIP (United Kingdom Independence Party)

- They don't like the EU, crime or political correctness
- Joan Collins, Geoffrey Boycott & Max Clifford will be voting for them

New Party

- They want less tax, less interference and a lot less immigration
- Ex-ICI chairman Sir John Harvey-Jones will be voting for them

English Democrats

- They want a devolved English government, more immigration control and are anti-EU
- They won 20% of the vote in Basildon in the last election

Respect

- They're anti-war, anti-privatisation and pro-public services
- Founded by George Galloway. They proposed a £1 flat rate fare for the London Underground

Veritas

- Hate immigration
- Love Truth

The fidget-zones enquiry



Jon Swaine

No, I'm telling you – global warming is all just a myth perpetuated by those damn environmental lobby bastards,' was the first thing anyone ever said to me in Cambridge. 'Trust me – I'm doing Natural Sciences,' continued the voice of someone I was swiftly realising would be my neighbour for an entire year. 'It's the sun – it's getting hotter. Oh, you're studying Politics, you say? Blair's such a fascist. Anyway, I'll always vote Tory.' Somehow managing to talk myself back off my own window ledge while he made the tea, I resolved to devote my time at this esteemed institution to prove him wrong. Alas,

In the olden days everyone was grubby, restless and itchy.

having stuck at it for at least an hour – even using resources other than Google – it pains me to say that the sheer cluelessness of our worthless age has thwarted me; apparently we're not too certain of much at all any more.

Back in the days when at 14 you could – nay, were expected to – leave your front door open when heading out for an afternoon kick-around, pack of Woodbines and swift half of IPA with the chaps in the park (jumpers for goalposts optional), and return to find your house not only distinctly un-burgled, but thoroughly cleaned and having

any necessary structural repairs being carried out by friendly local handymen, we all knew where we stood. Eggs was eggs, Britain was Great and children were to be seen and not heard, for fear of a clipped ear.

But in this terrifying, globalised age of genetically-modified fruit that may or may not cause cancer, nanotechnology that might well consume all civilisation if we make it a bit too clever and ever-shrinking mobile phones that – as far as I understand – will fry our brains, cause several deep-vein thromboses and make us fall out of the sky if we use them for too long on planes, as well as aforementioned disagreement on what exactly has burnt a big hole in our ozone layer, science has simply lost the reassuring certainty it once had.

Take a pressing social malaise: obesity. Worldwide, 300 million are estimated to be affected by the problem, which is beginning to replace malnutrition and infectious diseases as the most significant contributor to global ill health. Diet and weight loss programs have never been more necessary, popular or profitable. There are Atkins-devouts, South Beachers, Good Carbs, Bad Carbs; even Marjorie Dawes' preferred Dust. Myriad prescription drugs are available; possibly-fatal gastric bypasses are readily snapped up and reality television programs are produced featuring tearful, obese C-List celebrities being shouted at by drill sergeants called Hank. Truly, it is the crisis of our generation.

Many have pontificated on the primary causes behind the predicament. Perhaps it can be attributed to our lack of sufficient exercise; after all, playing fields are constantly being sold off to Capitalism, and we're no longer made to run seven miles to school



Obesity is now considered a global health concern; exercise is to become a much bigger part of our diet

in only gym knickers and plimsoles. Correspondingly, it's suggested that we generally eat slightly too much, and should instead eat less. Come on – even McDonald's have made the effort, taking some responsibility and expanding their product range to those renowned dieters' essentials, chocolate muffins. Brilliant.

But, according to research published this week by Mayo (!) Clinic, Minneapolis, we are all fundamentally mistaken; the real problem lies not in over-consumption or even lack of strenuous exercise. That would be far too straightforward; it's actually that we're just not fidgeting enough these days. In tests forcing ten 'mildly obese' and ten 'lean' people to wear special underwear made with 'technology developed for fighter-jet control panels' (obviously), subjects' postures and movements were

measured every half-second, 24 hours a day for ten days. Scientists found that on average, their obese patients sat still for roughly 150 minutes more per day than their lean subjects, meaning they burned about 350 fewer calories a day. 'If we can revert to general [fidgeting] levels of fifty years ago, we have the potential to reverse our obesity,' they said, presumably referring to the restlessness and itching caused by everyone being that bit grubbier in the olden days.

I really would like to know who these 'scientists' think they're trying to fool. Burning 350 calories from our daily fidgets? Have they ever been to a gym, ran flat-out for three hours on Alpine-worthy inclines, only to be informed by the heartless screen that they've done just enough work to burn off two raisins?

This may indeed be a minor,

even trivial example. But on a larger scale, it is surely a similar contemporary willingness to cry wolf, despite highly questionable provenance, over the possible or probable risks we face in so many aspects of our everyday lives – from tomatoes to terrorist threats – that merely serve to confuse and worry everyone into living like jittering wrecks, and provide a reservoir of ridiculousness for rhetorically-sensational *Daily Mail* front pages for every slow news day in the following six months. Perhaps if every scientist with something to say just stopped, counted to ten and asked themselves, 'Am I really sure that what I'm about to announce isn't utterly ridiculous?' we could calm down long enough to sort out a few things. Then again, all that nervous energy does make for exceedingly good fidget-fuel.

Parker

It's not been a good week for national Labour politicians in Cambridge. When former Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam came to talk to a student society here in Cambridge she cut a worryingly frail figure, so it wasn't a surprise when one student offered to help her to her car. More unexpected was the fact that the reply that the student received to this polite offer was none other than Mo telling her to "fuck off"!

"More unexpected was the fact that the reply that the student received to this polite offer was none other than Mo telling her to "fuck off"!"

So who better to rectify the reputation of politicians than American hero Rudy Giuliani KBE, praised for his leadership of New York at the time of the September 11th attacks? Except that when Union Senior Officer Adam Swersky spoke to his PA about a potential visit to Cambridge he was told that Giuliani wouldn't address the students here without a fee of \$200,000. The Union – which speakers normally address for free – politely declined the offer.

Bobby Friedman

Anything we should know?
Email: parker@varsity.co.uk

Broadside

Before attending King's Cellar and its inaugural hip-hop sweat fest for a mere hour or two last week, I unwittingly added my name to a contact list, blithely unaware of the carnage which would ensue. For days now, I have been receiving asinine 'reply-to-all' irrelevancies from the (roughly) 360 strong mailing group as they attempt to anchor the rogue list and compel the attention of us unfortunate souls who have to suffer, among other sparkling witticisms, a 10 e-mail joke about a lost biro. How terribly amusing.

The most striking thing about this satirical exercise (started by my mate, who understandably riled a few people with the comment 'King's are wankers'), is its stupidity. No-one genuinely thinks any of this is funny, while those limp attempts to placate and compel the list to 'just get along' and 'stop sending e-mails' is even more fatuous in two ways: firstly in that, by sending an e-mail they are perpetuating the problem to an equal degree, and secondly, these forays have now become fodder for fresh pastiche. One could muse interestingly on the democratic principles that the list explores, but I do not. It is annoying, not least because some idiot didn't blind carbon copy it to start with. So stop it. All of you (hopefully an entreaty in print will have a fresh effect).

Christians aren't scary pod people



Mary Bowers

It's February and thus there are two seemingly harmless objects that are a) omnipresent and b) cause more resentment and bitter catfighting than the Spice Girls' last days on tour. The first: that venerable tradition the Valentine's Day card. The second: the green CICCUC mission hoodie. Don't pretend you haven't seen them. They're in every faculty library, every dining hall, every aisle of Sainsbury's. Not only are the Christian Union uninformed, they're armed (with mini-Gospels), dangerous (with their Alpha Courses) and they're out to get us. Apparently.

I don't mean to reinforce the

Beatitude "blessed are the peacemakers" here (well, actually, yes I do, but that's beside the point), but why exactly are we all so wary of Christians? After all, they do not (as far as anyone has been able to prove) put arsenic in the doughnuts they give away at Friday lunchtime talks, they don't advocate a death-by-pancake-party war strategy.

Pancakes, after all, will not implant their persuasions into our brains (if it did, surely every supervision we go to would include mandatory munchies. I have to tell you, mine never do). Christians are not offensive (except Christian Rock, an aural profanity almost in line with Will Young's cover version of 'Hey Ya'). So what are we all so defensive about?

I can tell you the story from both sides. As an ex-Christian Youth Worker (that's an ex-Youth Worker, mind, not an ex-Christian) I've been both over-enthusiastic proselytiser

and angst-ridden adolescent determined to resist my mother's desperate attempts for me to attend mass. (It amazing how many different paralysing illnesses one can contract in the space of a Sunday afternoon). From my experience I can tell you that i) there's no conspiracy, ii) secret indoctrination is harder than you think and iii) Sunday after-

Is there a death-by-pancake-party war strategy?

noon feigned illness leaves you with less chance of getting that sick-note for Monday morning PE.

I'm growing more and more convinced that we never do grow out of Sunday-itis. Some of us steer clear of Christians/Hindus/Muslims with the 'its fine for them but not for me' tack, as if the whole thing was an contagious as last term's mumps (though

contrary perhaps, to common belief, it doesn't contribute to male impotence).

Being seen at a CICCUC mission talk seems almost as damaging to the reputation as being seen drinking alcopops in Coco's (I won't implicate anyone). Though we refuse to take any time out from our busy biscuit-eating *Neighbours*-watching essay crisis schedules, it's amazing how many of us are willing to pay £4 for an evening in the company of a total stranger, who may be sad, boring, mentally deranged, or all of the above, in the unlikely hope – and let's face it, it's in the back of all our minds – of finding true love. I hope your RAG blind date was as interesting.

Yet the idea of sitting in a room for half an hour and perhaps understanding what it is that makes a large minority of the University tick – and why there are as many churches in Cambridge as pubs – is utterly abhorrent/terrifying/pathetic (delete as applicable).

I'm not the most participa-

tory Christian in college, and so I'm certainly not preaching here – I'm as distracted by nights of drinking, smoking (ex- if you're interested) and playing rock 'n' roll as the next person. It doesn't make me debauched, (the closest I get to a drug high is drinking three cups of tea in a row) but some days do make me a teeny bit jealous of those Christians who do appear to be having fun without the dark shadows under their eyes. And they do genuinely appear to be happy. Am I the only one who wonders? Really?

I'm not expecting any Valentines this year (though any contributions, my pigeon-hole's on the far wall in Queens' College Porter's Lodge). At the moment, its empty. A bleary-eyed student who has just stumbled out of bed and past the newly-posted Mission poster on the college noticeboard. "Bloody Christians" he mumbles, "Jeezus". Pancakes, anyone?

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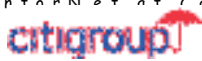
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VARSlTY

The Morning After the Night Before

Zoe Smeaton considers how women could cope with the consequences

The manifest controversy of pregnancy termination was again highlighted to us all by the recent reports that CUSU may be subject to legal action from The Cambridge University Pro-Life Society. With the student population embodying keen supporters of both organisations, the progress of these issues is clearly important to many of us.

This isn't the first time abortion has been mentioned in 2005's press though. Mike Leigh's *Vera Drake* (relating the story of Vera, a back-street London abortionist in the 1950s) has received much media attention to add to its 3 Oscar Nominations. The film portrays Vera as a kindly woman and it is striking that inducing abortions seems to her quite simply a routine; a way to "help out" girls in trouble.

Nowadays the legality of abortions rests upon this "helping-out" factor - pregnancy terminations are authorized so long as a condition such as that "continuation of the pregnancy would involve risk to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman greater than that posed if it were terminated" is satisfied.

Pregnancies can only be terminated legally up to 24 weeks after conception, either through the NHS, or private companies such as The British Pregnancy Advisory Service. The processes become more complicated after 12 weeks, but in general there are two alternatives. Medically induced abortions (sometimes called the abortion pill) use drugs to cause an effective miscarriage - prostaglandin is administered (often with other drugs) to loosen the cervix and initiate uterine contractions. Some women choose instead to have an operation in which doctor's use equipment to artificially remove the foetus from the uterus, though this usually needs an anaesthetic.

The support of the Law and wide availability of operations, though, does not ease the guilt associated with having a termination, and religious beliefs or morals often make it an impossible option. The Government's publicly viewable data on abortion rates shows, though, that in 2002 there were 175,600 legal abortions in the UK, with 30.2 abortions per 1000 women aged 20-24: hardly the profile of a rarely-performed process. However, the choice to have an abortion does not necessarily indicate a lack of remorse, and women who do undergo the procedure are warned that they are likely to find it highly distressing.

Beeline offers confidential support for students

With the "morning after pill" now obtainable without so much as a trip to the Doctor's, abortion rates are expected to fall though. Contrary to popular belief this emergency contraceptive method does not cause abortions, but instead the tablets contain the same hormone types as progesterone-only contraceptive pills and act to prevent ovulation or stop a fertilised egg from implanting into the uterus lining. Emergency contraceptive pills can be collected from Family Planning Clinics, and certain pharmacists sell them subject to a consultation with a member of staff, though prices in shops vary (Cambridge Boots charge £24).

Despite the apparent ease of access to emergency contraception, unplanned pregnancy worries are still rife in Cambridge, a problem Richard Reid (CUSU Welfare and Graduates Officer) says "is evident from the volume of pregnancy tests that CUSU distributes free of charge".

The University does offer support for pregnant students - College Nurses and Welfare

Officers can be approached as well as the University Counselling Service (though students are put on a waiting list here for treatment). In a Varsity survey this week, though, only 11% of Cambridge students asked told me that they would turn to their College Nurse/Welfare Officer for support in an unplanned pregnancy, possibly a symptom of what Richard thinks is a general problem of students "not realising that's what a College Nurse is there for".

Richard also mentioned the CUSU phone-line Beeline (which offers confidential support for students regarding pregnancy issues) saying "certainly one thing we would like to do is to promote Beeline as a source of support as it offers a valuable service - I think a lot of the problem is lack of awareness of what it is and what it can offer".

The options for unexpectedly pregnant women are perhaps more appealing than Vera Drake's use of soapy water to induce abortions, but the dilemma faced by many women remains the same even now. 89% of students included in the Varsity survey said they would feel "anxious or stressed" if they discovered they had become pregnant - emotions which are good for neither women or their babies if they continue the pregnancy. Yet these reactions are understandable given the problem: pregnancy terminations, whilst a relatively safe option now, bring with them guilt that may never disappear, but as this newspaper reported last week, being a parent at Cambridge is unlikely to be easy. The cost of childcare and accommodation, and the struggle to fit looking after children around such features of study as Saturday Lectures do not make University many women's ideal time to have a child.



Zoe Smeaton

Free pregnancy tests from CUSU are distributed in large numbers to Cambridge students

But was it Love that was in the air?

Hoping for chemistry between you and a Valentine this year? It seems you could do worse than burrowing your nose in their armpit. Little known experiments with mice and humans show that a ubiquitous protein of the immune system, the Major Histocompatibility Complex (MHC), may act as an important criterion in mate selection by influencing our bodily odours.

Scientists asked a group of male students to wear the same T-shirt (without taking a wash) for a number of days. Once the T-shirts had become suitably pungent, they asked female students which T-shirt they preferred. According to their results, the female "volunteers" preferred the T-shirt from males with a different MHC type to their own. Interestingly, females on their periods or the

pill showed no preference.

These results were then replicated in an isolated North American population known as the Hutterites where scientists examined the MHC status of a group of married couples; the partners more often than not had differing MHC types.

Furthermore, American scientists have showed that a male mouse in a maze when presented with two females would be more likely to mate with the mouse with a different type of MHC to themselves. In mice urine, different MHC types produced different odours.

There may be a reason for all this: MHC binds to parts of pathogens, such as bacteria and viruses, and thereby allows white blood cells in the body to recognize them and become "switched on". Once "switched on" these cells can circulate the body and destroy the invading pathogen.

It is believed that selecting a mate with a different MHC type to oneself increases the range of pathogens that offsprings' immune systems will be able to recognize and clear.

Scientists now hope to extend the work using an "electronic nose" to gather more data, including a study comparing divorcees with couples that remained married to see if the influence of MHC-dependent odours is a factor there.

The authors of one of the papers believe that nowadays our personal odour may be disguised by those found in perfumes, shampoos and deodorants and, thereby, reduce its influence. So maybe this Valentine's Day to find out if you are really compatible with your partner, make sure you don't shower before hand....

Justin Loke

Pickle Brine? Prairie Oyster? When Alka-Seltzer just isn't enough

It was when it became habit in my Monday morning lectures to position myself close to both the bin and the exit to the toilets, as emergency vomit control measures, that I realised I should probably address my drinking problem. Or rather, my morning-after-drinking-the-night-before problem. "Drank with Russians Monday. Tuesday; nearly died. Drank with Russians again Wednesday. Thursday: should have died on Tuesday". Take out the word 'Russian' and insert Finns/Polish/Australians/Cambridge students' and you have not a suicidal Craig David, but a brief insight into my quite intimate morning relationship with fruit juice, painkillers, and the inside of the toilet bowl.

The hangover through history has always been an egalitarian little shit, giving every social echelon and nationality the chance to feel like their brain was peeling from the inside of their skull. Tsar Nicholas II would take a slice of

lemon, piled with a teaspoon of sugar and a teaspoon of coffee and eat it one bite to cure his, whereas the infamous Sally Bowles, nightclub dancer in the film 'Cabaret' swore by 'prairie oysters darling! You'll love it! Just take an egg, and whoosh it up with a little Worcestershire sauce; simply divine'.

Quite frankly, I'll take their word for it, along with the Russians who drink brine straight from the pickle jar, the Assyrians, who used to take crushed swallow's beaks with myrrh, and those who take Tylenol the morning after. Whilst the latter sounds the most sensible, acetaminophen (the active ingredient) in the pills will react with the alcohol still in your blood stream, and to quote one hangover cure website, 'make your liver explode'.

After the penny has hit the bottom of the glass, and its contents have been drained, alcohol is absorbed through the stomach lining into the hepatic portal

vein, transporting the happy poison to your liver. Here a series of enzymes slowly break ethanol down into a series of other substances. Firstly the enzyme Alcohol Dehydrogenase breaks alcohol down into acetylaldehyde, which is highly toxic, and will make you feel very ill (the nausea, the flushing, the sweats). This is then metabolised further by a second enzyme, Aldehyde Dehydrogenase, into acetate.

So much for 'grown up drinks, I abstain

Whilst alcohol itself is an equal opportunities employer, it seems some slaves are more equal than others. Heavy drinkers can build up a tolerance to alcohol by producing more Alcohol Dehydrogenase enzyme, breaking down the ethanol faster, whereas those of Asian descent appear to produce less of it in general. Aboriginal populations of both Australia and the US

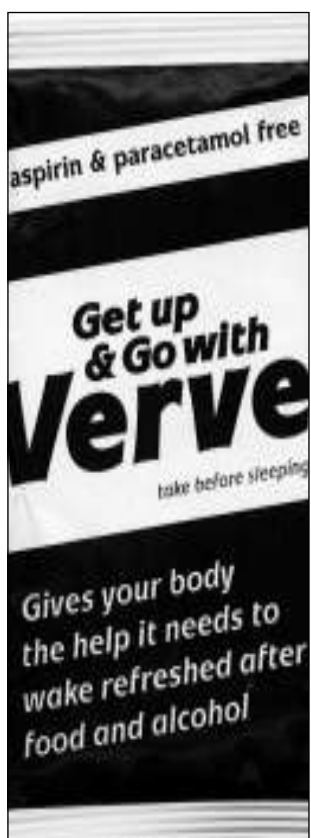
experience low tolerance and high levels of addiction; due to their livers not being equipped with the right enzymes to break the alcohol down.

It's not just the unmetabolised acetylaldehyde floating round in your system the next day which will make you have to lie to your supervisor about having a 'migraine'. The alcohol itself, as a diuretic, dehydrates you, and the loss of electrolytes in the large volumes of urine excreted will make you weak, light-headed and dizzy. That abdominal pain and nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea were not caused by the 'Van of Death'; they too were caused by that last shot of vodka, or swig of port irritating the stomach lining and intestines. The changes in the liver required to break down all the alcohol consumed may cause low blood sugar levels, and best of all, alcohol's disruption of your already student battered circadian rhythm will lead you to suffer from 'jet-lag'.

In the golden days of my youth, hangovers were the STDs of the drinking world; a scary and painful phenomenon that however reckless the behaviour indulged in, would never, ever happen to you. Now that I have virtually given up drinking because it makes me so ill, I wonder where it all went wrong. The answer I fear, lies with hangover causing compounds called congeners, lurking in all manner of favourite tipples. Vodka apparently, and white wine, favourites of a mispent youth ('Lambrini girls just wanna have fun') are virtually congener free, whereas my new 'Cambridge sophisticate' refreshments of choice; gin, red wine and port, are the worst offenders. So much for 'grown up' drinks; from now on, I abstain. Orange juice, anyone?

If you are concerned about your alcohol consumption go to www.aa-gb.com.

Krystyna Larkham





NEWS

King

Sissy middle-east: "too weak to War"

Poetry King

Photo King



Giant man - civil.



Misled Bush releases "butterfly".



Cilla Black puts her foot down: Surprise, surprise!



As humans laud MacArthur on land, boats rush to praise their hero.



Recovered Pope flies up and down.



Alan Shephard

A world looked on in sickened embarrassment this week as loser-titch waif-states Israel and 'Palestine' (Times, 2002), once again, retreated from the hero-strewn man-field of war-time (like a hedgehog scrunched up in a ball). This message came on the back of the media, at a time when international relations have breached borders, crossed oceans and penetrated the grand, grand depths of continents.

Blair rhetorically thinks: 'The horrors of war? No, but war, 'tis a many-gloried thing. Their sleeping legions, their blunted blades, their living children: all ashamed is.'

Kofi Annan announced: 'I

will neither be expelled, nor will I be pushed out because of any supposed allegation or otherwise. I resent the implication, and [pointing to woman] I question HER motives.'

Silvio Berlusconi: 'Mama mia, il miglior fabbro!'

Peace is unavoidable, cowardice is among our midst, and speculation is certain.



Child - symbol of peace and weakness



Ellen MacArthur

Diary

Day 1 - I'm really looking forward to this but I've got the feeling it'll be a tough one. It's just starting to hit me that I'm actually going to be alone. Completely by myself. In fact, I'm very, very scared.

Day 2 - The motto for today is "Feel less pain". Easier said than done sometimes but, hey, we have to give it a go, don't we?

Day 24 - Disaster. Blood everywhere. And water. Main halyard is creaking.

Weather is unkind. I've tried everything but the fact is I could die, and I have to

deal with that. This is taking ALL that I have. Every last drop and ounce.

Day 25 - Last night I was very, very lucky, that's for sure. It was *****. The *** halyard *****. We're fine, we're fine, we're hanging in there.

Day 26 - Attempt in jeopardy. A huge wave just broke right next to the halyard. Come on Ellen. This is really, really hard. I'm being pushed as far as I can go. I keep telling myself not to cry - hey, there's enough water around here anyway without me making any more of it!

Day 72 - I can't wait to see everyone. I can't believe I actually made it.

Anything is possible now.

To Lady Lazarus (deceased)

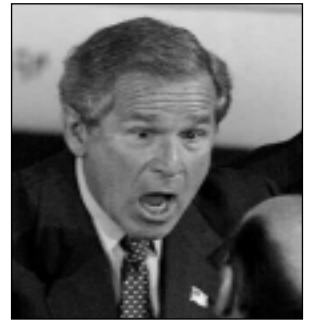
You say that you're wizard at dying,

Now I think we both know that's not true,

For you seemed to spend all your life trying,

Yet it took thirty one years to do.

L. Roberts



"No. You save my environment! Jesus..."

Food King

This delightfully steamy dish comes from a little-known region of Seville and encapsulates all that Spanish food has to say and smell in just one dish: *Fiesta!* Its aroma has been likened to that of nightingales' song by several leading experts and the connoisseur is advised to suck on Manuela de Zimbabwe's masterful novel *Papa eats Mama Cha-cha* for a more formal introduction to this approach.



"Man. How did someone as pretty as I feel end up cooking?"



Notwithstanding these, take two eggs and whisk until dry.



Keep whisking until dry. In the mean time crack open two more eggs and cover fingers with yolks' inners. Add the lemons and keep going.



At this point be careful not to add too much water: I made this same mistake twice yesterday and killed fourteen dogs! After this, preset the oven to gas-mark-two and blow until hot; stir well and make sure the oven is placed on the middle-shelf.



Leave to simmer for fifteen minutes until golden-cheese. It's now time to add her eggs. Open oven door and climb in. Gently prick eight yams together with the sauce and repeat until tired. Set oven-timer to the year 1885 and wait til dawn.



Now it's time to conceive the marinade. Mix vinegar with crème de menthe for a truly zesty surprise: Cooley! For a truly Spanish touch serve chilled and coated with knobs of boiling water for taste. I like to sprinkle the leftovers on the lawn out back.

Nick Mohammed

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VARSlTY model student 2005

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Courtesy of the Whoopee Club

Performers at The Whoopee Club

pick of the week



Music: Warning Junction, Sat 12th, 22.00-0400

Leading purveyors of ribcage-shaking beats since 1995, this month Warning presents scene-shapers DJ Hype, DJ Ron, DJ SS, Darren Jay, Mampi Swift, Concrete, Ragga Twins and more.



Film: Election Arts Picturehouse, Fri 11th, Sat 12th 22.40

See *Ferris Bueller* star Matthew Broderick playing the high-school teacher in this witty high school satire. Starring Reese Witherspoon as his nemesis: an over-achiever running unopposed for student president.



Theatre: Me and My Girl Arts Theatre, Tues 15th-Sat 19th, 19.45

You just can't beat wisecracking musical-theatre cockneys in my book. CU Musical Theatre Society presents a new version of this classic that's sure to warm yer cockles.



Art: Yoshitoshi Fitzwilliam Museum, until April 28th

Yoshitoshi is considered to be the most important Japanese woodcut artist of the 19th century. These recent acquisitions are definitely worth a look on a rainy Sunday afternoon.

In spite of being lampooned by feminists, equal rights campaigners and the makers of Bounty kitchen paper, girls - naked ones in particular - are used to sell anything from music to cars to beer. And, it seems, this includes something as old-fashioned as a cabaret show. Disheartened by Cambridge's total indifference to my perky, 'Burlesque cabaret, sir?', I try a different tack, and instead announce, 'Nipple tassels; naked girls?' This seems to work: flyers suddenly seem to be flying out of my hands.

The reality is, though, that there is much more to burlesque than sheer nakedness. What sells is the promise of sex; what keeps an audience enthralled is the withholding of it. This is something that the Whoopee Club, arguably at the forefront of the neo-burlesque craze that Time Out's been banging on about since 2002, has down to a fine art. An article in last week's Times Magazine, citing a Whoopee show last December, claimed that 'the fun is as much in the anticipation...as in the performance.' There had to be something more to that night than the performance - it lasted half an hour.

And there most certainly was. The performance may have been half an hour but the show extended to the bikini-clad Cleopatras sashaying around the bar; the top hats, canes, spats, sequins, wigs, and gold - lots of gold. It was a case of brushing your teeth and putting on your specials. Value for money it may not have been, but decadent it certainly was, and looking for value at a burlesque show is like asking a hooker to do the washing up.

But it's not just nipple tassels, feathers and fishnets that have

Sex Still Sells

Burlesque is making a riotous comeback, says **Alice Harper**

fuelled the success of the burlesque revival. It is a synthesis of periods, styles, performance traditions, all are treated with respect and all are undermined at the same time. It's at once cheeky, brash and stylish.

This is not such a huge leap from where burlesque first started. Nineteenth century burlesque operettas had such names as, 'Novel, sensational, emotional, farcical, musical, melo-dramatical,

Not just nipple tassels and fishnets

and substantial burlesque of Rip Van Winkle, or, some nambulistic knickerbockers.' The mocking of theatrical traditions was central to the feel of such shows, as was a flouting of sexual taboos.

The so-called queen of burlesque, Lydia Thompson, embarked on a five year tour of the United States with her troupe, the 'British Blondes', in the 1860s. Famed for displaying their shapely legs in tights, while turning gender distinction on its head by playing men, these ladies made their way to Broadway's most prestigious musical house, Niblo's Garden.

An act that demanded ten times as much as your average acrobat in the 1920s music halls of Paris was Barquette, a British aristocrat who, dazzling in a silvery-gold wig, feathers and lamé, began to undress but for jewels on his nip-

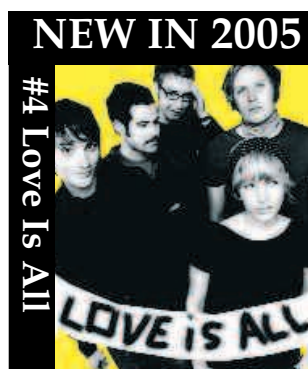
ples and navel before walking the tightrope before an awestruck crowd. The climax of Barquette's act was the sudden removal of his wig to reveal the shaven head of a man, dissolving the illusion. The audience went wild.

It is not so hard to see how a man dressed as a pig on ice skates, stripping to a voice over of his interior monologue can pass for a burlesque sketch in the Whoopee Club's show at the Edinburgh Festival last year. Perhaps the satirical stripteases that permeate Whoopee have a lot to do with the fact that the club's founders are women: Tamara Tyrer and Lara Clifton, who met while learning to be strippers. They have created what they call a mix of 'high theatre and the lowest humour, that is entertaining and artistic without being self-indulgent'.

Embraced by the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Cobden Club (itself a Victorian cabaret club), the Barbican, the Great Eastern Hotel and by the home of the most commercial of theatrical ventures, London's West End, burlesque is as hot as a stripper's knickers. Sex with a twist most definitely sells.

Sea-Shell, Hell's Belles and A Bravol on Brighton Beach, or, Have you seen my can-can cane? Cambridge Union, 14th February 8.30pm - 1am

Varsity Arts



Gothenburg band Love is All 'might well be the slowest band ever', according to singer Josephine Olausson. She's only referring to how quickly they do things, rather than the music they play, which is at times frantic. They harvest chaos and bottle it up in three minute packages of pop genius, encouraged by a manic Saxophone sound not heard since X-Ray Spex.

Last year they managed to make inroads by recording a Peel Session and getting a Single of the Week in the *NME*, so what are they doing here? Well this week sees the release of a single 'Talk Talk Talk Talk' and 'Felt Tip' ('Depending on which side you like the better') and they've just finished recording their debut album. Love is All continue the dynasty of great Swedish pop and should be unstoppable in 2005.

Sam Blatherwick

www.loveisall.tk

The Future looks bright

NME Awards Tour Corn Exchange – 4 Feb Review by Jon Swaine

It's easy to hate the *NME*. Its garish production values, ever-rising cover price and insistence on championing abominations like Jet, in the name of scenes that would not require such tenuous defence had it not invented them in the first place, mean we're all quick to forget those formative, inky-fingered Wednesdays spent crowded round communal copies, pretending we didn't like JJ72.

But the maligned rag's annual tour is more difficult to smear. Its reputation for bringing bands into mainstream focus is well-earned: the past four years have seen Coldplay, The Coral, Interpol and Franz Ferdinand thrust upon us. Such auspicious preconditions and a superb line-up made for a highly anticipated night at the Corn Exchange; certainly not in recent memory has the 'I wonder if that vaguely indie girl from my lectu...yep, there she is' count been so astronomically high at any Cambridge gig.

And so it began, the Kaiser Chiefs opening with an energetic set wholly justifying the praise currently being lavished upon them. Drummer Nick Hodgson had earlier told me of their desire to be seen in the line of 'Great British bands, like The Specials,

The Smiths and Blur', possible if they are able to consistently recreate the catchy effervescence of 'Saturday Night' and 'I Predict A Riot'. Singer Ricky Wilson resembles a mid-90s Albarn, and has the necessary charisma to take them far.

Bloc Party were better still, mixing modesty and confidence

in good measure. 'Luno' and 'Helicopter' were obvious highlights; however, reliance on perfect balance and pin-point precision for the idiosyncrasies of songs to take full effect does not mix brilliantly with a shared sound system and dodgy monitors. Regardless, the boys fought on valiantly, throwing jagged

walls of tuneful noise into the grateful hordes.

But in best providing solutions to such problems of intricacy, it seemed that the true stars of the night were the Futureheads. Their obsessive rehearsal schedule continues to pay off: razor-sharp, angular guitar lines duel relentlessly and more tightly than anyone else around. Just as their debut album somehow manages to sustain originality and break-neck momentum across fifteen tracks, their live set is a whistle-stop journey. Lovable guitarist Ross Millard even splits the crowd like a pantomime dame for the amazing cover of Kate Bush's 'Hounds of Love' - somehow it doesn't seem mawkish - while 'Carnival Kids' remains simply one of the greatest songs released so far this century.

This band are a perfectly-formed national treasure; the feeling that within them lies the potential for such success and longevity is unavoidable; only household ubiquity would be truly just.

Yet just as it seemed nothing could go wrong, the Killers' headline set was as confounding as it was excruciating. In building their line-up, this tour's organisers have had an unenviable challenge in providing four sets combining popularity and promise, diversity and consistency, and in seeking cohesion for the night as a whole. While on paper they

looked more likely to succeed in this than ever this year, the overblown, sub-Duran posturing of this (aptly) Las Vegas four-piece simply jarred horribly with the lean, clipped honesty of the three preceding bands, threatening to spoil the otherwise triumphant evening.

The limited functionality of their brash, backlit banner really said it all; a tacky, one-trick pony, briefly illuminating before the underlying emptiness swiftly set in. Through absolute deficiency of innovation or relevance, both band and banner simply continued on an unrelenting nosedive into monotony for the duration of their set. Of course, bravado in music is fine. It just needs to be backed with any sort of substance, and ideally a couple of choruses more suitably impressive than 'Smile Like You Mean It' and 'Indie Rock and Roll'.

Yet, despite his ridiculous, puffed-chest entrance and best attempts at alienating his audience by whining that some beer had got on his keyboard, singer Brandon Flowers could seemingly do no wrong to half the crowd, who seemed utterly enchanted by his every word. Meanwhile, the rest retired to the bar to discuss what had gone before: the assured, accomplished arrival of three bands as inspiring live as they are compelling on disc, and in whose hands the future looks a whole lot rosier.



The Futureheads' Barry Hyde: better than the Killers

Not so unmiscible

Miscible

Fitzwilliam College - 2 Feb Review by Hannah Stewart

First things first - the name is just far too easy a target. It isn't fair. Oh well, that being done, we must turn to the new incarnation of Red Shift whilst attempting both to be honest and retain some of that Billypride™. What an intimidating feat of diplomacy.

We want Miscible to succeed; we want it to be a six-room extravaganza that satisfies all fans of Sugababes, Mylo and Captain Beefheart alike, in a perfect, dazzling manifestation of the elusive goal of a (whisper it) 'good college ent'.

But then, we do also want The Others to have freak accidents with rich kids' Land Rovers. Dominic Masters is still being crack's second favourite posterboy, and similarly, being at Miscible felt a little like watching your beloved first-born fall over in the egg-and-spoon race.

Miscible and Noam Chomsky are prime evidence for the argument that you should never attempt everything, because you might end up with really shoddy theories on linguistics or an ent that spreads itself too thinly. A dance room, and d'n'b room, a bands room, a chillout room and a cheese room, all of

which would have been great had there actually been enough people in each one to give it the atmosphere it probably deserved. There's no denying that it's obviously a great idea, to embrace all kinds of everything into one night, but it really needs to attract punters by showing itself to be more serious about its music, and being more than just a KamBar room, a Coco's room, a Ballare room, and so on. In all, Miscible is a good night, with lots of cheap drinks and plenty of variety. But it needs a better gimmick than simply being 'an unmissable mix of music' to get more people through its doors.



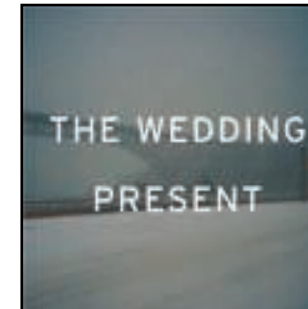
Bloc Party Silent Alarm

Silent Alarm has barely settled into HMV 'indie' sections nationwide, yet the rumblings of a backlash are already discernible. Why? Perhaps it's that guitarist Russell Lissack's fringe isn't asymmetrical enough, that politics and sincerity is like, so pre-electroclash, or, more cuttlingly, that the LP's cover resembles ardent bed-wetters Travis' *The Man Who...*

It's all bullshit though. The visceral punches of 'Helicopter' and 'Banquet', all staccato guitars, pulsing bass and euphoric choruses, are beautifully balanced by the maturity of desolate, edgy urban soundscapes like 'Price of Gas'. Though their combination of image and politics seems a little uncertain, Bloc Party's success in mixing songwriting with sonic experimentation marks them out as a veritable diamond in the faeces-strewn rough of the current rock scene.

Was Yaqoob

Silent Alarm is released on February 14th through Wichita/V2



The Wedding Present Take Fountain

An eighties band reform and tour again, eventually releasing a new album. Sound familiar? Music has been an ongoing concern for David Gedge with Cinerama; heck, there's even a Cinerama single here in 'Don't Touch that Dial'. It's a new version of the Festive Fifty topper, but it's no less heartfelt and powerful than it ever was.

Take Fountain opens with a staggering, ten-minute version of 'Interstate 5', which is risky, but the band simply breeze through it, building layer upon layer of perfect sound. I could go on with superlatives about each song, but I've spoiled enough surprises. The band has matured, but unlike your other washed up stars of yesteryear, slowing down has not made them any less interesting. Exciting, emotional and brilliant. David Gedge needs a knighthood.

Sam Blatherwick

Take Fountain is released on February 7th through Scopitones



Wheatus Suck Fony

A very little known fact, this, but *Teenage Dirtbag* wasn't Wheatus' only ever release. As a matter of fact, they have two albums floating around somewhere, one of which they released twice in this country. *Suck Fony* is that album reborn. Abandoned to 'fend for itself' in the UK nearly two years ago by (you guessed it), Sony, 'Hand Over Your Loved Ones' now comes self released by the band and blessed with - oh my gawd - a, like *totally* ironic new title and two bonus tracks, one of which has a bizarre free jazz outro. If you're a Wheatus fan, aside from all the other issues, you probably have most of this album already, so do have fun being exploited (now isn't that ironic). If you're not a Wheatus fan, then I suggest you go and buy the new Sum 41. This is that good.

Krzysztof Honowski

Suck Fony is released on February 14th through Montauk Mantis



And the crowd goes mild: Miscible turns the heat up to lukewarm



Not just a fairyland

Simon Brown on Iceland's emerging music scene

We're not talking elves, fairies or Eskimos. Although geographically isolated from Europe, Iceland is neither the far-and-away magical place nor the ice wilderness some may have you believe. Iceland's detachment from the hustle and bustle of modern living is incredibly convenient for creative fertility – especially music.

It was Björk who paved the way with her first album *Debut*. She has combined house, techno and traditional songwriting while embracing the growing trends in experimental electronica pioneered by LFO and Plaid, and now stands as Iceland's 'grand matriarch' of music culture.

The Reykjavik Underground has started but it won't finish

2004's *Medulla* relied almost entirely on the human voice alone. Sliced vocals, beatboxing and choral work create an affecting sound that combines ancient with modern, natural with technology.

Iceland's emergence onto the musical map has been a notably slow and steady one, as most of

the country's defining music is still underground in Reykjavik itself – if you ever go to Iceland do not expect to hear of the artists mentioned below. Nevertheless, there are many bands who have emerged onto the UK commercial market.

Sigur Rós (Icelandic for 'Victory Rose') have supported Radiohead on tour, been given the dubious accolade of an NME single-of-the-week, but have also been inundated with advertisement and soundtrack requests for their music. Why? Listen to *Ágætis Byrjun* – ethereal, elegiac, but life affirming. As the song *Jóga* (from Björk's *Homogenic*) puts it, these are 'emotional landscapes'.

But this does not do justice to the diversity of the band; such a limitation is probably why Sigur Rós chose to sing in Hopelandish – a gibberish language of their own creation – as well as intermittent Icelandic and English phrases. Their last full-length, *(*)*, even contains a blank booklet inviting listeners to make-up our own titles, words and pictures.

Put Sigur Rós into an Aphex-blender and you get Múm – a four-piece creating a form of

electronica merging minimal vocals with a variety of opulent electronic and acoustic instrumentation. Check out *Summer Make Good*, their most recent album, but start with their debut *Yesterday Was Dramatic - Today Is OK* – an IDM-tinged masterpiece that creates dramatic lullaby-esque qualities.

ethereal, elegiac, but life-affirming

Bad Taste Records deserve the credit for championing these bands (also known as Smekkleysa). An Icelandic label started by the Sugarcubes (the band with whom Björk started out), it still runs today as an all-encompassing music store. A 15-year retrospective CD – *Lobster or Fame* – has recently been released celebrating the large canon of artists the country has produced.

Einar Örn Benediktsson, co-creator of the Sugarcubes, follows Mum's electronica tendencies – combining elements of dub, hip-hop and glitch, *Ghostigital* is available in the UK via Damon Albarn's Honest Jon's label. The more accessible *101 Reykjavik* soundtrack, written by both

Albarn and Benediktsson is a document of the infamous weekend hedonist dance culture Reykjavik plays host to.

For a classical alternative to Sigur Rós, look to Johann Jóhannsson. His *Englabörn* is worth a listen for the beautiful, harrowing melodies Jóhannsson creates with a string quartet and piano.

It is difficult to even scratch the surface of the Icelandic music scene, one which ranges from jazz (Gudmundar Ingólfsson Trio and the annual Jazz Festival) to Warp-esque electronica (GusGus) and hardcore metal (Minus). Thanks to an increasing Icelandic presence on the internet and in other forms of media, the Reykjavik Underground, unlike Magnus Magnussen, has started but it won't finish.

www.smekkleysa.net – The home of Bad Taste.

www.icelandculture.com – A contextual guide largely for travellers but enlightening nonetheless.

www.tonlist.com – a site dedicated to online downloads of Icelandic music.

Still going strong

James Taylor Quartet
Review by Niccie Simpson
Corn Exchange 3rd Feb

James Taylor cites addiction as the reason for his supreme musical career, an obsession with playing gigs and making music. In 1986, his first single, *Blow Up*, released with the newly formed James Taylor Quartet was championed by John Peel, and the track appeared three years running on Peel's seminal Festive 50 Chart.

The JtQ are the sort of band whose music you don't know you know – they've recorded the 60s classic *Mission Impossible* as well as *The Theme from Starsky and Hutch*, and Taylor co-wrote the theme tune for *Austin Powers*. His distinctive Hammond playing has featured on albums of Manic Street Preachers, U2, The Wonderstuff, Tom Jones and The Pogues, and he has recently done some session work with Amy Winehouse (whom he describes as 'arrogant and 'belligerent', but in a good way).

Their gig at the Corn Exchange last Thursday was the first they've played there for 10 years, when they sold out the venue. In an interview prior to the performance, James described the past 12 months as a 'colossal year of performance'. Last week's gig featured the same three artists with whom he has now worked with for 15 years, and this was perhaps the reason why there was such a strong sense of unity.

Something which particularly struck me was the unpretentious-



The master at work

ness of the gig – no random sets and distracting lighting effects, no weird clothes or unnecessary ceremony, but just the band themselves, dressed as if they were having a jam before going for a pint at their local.

But what a jam. The opening number was a funk-up version of Andrew Lloyd-Webber's *Jesus Christ Superstar*, I know what you're thinking, and I would have been sceptical too, but you'll have to trust me on this one – it was spectacular. A real sense of unity emanated from the stage, and it really seemed (without wanting to sound clichéd) that they were all thinking with the same musical mind.

Special mention must also go to all the musicians for their quite brilliant solos, executed with impeccable jazz timing. Perhaps most unexpected was the contribution of the flautist (who doubled up as saxophonist); this added a completely different dimension to the music, and an element of surprise – but it

worked. In fact, the fusion of a traditional set of jazz sounds with a classical instrument, against the distinctive background of a Hammond organ, produced a very unique and inimitable sound.

The audience was utterly won over – by the end, they were up and out of their seats, clapping their hands and generally grooving on down. After a two-hour set, the band walked off the stage and left the crowd breathless in their wake.

When I asked James what he felt he had yet to achieve with the band, he said 'for the British Media to accept us'. He said that they are still, despite everything, treated very much as outsiders. The distinctive music of the JtQ is certainly underappreciated and underrated, but these stalwarts of contemporary British jazz (and god knows we need more of those) clearly have a lot more to give.

www.jtq.co.uk

www.jtqgrooves.co.uk

Streets apart... Mike Skinner saint or sinner?

Saint

Mike Skinner: love him or hate him. I think *A Grand Don't Come For Free* was amongst the best albums of 2004, but take a furious critic on Amazon, who demands that "someone define music to this chav!!!!". Or The Guardian's Caroline Sullivan: "Why are we meant to celebrate his supposed lifestyle," she wails, "an aimless round of late-night kebabs, spliffs and untaxed Ford Cortinas?"

To bemoan Skinner for writing about what he writes about is about as intelligent as arguing that 1984's rubbish because Eurasia sounds like a bit of a hellhole.

There are essays to be written about 'Dry Your eyes'

Much is made of his lyrical brilliance, and call me a pseud, but there are essays to be written about 'Dry Your Eyes' and its extraordinary invocations. No-one in mainstream music today writes as well as him, and for all his protestations that poets are wankers – sorry Mike, but you are one.

But even if he was talking nonsense, his easy command of his vocal style – a kind of Real Speech Plus – is so arresting that every track is compulsively listenable. The man can write a tune.

Plus, he's funny as fuck. This may be the only man in pop music who could make a line like "I'm not gonna fucking just fucking leave it all now" comprehensible, heartbreaking, and as irresistible in its rhythm as a pneumatic drill. This "chav" doesn't need anyone to define music to him: he's doing it fine all on his own.

Archie Bland

Sinner

'A very remarkable record from a teenage young man talking about what it's like to be young in the city', said Mercury jury chairman Simon Frith. It's this attitude that has cemented the popularity of what is essentially just the classroom banter of a jumped-up brummy towny.

Mike Skinner is currently being lauded as the British Eminem, the Voice of Blair's Britain, the man who has added the much-needed degree of social commentary to British Music.

But we don't need another Eminem. Why would we want another white-boy rapper parading himself as a political satirist? And as for 'social commentary' – surely the Midlands can't really be that bad?

The sad little man in 'Dry Your Eyes' just seems so desperate – he wants to impress the girls by showing he's in touch with his 'emotional side', but just ends up letting the entire male population down. His real attitude is epitomised by the comments on his website: "Never ever, confuse a

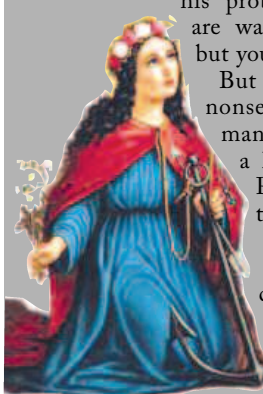
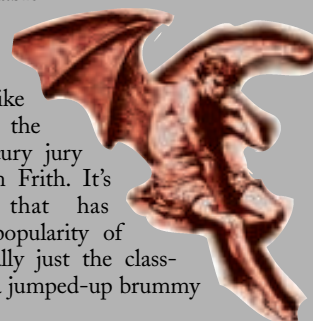
We don't need another white-boy rapper

girl with being your 'friend' – girls are for sleeping with, blokes are for hanging out with".

Couple all this shite with Skinner's brummy monotone and you wonder if the future of British music will consist of Armenian immigrants scattering to a tambourine – because 'that's real, man.'

Mike Skinner has described himself as not working class or middle class but after a British housebuilding company: "Barratt class: suburban estates, not poor but not much money about, really boring". Or was that his music?

Niccie Simpson



Science fiction: much more than escapism

It's the most daring and progressive area of fiction, argues **Tom Kingsley**



I don't like those science fiction books with the stupidly long titles with umlauts and roman numerals and where the author's name is inflated with extra initials which only fit onto the spine if it's wider than the front cover which has to have a garish picture of a spaceship painted on it so you can tell it's the cover not the spine and then because the spine's still really big the author needs to add superfluous plot to fill the pages and then because of all that superfluous plot you need to write

sequels to develop them further and then they have even longer titles and so the vicious cycle continues, in another sentence. I don't like those science fiction books at all.

Good sci-fi is called SF, they tell me. And good SF is a short story: a single, instantly engaging idea. Good SF isn't about helping you to escape to another world because you have no friends; it distorts the real world to such frightening extremes that you decide you probably don't want any friends anyway.

Basically, good SF is satire. Subversive Fiction.

no other form of fiction shares SF's vocabulary of ideas and images

Journey to the Centre of the Earth? That's sci-fi. SF is more like More's *Utopia*. Like the best SF, it has no aliens or dinosaurs, but instead has alternate worlds populated by normal humans, and controlled by

a normal repressive government which reflects the injustices of his own. It's clever, and good SF is very clever. To be fair, More's satirical new world has too much philosophy and too little fiction, but it's thinking along the right lines.

But the man who puts the F back into SF is the legendary Philip K Dick. Dick's writing is the work of a genius. Partly because he was a genius, but also because he rarely wrote whilst not on amphetamines.

Which is why he describes paranoid alternate versions of the present where everyone is on drugs and no-one is sure who they are. With his nightmare visions of repressive governments and insidiously insistent capitalist advertising, Dick shares Kafka's distrust of authority, and with his deconstructions of memory and identity and the nature of narrative, he's up there with Borges.

"We live in a society in which spurious realities are manufactured by the media, by governments, by big corporations, by religious groups, political groups," Dick declares. "My writing asks 'What is real?' Because unceasingly we are bombarded with pseudorealities manufactured by very sophisticated people using very sophisticated electronic mechanisms."

Dick's dilemma is that the interesting people who'd want to read his books are the ones who rarely look in the science fiction

section. Even if they did, they'd see all of Dick's slim little volumes collected into monstrous bumper editions of his works with garish spaceship-strewn covers - despite the lack of spaceships in the books.

Several of them really are bad. But then again, lots are brilliant. In *A Scanner Darkly*, a policeman's personality is split in half by a powerful drug, creating a criminal alter-ego who he has to chase around the place. He's the grand-master of the high-concept, which is why he's the most-filmed SF author in Hollywood. *Blade Runner*, *Minority Report* and, um, *Paycheck* and *Total Recall* are all bloated, bastardised versions of his books. But the Dickian vision is still there.

It's not just 'what if...' It's 'My God, what if-'

And the Dickian vision becomes even more abstract and powerful in the writing of J G Ballard. His masterful stories impress with their imagination and brutal economy of prose. Ballard creates decaying worlds, rotten to their nihilistic core and with no chance of redemption. In *Crash*, people get off on car crashes.

In *High-Rise*, the residents of a luxury tower-block declare war on each other. In *Concrete Island*, a man is car-wrecked on a motorway roundabout. It's as if he's trying to scare himself

with his own writing.

What is even scarier is the structure of Ballard's worlds. His characters are left purposefully blank because he prefers to describe them in terms of their surroundings. It's not what they do that is important, but what is done to them.

So the alternate fantasy universe is one created specifically to explore different characters and situations. SF moves towards what Ballard calls the "perspective of the personality". And so important is this idea to Ballard that he insists that "no other form of fiction shares SF's vocabulary of ideas and images to deal with the present, let alone the future."

Science fiction thus becomes the most daring, progressive area of fiction. It's where readers negotiate dizzyingly distorted parallels of their own lives, and authors are free to change their world if it helps them tell their story. From Kurt Vonnegut's insane ramblings to Ursula le Guin's thoughtful anthropological studies of imaginary worlds, science fiction is unlimited in its power and scope. It's exciting, it's edgy, it's nothing to be embarrassed about. "I love SF," says Philip K Dick, of course. "I love to read it. I love to write it. The SF writer sees not just possibilities, but wild possibilities. It's not just 'What if...'. It's 'My God, what if-'. In frenzy and hysteria. The Martians are always coming."

Un-natural sciences

Has sci-fi had its day? asks **Rebecca Jenkinson**

Kingsley Amis recently said that science fiction as a genre has become obsolete in the modern era, and that it's only worth is as a "historical artifact". He has a point - the actual art of science fiction writing is probably past its sell by date.

The genre has not lived a charmed existence, belittled by literary types for the supposed low quality of its writing, and seen by the mainstream readership as the domain of geeks, it has been readily dismissed. Yet this view ignorantly rejects the impact that science fiction has had on society through technological advancement.

I make this statement on the basis of the impact which science has had on our society, which has slowly but surely hijacked the role once given to the arts as having the biggest influence on culture. Science fiction, however, gave hope to all those arty types who saw literature as the real 'truth'. It has bridged the arts/science gap to become the brainchild of modern science and therefore one of the most influential genres of contemporary times.

To start at the beginning, Over a hundred years ago H. G. Wells began writing a type of literature he called 'science romance', a mix of hard science and fanciful speculation. In one of his most popular works, *War of the Worlds*, Martians invade England. This story of devastation by aliens, human fear and paranoia is recounted in a factual manner as though it were intended for a newspaper. It has the effect of making the unreal seem real; the key stone of science fiction as the classic science fiction novel is characterised by a scientific, rational take on the world using real science.

The impact of this on the audience can be immense. When *War of the Worlds* was first aired on American radio listeners who missed the 30-second introduction believed what they were hearing, creating widespread panic.

Nor has its role stopped there. Science fiction has pushed the boundaries of modern perception and has, in effect, created the future. In 1968 Arthur C. Clarke wrote *2001: A Space Odyssey*, which reads like a fictional

Origin of the Species: imagine Charles Darwin on glue. Bridging the gap between fiction and technology readers are presented with a race through space, controlled by HAL, a computer that can talk and interact with humans.

This was followed by Isaac

Science fiction gave hope to all those arty types who saw literature as the real 'truth'

Asimov's ingenious short stories about robots. His *Robot Series* provided a somewhat pretentious but varied read in which he coins the word robotics. He wrote about them long before two scientists - both Asimov fans - drew up plans for the first working robot in 1956 based on his *Laws of Robotics*.

Science fiction writers also predicted climate change, possibly one of the most important issues of the day. Ray Bradbury foresaw in *The Martian Chronicles* how pollution from rockets in space might lead to global warming and ozone

depletion. Yet this was 50 years ago, when even the most diligent lefty liberal still used CFCs.

Such stories captured the attention of readers not just because of their impact on contemporary advances in science but also for the writing itself. Read one of these novels as a historian, and the best of you will be able to step into the shoes of the writers contemporaries and be made to feel that anything is possible. The best science fiction writing starts with the everyday, even the ordinary, and imagines possibilities from there.

But as Amis has said, the end is nigh. As the universe becomes less of a mystery to man, and technological advances has become the stuff of tabloid journals, the difficulty in producing a 'pure' science fiction novel, with high levels of scientific and transcendental realism, has increased.

So what does this mean? As always, art evokes - and science creates. It falls to the next generation to offer up their imaginations to the creative melting pot which science seems to plunder.

Varsity Recommends

Wide Sargasso Sea
by Jean Rhys

Sophie Allen

Jean Rhys' belief that the character we see the least of in Jane Eyre, Bertha Rochester, may be the most interesting acts as inspiration for *Wide Sargasso Sea*, which takes the mad woman from the attic and places her centre-stage. With the tortured Bertha transformed into the passionate Creole heiress, Antoinette Cosway, the novel is, in essence, a prequel to Charlotte Brontë's classic, relating Antoinette's marriage in Jamaica to an English gentleman who, although he remains unnamed throughout, is clearly Edward Rochester, Jane Eyre's brooding hero. Rochester is initially entranced by his young wife's beauty and sensuality, yet, as he fails to penetrate the mysteries of either Antoinette or her native country, a land steeped in dark voodoo magic, he increasingly imposes his own rigid moral code upon her, pushing her towards madness.

Wide Sargasso Sea offers a brutal critique of the destruc-

tive nature of both patriarchy and colonialism, yet Rhys refuses to succumb to crude caricatures. Whilst giving a voice to the first Mrs Rochester is undoubtedly the novel's *raison d'être*, the story equally belongs to Rochester, who, as the obedient second son, forced by his family to marry for money rather than love and trapped in an alien and often hostile country, is presented as a man to be pitied as much as despised.

Rhys' allusions to *Jane Eyre* are often playful and inventive, such as when, imprisoned in Thornfield Hall, Antoinette sees fleeting glimpses of a ghost-like figure, who we must assume to be Brontë's heroine, herself now 'off-stage'. As such, Rhys' version of Bertha's story offers us new ways in which to read a canonical text, but she is never in thrall to her source nor does her desire to fill in the gaps diminish it. *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* complement each other perfectly in presenting two contrasting yet equally fascinating female characters, but even those who've never read its more famous predecessor will become absorbed in this moving and intensely poetic novel, which deserves to be considered a classic in its own right.

Two pairs of twins and a packet of laughs

Allegra Galvin



The Comedy of Errors Review by Bertie Troughton Arts Theatre, 19.45, 8-12 Feb

This year's Marlowe Society production is slick and silly and as a result Shakespeare is made accessible and humorous. The cast is offensively talented and is at its best when at its busiest, displaying a combination of incredibly tight physical theatre and comic timing.

The light-hearted nature of the play is juxtaposed against the prologue. A bell tolls five as a noose is flown in over a dimly lit trial scene. One slightly wonders whether there will be an army of tight black T-shirts in the wings waiting to pounce and 'perform.' There is, however, a complete absence of any pretentiousness in this production, and Arthur House (Egeon) sets the scene as, looking enchantingly ancient and speaking with a wise resonance, he embarks on telling his story of loss and searching.

One is then thrust into the thick of the action with a market scene, choreographed by the director Laura Baggaley, in which we are introduced to the cast and the theme of mistaken identity. One of the many pleasures of this production is the use of music to mirror the tempo of the action on stage. Rebecca Applin's composition tied the play together.

This is not to insinuate that the production needed to be anchored down or tied together, but the style of humour perhaps took away some of the empathy one could potentially have felt for the situation in which the characters found themselves. Shakespeare's characters in *The Comedy of Errors* are, to my understanding, quite two-dimensional and Baggaley has not shied away from this. The cartoon-like atmosphere that she has created accentuates this reading of the play. It does not make it deep, but nor is it meant to be. This is a jolly romp. The difficulty arises when the audience wants to be a part of the happy ending: the reconcilia-

tion of lost children, lovers and brothers, but we do not feel that we know the characters to the depth that would enable this. But ultimately the actors look like they are having fun and whilst this does not give us an understanding of the woes or frustrations that they may feel, it does create an infectious affection for them.

This production has a complete absence of pretentiousness

The comic relationship between the Antipholus's and the Dromio's is highly entertaining and polished. Benjamin Deery and Max Bennett are relentless in their stylised beatings of the Dromio's (Thomas Eccleshare and Richard Kelly), both of whom combine a superb range of facial expressions and odd noises as they are tormented by their masters. The intensity of the fights creates the perfect setting for the shouting match that Eccleshare and Deery have at the gate of Antipholus of Syracuse's

house. Eccleshare revels in dismissing Deery, who then uses his Dromio's head as a battering ram, whilst Angelo (Sam Kitchener), who deserves special mention, watches on with distaste. Also deserving of praise are Adriana (Lydia Wilson) and Luciana (Holly Strickland). It was with these two that one was able to get more out of the characters. They supported each other well and played difficult parts with great accomplishment.

There are perhaps two features above all others which distinguish this play from other shows in Cambridge. The first is that the play is at its best when the stage is most full, due to the actors' comfortable use of the set and their awareness of each other's movements and an obvious willingness to work as one cohesive unit. The second feature that distinguishes this play, and this is an odd thing to praise, were the scene changes. Usually a waste of time and an embarrassment, in this production they were a delight of characterisation and physical comedy.

Hoomit Conversations

Review by Alex Williams
ADC, 8th February

From the opening telephone conversation in which we follow the desperate pleadings of a suicidal lover and his disinterested former partner, Luke Roberts' new collection of disparate comic writings identifies itself as fresh, edgy, witty and askew. The audience is confronted with a series of short sketches that deftly deal with issues as broad-ranging as coma and companionship, baptism and stress balls, olives and alternative universes. Not to mention an unhealthy obsession with puns and soup.

The scenes, so far as they are self-contained, work well in building credibly surreal situations in which a cast of zany oddballs live out their hopes and fears through small talk. Indeed, much

of the show's humour stems from the juxtaposition of a grand philosophical theme ("is my baby the antichrist?") with suitably inappropriate conversational informality ("maybe, but he might equally be Jesus and wouldn't that be lovely?"). It's a joke that manages to just about sustain the hour, but unfortunately fails to provide the sketches with sufficient connection. This is not a criticism in itself, but unfortunately there is a subsequent narrative and comic inconsistency between the scenes which leaves the audience unable to locate any satisfactory unifying theme in the evening as a whole.

Having said that, there is an atmospheric consistency well worthy of praise. The staging is basic but effective, mirroring the surreal scriptural content. The largely grotesque performances are consistently of high standard. Meera Chadha and Raphael Shirley stand out for a sketch that uses physical comedy in an

evening drenched in words. Shirley places his hand on Chadha's neck in an affectionate gesture that isn't returned, and the subsequent continuation of the banal conversation with this deceptively simple physical change alters the entire mood of the scene, a subtle observation of how the physical formalities that surround conversation can transform the mundane into the highly charged.

The characterisations, however, are undoubtedly the real strength of the evening. Roberts' writing deftly brings to the fore the tragic quality and cruelty inherent in human relationships, and invites us to laugh at them. That we are so ready to empathise with these comic caricatures is as much reflects of Roberts' craft as the audience's sentimentality. No doubt at some point we will see a more polished and consistent production from Roberts' pen, and I look forward to the day.

Musically anti-reactionary

Wetmarsh College,
or Dr. Middlebottom
Review by Sarah Marsh
ADC, 19.45pm, 8-12 Feb

The time-warped that is the Cambridge bubble is brilliantly burst by this "Gilbertian libretto" written by Mark Wainwright and set to music by Roland Anderson in classical pastiche. This newly-written musical tackles many of the reactionary attitudes still present today in Oxbridge colleges.

A fellowship falls vacant at Wetmarsh and although the best candidate is a woman, Dr Middlebottom, competing against a bricklayer with "hidden depths" and a road sweeper, the fellows are unable to overcome

their prejudices to appoint her.

Although musicals are hardly renowned for their deep intent, this one engages in past and current polemic, as the programme neatly reminds us that the libretto was written while the author was at a Cambridge college with very few female fellows.

The cast carried this production off with general joie de vivre rather than studied comical effect, except for the crucially precise timing of James Lark, playing the socially inept Cooper. The slightly hesitant singing of the chorus was redeemed by their own exuberance and the impressive lyrical performances of the main characters. 18-year old Adam Smyth and Scott Kaufman, in the roles of the Master and the Bursar, projected powerful and finely-tuned voices,

but it was Mary Bevan in her role as Dr Middlebottom who stole the limelight, scaling one octave to the next with unfaltering ease and grace.

Clearly influenced by the light operas of Gilbert and Sullivan but lacking their farcical complexity, the plot evolves almost directly from the fellow's rejection of Middlebottom to the sudden revelation of their bigotry. Moreover there are limits to a dramatic oeuvre defined by its self-referential nature. It cannot aspire to universal appreciation, when it depends upon the audience's immediate recognition of scenery and obscure college terms. Yet the libretto does not claim to be aimed at anyone other than Cambridge students, for whom it provides sparkling light relief.

What to Watch

The Cardinal Club

Boasting jugglers, contortionists, love-sick panda bears, the forthcoming *Orpheus in the Underworld's*, Can-Can lineup and a thinly clad troupe of burlesque dancers, this promises to be so much more than your average Cambridge Valentine's Day experience. **Tickets:** Union Foyer, 4-6pm Saturday 12th Feb

Me and My Girl

The annual CUMTS showcase follows the success of last year's Little Shop of Horrors. Expectations are high.

Abigail's Party

Mike Leigh's cult masterpiece about an era where kitch was in vogue and G & T's flowed a little too freely.

The Shape of Things Review by Patrick Gleeson

Playroom, 7pm, 8th - 12th Feb

There are two reasons why I object to there being so many plays put on in Cambridge. The first is that it leads to a massive demand for good actors, who as a result tend to get involved in more than they can handle. In the case of *The Shape of Things*, this resulted in a last minute shuffle of cast members that unfortunately affected the performance as a whole.

My second gripe is that with so many shows it is inevitable that some of the better ones will pass by largely unnoticed. Thus I was disappointed but not surprised to find that I was one of maybe ten people in the audience on the show's opening night. Given how funny, moving and provocative the

production was it deserved to be far better attended.

The Shape of Things is set in a middle-of-nowhere Liberal Arts College in the US. Adam, played masterfully by Conrad Mason, is a spectacle-wearing geek whose life is transformed by a beautiful, exotic art student, Evelyn, who, over the course of his relationship with her, makes him, for better or worse, cool. Susannah Wharfe, who was originally cast in a smaller role and took on Evelyn at the last minute, deserves much praise for her utterly convincing portrayal of the character, especially during her long monologue near the end, where the big twist in the plot comes out.

Visually the entire show was very impressive. The scenery used was sparse but well-chosen, and in the changes following each scene, images were projected onto the Playroom walls suggesting the

location of the next one. In this respect, Imogen Walford, the director, managed to squeeze a lot out of a very limited theatre space.

Unfortunately, it was impossible to entirely hide the fact that the show had been rushed together. Some of the blocking in the early scenes meant that for one section the audience visibility was restricted, and just occasionally the pace of some sections seemed to be misjudged.

However, having said that, I enjoyed the show tremendously throughout. The writer, Neil Labute, couldn't resist including an unnecessarily bitchy attack on the contemporary art scene near the end, but even that was forgivable. The performance I saw was very good, suffering only from a lack of time. I'm prepared to bet that by Friday or Saturday night it will be absolutely brilliant.



Allegra Galvin

Natural accuracy in natural rhythms

Claire Hart looks beyond the cliff face

Let's face it, rocks just aren't sexy, and Elizabeth Vellacott is no Natalie Portman. But you would be missing out on something rare if you allowed these superficial obstacles, boulders if you will, to put you off visiting the exhibition at Kettle's Yard. Something that is too often overlooked in a world fixated by bling, youth and instant gratification. But something valuable nonetheless.

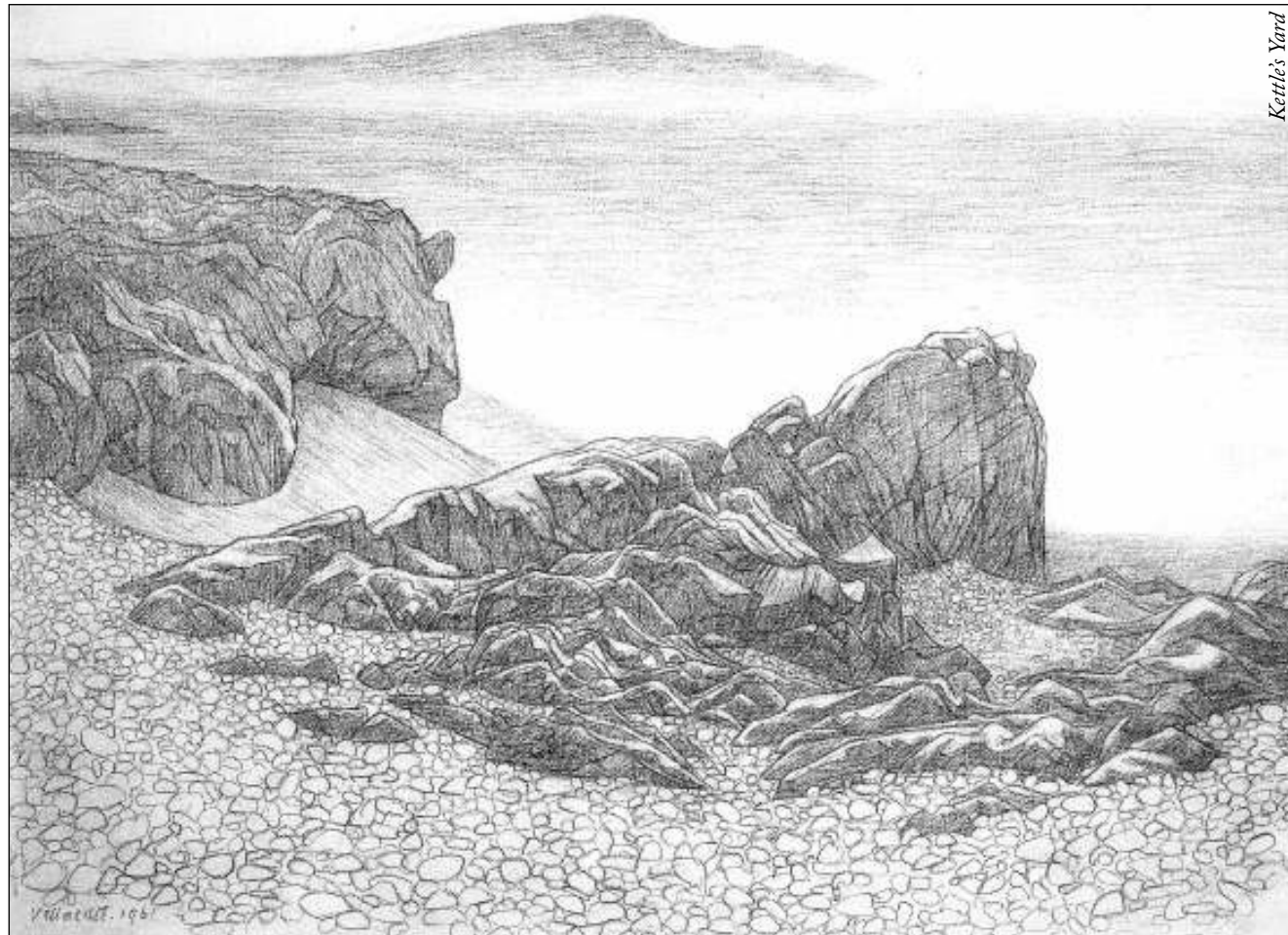
Vellacott is far more than simply a beneficiary of nepotism

The centenary of Elizabeth Vellacott's birth this year, together with the fact that Jim Ede, founder of Kettle's Yard, was apparently an avid collector of her landscape drawings, prompted an exhibition of some of the work she produced in later life. Vellacott is far more than simply a beneficiary of nepotism or an artist who happens to have been born a hundred years ago, however; for which her inclusion in *The South Bank Show's* select A-Z could easily be cited as evidence. Critics have commented 'there is a subdued spirituality to her lonely, depopulated drawings' and that they 'might in many ways be seen as metaphors for the process of life itself.'

In short, what Vellacott produced was nothing more or less than drawings of rocks and mountains, but they are drawings of rocks and mountains that are capable of pointing beyond themselves and awakening something quite deeply-felt and unexpected.

Moreover, you cannot help but admire the genuine love of nature and desire to explore and establish a relationship with the natural environment, as well as the single-minded dedication to achieving accuracy which comes across from the works of Elizabeth Vellacott. With her there are no self-indulgent attempts to explode gender stereotypes or put the world to rights; what we get instead is a true presentation of a series of moments of profound reciprocity between a woman and the world. A woman who, in her own words, used 'only the rhythms of my subject to give unity and structure' to her work. Her drawings are even entitled with refreshing, straight-forward honesty in the vein of 'Rock', 1963 or 'Rock Pool', 1958. If the ultimate goal of the artist is to compromise as little as possible then Vellacott can definitely be considered to have been a great success.

The drawings at Kettle's Yard are devoted to either collections of rocks or mountain landscapes and were made during summer



Kettle's Yard

holidays to the Isles of Scilly, Anglesey and the Welsh Borders in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. Some development is discernible over this time period; from relatively vague and indistinct hill-scapes to more convincing, smaller-scale depictions of rock clusters. Combinations of random shapes which resemble sea-side

strata are replaced by more confident images of rocks. The latest work in the exhibition, 'Rocks at Sea', 1973, even sees a successful experimentation with some subtle colour.

If any criticism is to be levelled against the exhibition it could only be that possibly the exhibition space at Kettle's Yard is in some ways not particularly

well-suited to this kind of an exhibition. Even though the Elizabeth Vellacott display is situated in one of the more enclosed areas it is nonetheless subject to some quite relentless light which inevitably reflects off the glass frames in which the drawings are mounted and obscures the subtle markings of light and tone which were care-

fully crafted by the artist. But this certainly does not constitute a major problem and shouldn't prevent you making a visit to the Elizabeth Vellacott exhibition if you can.

Elizabeth Vellacott at Kettle's Yard till Febuary, 27th.

Solitary and stylistic confidence

In between somewhere and nowhere
 The café, Department of Architecture
 10-23 February
 Reviewer: Frances Slater

It is only on the second viewing of the photograph of a display of mirrors in a shop window that I notice the hazy reflection of Rawlings' silhouette in the polished glass of the window pane. The eye is initially distracted by the bright lights that seem to bounce off the mirrors in all directions. But if one looks closer, the solitary figure of the artist gradually comes into sharper focus imposing an eerie calmness upon the scene.

The search for calmness in solitude has been constant

theme in Rawlings' work. His latest exhibition *In between somewhere and nowhere*, his second solo show to be hosted by the Architecture Faculty, is his most challenging and accomplished series to date. His earlier work, in particular pieces

the location of the photographs are hardly ever obvious

from the *Japan* series, sometimes suffered from an overly eager enthusiasm for the new and unfamiliar environments in which he found himself, thereby detracting attention from the exploration of his more subtle preoccupations and giving rise to less original approaches and compositions. However, *In between somewhere and nowhere*



shows him to have grown in stylistic confidence and one finds here a delicate yet deeply introspective examination of the self and the surrounding envi-

there is a definite conscious detachment that characterises each frame

ronment in which the locations of photographs are hardly ever obvious and knowledge of them is not necessary for the appreciation of the work.

The lack of vivid depictions of human faces and the sense of detachment this generates is perhaps the most striking feature of this series. The figures that pepper his work are walking away from us, have their heads turned to the floor, are shrouded by shadows or exist merely as distorted reflections. (The only face shown to have distinct contours is that of a mock-Grecian sculpture holding what appears to be a neon light sabre.) The lack of direct engagement with vital, living forms and the sheer scale of the landscape which is often highlighted by the inclusion of small shadowy figures makes us constantly aware of the artist's almost transcendental viewpoint. There is a definite, one might suggest conscious detachment that characterises

each frame, with perhaps the exception of a ballerina who stares directly into the camera in an interesting concluding note to the exhibition. Rawlings seems comfortable in solitude and is unafraid to probe its personal significance.

Rawlings' decision to exhibit his work without using frames and his choice of a matt finish are very effective. The space provided by the Architecture Faculty also lends itself to the size in which Rawlings has chosen to work. Overall, this is a hugely successful exhibition from one of Cambridge's up-and-coming photographers. Lose yourself in *In between somewhere and nowhere*.

www.ashleyrawlings.com

Also worth a visit:

Shackleton: The Hidden Collections
 The Scott Polar Research Institute. Free entry Tuesday - Saturday 2.30 - 4.00 pm.
www.spri.cam.ac.uk/events/exhibitions/shackleton/

Altered States
 The Charrington Room, Fitzwilliam Museum. Open daily, free entry.

Those home discomforts

Zoe Ross plunges into a troubled life in Jonathan Caouette's autobiographical debut *Tarnation*, and comes up gasping for air

This April, first-time director Jonathan Caouette's film, *Tarnation*, will go on general release in the UK, after a trail-blazing run of critical success at both the Toronto and Sundance Festivals. It is at once a highly personal diary, and an overtly melodramatic spectacle. Made for only \$218 on his boyfriend's iMac, the film chronicles, through an amalgamation of snapshots, home video footage, and answerphone messages, Caouette's fragmented and deeply troubled journey from an eleven-year-old living and growing up in small-town Texas, to a 31-year-old New York actor.

We learn initially that Caouette's estranged mother was administered in her early teens with regular electric shock treatments following a partially paralysing accident. After this, she continued to drift between mental health institutions throughout her young adult life, leaving her son exposed to early abuse in foster homes, before he was reclaimed by his 'eccentric' grandparents.

With no father in the picture, an absent mother, and a disturbed home environment, Caouette's emotional outlet became his camera... as well as hard drugs, sexual experimentation, and spells disguised as a character he playfully dubbed 'petite Goth girl'.

Caouette's early story carries an inherently self-destructive and rebellious momentum, and at the age of eleven, he experimented with an especially potent joint, laced with a myriad of chemicals and dipped in formaldehyde. As an apparently direct result, Caouette developed 'depersonalisation disorder,' whereby he began to see life as a distant dreamscape, from which he felt peculiarly separate.

It is at this acutely fractured point in his life that he began to record it, and so the calmly objective narrative – unspoken, simplistically written phrases that roll serenely over the screen – is spliced with terrifyingly frenetic and kaleidoscopic sequences, risking sensory overload as optical oscillations and duplications flood your visual field in a violent frenzy. This

is one way in which Caouette's distorted and mutated inner world finds voice, yet there are equally revealing moments of confessional vulnerability, where an adult Caouette sits weeping before the camera, expressing fears that he might become as disturbed as his schizophrenic mother.

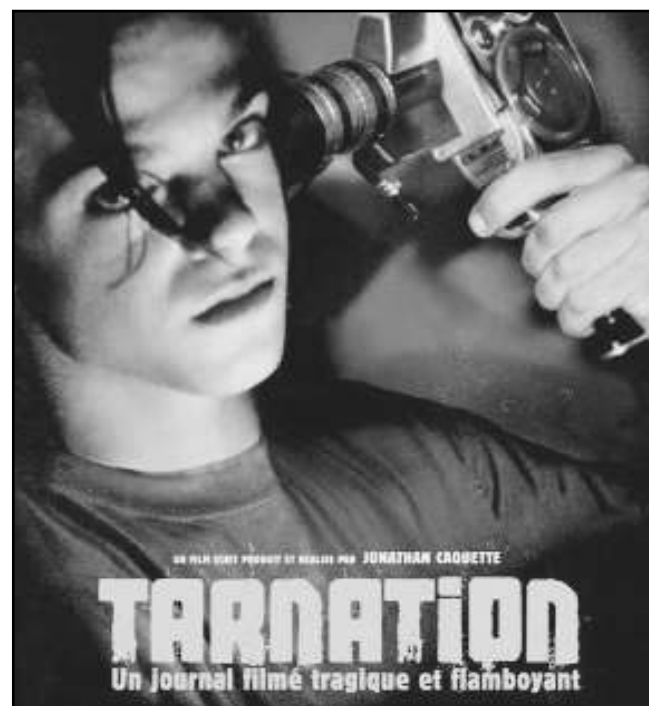
It is certainly Jonathan Caouette's prerogative to subject himself to such alarmingly intimate self-exposure, however when the camera is turned to an equally unflinching exposition of the deteriorating coherence of his mother, one begins to feel more than uncomfortable. A seemingly interminable sequence where she is captured giggling manically whilst serenading a pumpkin is at first grotesquely fascinating, yet starts to cross the line into distressing exploitation – surely some impulse of filial compassion should have compelled him to turn the camera off?

But if the camera is supposed to be acting as all-seeing witness, perhaps nothing should be censored: maybe this is legitimate confrontational honesty, however

indigestible. Yet there is something of Caouette's theatrical narcissism that permeates the film, making some elements feel wilfully and shamelessly dramatised. In fairness, though, this is very much a subjective experience, and as such should reflect Caouette's personal skew, warped and fantastical as it is.

It was an arguably self-aggrandising choice on Caouette's part to narrate in the third person – he refers to himself as 'Jonathan' throughout – but perhaps this has more to do with a dislocation of personal identity than it does with something as commonplace as vanity. It does create a curious effect, being plunged into an agonising inner world of sensory chaos, of mind-shattering sound and vision, and simultaneously, being held at arm's length by a rational, and silent, external narrative. *Tarnation* certainly makes for a deeply intriguing and distorted take on autobiography; hallucinatory psychodrama lived out through the eyes of a transmutating, unlocatable identity.

The excruciatingly raw exposure of the desperate pain in Jonathan Caouette's life can feel like torture, and the vulnerability of his psychologically crippled mother is almost unbearable. But the film is a testament to creativity borne of suffering, and makes for an almost stiflingly full, and ultimately compelling, cinematic experience.



Jonathan Caouette takes us into a celluloid childhood

Aural pleasure

Was Yaqoob speaks up about Ennio Morricone's soundtrack to *Once Upon a Time in the West*



Morricone's work on Leone's *Dollars Trilogy* was iconic, but *Once Upon a Time* demanded a completely different approach. Despite moments of dark comedy, its elegiac tone and obsession with death and the passage of time demanded a more mature, eloquent musical backing. As Leone cheerfully said, 'The rhythm of the film was intended to create the sensation of the last gasps a person takes just before dying' – it is a 'dance to the death'.

The score was key to this. Writing motifs for the main characters before filming,

Morricone's orchestra performed on-set, dictating Leone's camera movements. Many have compared Leone's work with opera, and certainly, the film exudes grandiose and often theatrical beauty. But the symbiosis between music and direction is so strong that the potential horrors of fat-faced histrionics are thankfully avoided. Guided by Leone's deft hand, the camera zooms, pans and glides with an understated grace to match that of the music.

In one stunning scene, the theme featuring Edda del Orso's haunting wordless soprano builds behind a despondent (and intimidatingly beautiful) Jill at a dusty train station, before the camera swoops up to reveal a bustling town, and the music swells to grand proportions. Cue tears being shed and erudite couples squeezing hands. Yet the scope of the creator's vision was such that image and sound fused to mirror not just the hope and beau-

ty of this quasi-mythical west, but also its desolation and tragedy. In one scene, rail tycoon Morton dies after desperately crawling to the edge of a puddle, the sound of crashing waves crashing tragically mocking his dream to hear the Pacific Ocean at the end of his completed railroad.

Despite the drama of such scenes, noting the influence of classic Westerns such as John Ford's, sociologist Baudrillard dubbed this 'the first post-modern movie' – a summary of the western rather than a sincere western itself. But Leone and Morricone's masterful marriage of sound and image raise this far above the level of homage or pastiche, to the pinnacle of the Western genre. Perhaps the best of the 200 or so he has done to date, Morricone's score, eerie and emotional, was the cornerstone of this achievement, bringing tears to the eyes as much as it sends shivers down the spine.

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England potential and a law degree

Adrian Shankar tells Adam Edelshain how top level sport and Uni can work

Long gone are the days when Britain's top sportsmen had a university education. Now it seems impossible for talented footballers and rugby players to get a degree while some of the country's youngest stars are barely finishing their compulsory education. However, Adrian Shankar, Cambridge's cricketing superstar, believes that cricket may be different.

"Going to university isn't a huge problem if you work really hard." Says Shankar in a brief interview between cricket practice and his work on international human rights. "For cricketers", he added, "The only worry is injury or being distracted by other things."

This seems strange considering the emphasis placed on the development of youth academies and the current sporting ethos of unearthing the talented youngsters as early as possible. Cesc Fabregas made his first appearance for Arsenal at the age of 15, while there are reports from Brazil that top

clubs are interested in players as young as 9. However, Shankar argues that cricket can be very different to other sports.

"With cricket as opposed to football, you can explode in 12 months." He said before adding that it is also true that players can blossom with hard work through the academies as well. But to emphasise his point, he drew attention to James Anderson, his roommate when the two played together in the England Under 17's. "Jimmy Anderson went up in 6 months, and has gone straight back down again." As a contemporary of Shankar's, he has bowled for England, taking wickets and now, his lack of form and focus have seen him dropped from the side.

This is not a common trait in other sports. Players tend to be either good enough or fringe players. Very rarely will a player be seen as first choice for three months and then dropped from the side. It seems that good form is a more vital ingredient

in Cricket than in other sports. Hard work will go a long way, but whereas it is a rare sight to see a footballer go from the lower leagues to playing for England, cricketers can make the jump much more quickly.

However, Shankar is quick to point out that putting in the hours is still crucial to reach the top. He said, "Before Andrew Strauss, I'd have said it's much easier to go straight up through the cricket academies. You have a longer summer to impress the team selectors, and don't get mentally drained by your degree."

Yet Andrew Strauss got a degree and his explosion onto the international scene seems to have given Shankar hope that he could do something similar in the next couple of years.

Adrian Shankar's England dream isn't as pie in the sky as it might seem either. On paper it doesn't look that encouraging, having played only twice for Worcestershire's first team but much of this has been down to a cartilage injury sustained in October 2003. Unaware of the serious nature of the injury until just before the 2004's Varsity match, his summer was spent recuperating from the injury and he missed the majority of the cricket season.

Since then though, he has been to the World Cricket Academy at the CCI in South Mumbai and in Perth, where he played alongside some of the most promising cricketers around the world. Even though the quality of the other cricketers was high, he still managed to shine, labelled by the press in Australia as a 'diamond' with enormous promise.

Shankar though seems very level headed and was modest when questioned about his



Lynden Spencer-Allen

Shankar has scored many runs for the University, including this 72 against Cambridgeshire

performances in India. Worcestershire were keeping a particularly close eye on his performances at the World Cricket Academy, given that he has played so few games for them so far. He claimed to have been nervous to begin with but settled in nicely after the first week or two.

labelled by the press in Australia as a 'diamond'

Looking ahead, it seems that this summer could be crucial to Adrian's career, predominantly because if things don't go as well as he hopes, he may not choose to play cricket at all. Adrian has made it clear that if he feels he won't be involved in the game at international level, he will choose a different career. Therefore, a good summer could be the start of something big, both for himself and possibly England, whereas a poor summer or an injury could drive the young star to a career in law.

Adrian said, "I will definitely

play cricket this summer. If I play well and feel I can go on to play for England then I'll choose a career in cricket. You can play terribly one day and on other days you can crash the ball everywhere and think 'I could be the next Brian Lara.' We'll have to see how the summer goes."

This has been Shankar's plan from the start, saying two years ago, "The only point I can see in playing cricket professionally is to get into the England team, so I have to judge whether or not I am good enough to do that. It's a big decision." That decision may well come at the end of this year's cricket season.

For some, the draw of a career in county cricket with long term prospects for England would be too much to let go, but Adrian Shankar prefers to hide away from the spotlight. He doesn't like socialising with other cricketers, while preferring to keep to himself and listen to music than talk about cricket. Cricket isn't even his favourite sport. For much of the interview, Adrian discussed the merits of

England's friendly against Holland and why Arsenal were struggling this season. As a big Bedford Town fan, football has always been more important to him than cricket. He assured me he would watch the England take on Holland rather than watch the one day match against South Africa.

Yet, it is possible that Adrian will be forced into the spotlight if the summer goes well. He has been informally sponsored by Oakley Sportswear for a long time now, with the possibility of a big contract should he progress to become a major star. This could make him a pin up, Cricket's equivalent to David Beckham and Jonny Wilkinson. Yet at the moment he has laughed off all the speculation over his potential and is determined to focus on his cricket so that he knows where he stands.

It remains to be seen whether he will make it but it does give a little bit of hope to young sports men and women deliberating over whether a degree will destroy their dreams of becoming top level athletes.



Adam Edelshain

Shankar at one of his more studious, quiet moments

Boxing continued

continued from back page

...that he frustrated the crowd with punches that scored but carried no real weight or malice. Cambridge's Hugh Williams also won comfortably in the Super-Heavyweight category, where his lacklustre opponent could not match him for reach, power or technique. In both bouts, cries of 'to the sword!' were clearly audible above the smack of leather on skin.

Just after the interval, the ladies bout saw Meredith Price give her all but be out-punched by a simply stronger Leeds opponent. Cambridge's greatest triumphs came in the mid-

dleweights. John Wright and Sam Wood both showed very effective use of the left jab, where time and again they caught their opponents with powerful attacking shots. Their punches were straight and true, and their fights settled into a routine which proved bruising for their Campol opponents. Wood was named 'best fighter' for his sustained display of controlled aggression.

The biggest roar of the evening was saved for Vice-captain and welterweight Sholto Mayne-Hanvey, who showed great aggression throughout the three rounds. He did some nice damage in close quarters to

overcome an opponent with greater reach. He fought bravely, as if spurred on by the vociferous support of the union, and deservedly won on a majority decision.

Boxing brings something that Cambridge lacks - a spectacle that is unnervingly human and raw in its intensity. Who could ignore the suffering of Bird on the canvas, as he tried to drag himself to his feet? Or fail to appreciate Sarafidis' pride and despair when told he would not be allowed to continue? Those in the seats could only marvel at the bravery of those in the ring - and perhaps feel glad that they weren't up there themselves.



Malika Worrall

Cambridge put on a show at the Union, impressing a large crowd of 400 fans

Not jolly for Volleyball Blues

Volleyball

CAMBRIDGE 0
 OXFORD 3

Luke Johnson

After a fairly frustrating season in which the team had not performed to its full potential, the time had come for the crunch Varsity match. Only three days before, the two teams had met in a BUSA match in Cambridge with the final result a 3-1 Oxford victory. But the score was not representative of the closely matched level of play. Every one of the sets was fiercely fought and taken by a small margin, with the exception of Cambridge's victory in the third set, which showed an impressive combination of individual skill and team co-ordination. This previous match suggested that Varsity would be open to either side despite a reduced Cambridge squad due to injury.

The first set was something of a disappointment as Oxford sailed though 25-5, a score rarely heard of in volleyball circles. A quick team talk in the turnaround made a huge difference evidenced by the



Net disappointment as the Blues were smashed apart in double Varsity volleyball defeat.

scores remaining level throughout the next set. Both sides showed very good defensive movement and passing abilities that allowed them to utilise their outside hitters, but the Cambridge passes were not of a high enough standard to allow them to use their strong and fast middle attack and Oxford slipped

away with a 25-22 victory in the second set. Again, the changeover proved to be a useful opportunity for the team to regroup and rethink their positions and hitting tactics, resulting in what proved to be a highly entertaining display of volleyball. Passing quality was increased to give the setter,

Ramasse, 3 options of attack. Good speed from Braun and Heslop in the centre pulled the Oxford blockers away from the other attackers and also picked out the spaces at the back of the opposition's court. Jacquet and Willis ran consistently on the outside and Sarkozy was hitting impressively through opposite.

Despite this, Oxford defended admirably and were able to keep just a couple of points behind all the way through the set. The teams levelled out at 23-23 and in the end it came down to recycling the balls that came over as Oxford pushed to take the set 29-27. Overall, the Cambridge team would not have felt their performance made up for the disappointing result.

Despite riding on the wave of a succession of victories with a new influx of first years strengthening the squad, the women's team were unable to compensate for the male disappointment, as Oxford defeated them 3-1 in a fiercely contested encounter.

Throughout the match they managed to trail behind Oxford by a only few points, though in the final stretch Oxford managed to pull out the big guns and steam away with insurmountable leads. It looked as though it was going to be straight 3 set win for the dark blues, but spurred on by the home crowd the Cambridge girls managed to astonish a confident opposition with a 25-12 win. Sadly, they couldn't keep up the pace and Oxford replied by taking the final set by a few points. This represented an unfortunate culmination to what has overall been a positive season.

Sport In Brief

FOOTBALL

The Blues took on Warwick on Wednesday and came away with a creditable 2-2 draw. In form Mikey Adams scored both the goals.

BASKETBALL

The men's Blues basketball side toppled Division 1 leaders Wolverhampton by 89 points to 71 in a tightly contested clash. Spirits were raised the following day as they triumphed 89-69 over Warwick.

RUGBY

The weather was the major talking point in college rugby this week, as it called a halt on matches that will determine both top and bottom positions. St. John's will seal the title when they visit Girton, when the match is rescheduled.

AND FINALLY...

VARSITY FOOTBALL

On Saturday 12th March, the Blues take on Oxford at Upton Park in this years Varsity encounter.

Tickets cost £5, and can be purchased by emailing jmd62@cam.ac.uk.

Men's College Rugby League Division I

Place	Team	Pl	W	D	L	F	A	PD	Pts
1	Downing	10	8	0	2	200	115	85	34
2	St.John's	9	8	0	1	380	56	324	33
3	Jesus	10	6	0	4	187	120	67	28
4	Girton	9	4	0	5	113	157	-44	20
5	St. Catharine's	9	2	0	7	85	222	-137	15
6	Trinity Hall	9	0	0	9	58	353	-295	9

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Results: Downing 24 - 14 St.Catherine's; Trinity Hall P - P St. Catherine's; St.John's P - P Girton.

Men's College Football League Division I

Place	Team	Pl	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Fitzwilliam	6	6	0	0	25	5	20	18
2	Trinity	6	5	0	1	14	9	5	15
3	Jesus	6	4	1	1	14	6	8	13
4	St. John's	6	3	1	2	12	7	5	10
5	Churchill	6	3	1	2	8	10	-2	10
6	Darwin	6	2	2	2	10	7	3	8
7	St.Catherine's	7	2	1	4	7	13	-6	7
8	Caius	7	1	2	4	7	17	-10	5
9	Downing	7	1	0	6	10	18	-8	3
10	Girton	7	1	0	6	6	21	-15	3

Results: Darwin 1 - 0 Girton; Downing 0 - 2 Fitz; St.John's 1 - 2 Caius

Wolfs-on ice bail out

Dom Summers

Winter cricket tours are usually considered incompatible with the average college team's budget, given the difficulty of finding appropriate weather within an Easyjet flight of Cambridge. The alternative, as Wolfson's cricket team has recently discovered, is to travel to Tallinn, Estonia to participate in the first Estonian International Ice-Cricket Tournament.

The venue was an ice-rink at a former Soviet missile factory on the outskirts of the city. With temperatures a balmy -15°C, and unsurprisingly a hard, flat wicket with no chance of rain, the conditions were excellent for the tournament.

After one life-restoring sauna on arrival, Wolfson were put into bat for the first six over game against the Pretenders CC, another British touring party. The match was never in doubt from the start as Todd Bridgman and captain Dom Summers led the assault. Prabhu Narasimhan and Steve Mann completed the innings with some quality drives, cuts and edges to leave Wolfson with the intimidating total of 119-1.

The Pretenders' turn came and the pressure was immediately applied with some sharp fielding by Danny Dawson claiming the first wicket, a run out. Ultimately the Pretenders lived up to their name, 70 all out and 49 short of the required total. The second game was against the Estonian National Cricket Team, who were put into bat. Estonia crumbled after an inspired spell from

Ed Symes and were all out for 67, which was chased down with ease.

With maximum points in the group stages, Wolfson were the firm favourites to take the championship with just the Kelletinos Warriors standing in their way. Once again, Wolfson were chasing, and with the opening ball Narasimhan sent the bails flying and the opening warrior sheepishly back to the pavilion (sauna...).

Despite more fine spells from Dawson and Symes, Wolfson pressed the self-destruct button, with wides, dropped catches and misfields allowing the Warriors to make a very respectable 104-4.

The opening pairing of Bridgman and Summers continued their early form as the initial run rate kept on target, however an unforeseen event turned the match away from Wolfson. After a particularly tight

run involving dramatic leaping and sliding, Summers took a dramatic fall, his contact lens lost forever in the ice. Unable to recover both his sight and his rhythm, Wolfson's most prolific batsman was bowled out. When Bridgman was dismissed in the next over, the subsequent batting collapse effectively ended the contest, with Wolfson finishing 87-4.

Wolfson and Summers were distraught, as they had hoped a memorable tour and unique experience would be crowned with victory. One player confessed that only the "impending plethora of cheap Eastern European alcohol would provide a consolation for this defeat." As spirits were raised, the consensus was that the tour had been both a "great experience and success" and a Wolfson spokesman recommended nay urged other "college cricket sides to follow" in their adventurous footsteps.



Wolfson ice-cream was cut down to size after impressive early results

Blues Boxers face up in the Union Chamber

Cambridge take on the Eastern Counties in front of a sell-out crowd page 28



Unbeatable Nomads home in on league title

Ladies Hockey

CAMBRIDGE 7
WISBECH 1

Luke Pickering

CAMBRIDGE University Women's Hockey II team, the 'Nomads', won their sixteenth consecutive victory to leapfrog their opponents Wisbech at the top of the table. The win provides the side the opportunity to stake their claim as Cambridge team of the year, having already conquered the BUSA league. In what was expected to be a tightly fought game, the Nomads thrashed their title rivals, scoring more goals than Wisbech had cumulatively conceded in their fourteen games this season.

The opening five minutes of the game was a perfect snapshot of the drama to follow. Persistent pressure from the light blues was rewarded with a fine strike by star forward Sarah-Jane Lloyd, after her forceful drive into the dee. Indeed, the Catz striker was to

prove the thorn in Wisbech's side as she repeatedly provided a devastating end product to her teammates' fine build up. Cambridge's fluency continued to trouble the opposition, and their lightning breaks ensured that even whilst on the defensive, the Nomads were always dangerous. A succession of short corners penned Wisbech firmly in their own half, and even the lengthy stoppage after Claire Apted was hit in the face during another Cambridge short corner, provided little respite for the travelling team.

The Nomads secured the second goal their play merited on 16 minutes after an impressive interchange of passes allowed Rosie Sherman to shoot home. Yet, mid-way through the first half, the Cambridge defence's lack of action told, giving the visitors a lifeline through Ellie Atkins. Ignoring the pleas of a foot, she placed the ball past keeper Phoebe Arnold to raise Wisbech's hopes and put them back into contention. However, such aspirations were soon to be extinguished. The irrepressible Lloyd struck twice to com-



The victory stretched their impressive run of wins to fourteen, allowing the Nomads to leapfrog their opponents and top the table

plete her hat trick before the half time whistle after repeatedly embarrassing the Wisbech defence with her close control, leaving Cambridge 4-1 to the good at the break.

The second half began on a similar note, with Lloyd providing the cutting edge to her team's gritty yet creative play. After only 5 minutes she secured her 4th goal of the afternoon after rifling in a powerful shot from the edge of the dee. Rachel Trafford, after coming on as substitute, further extended the lead when she stroked home after a fluent interchange, to make score 6-1.

Sensing a rout the Wisbech team restored a degree of pride to proceedings as they started to justify their pre-game status at the upper echelons of the table. Nevertheless, despite three short corners, the Cambridge backline now began to mirror the form of their attacking counterparts with the fullback combination of Walls and Murdoch proving an impregnable force.

And to compound Wisbech's misery, there was still enough time for surging midfielder Sherman to score her second, firing home from an acute angle after the keeper had parried a previous effort, to seal a 7-1 thrashing.

Nonetheless, with this year's Varsity looming on the 14th February the team must recover after some surprising 'eleventh hour' changes to the line up. Since this top of the table tussle, the Nomads have suffered the loss of two of their players to the blues, although the retention of the services of Sarah-Jane Lloyd must surely be giving the Dark blues defence some sleepless nights prior to the fixture. Captain Claire Walls was philosophical after the disruption to her team arguing 'the team will regroup and be sufficiently prepared for the game'. Oxford heed the warning, the Nomads are ready.

Union boxing

Theo Bard

THE DEBATING chamber at the union bears witness to hard hitting, clever ploys and humiliating defeats on a regular basis. However this was never as vivid as on Friday night, when 400 bloodthirsty spectators revelled in the carnage provided by fighters from Cambridge University Amateur Boxing Club and their North-western opponents.

The evening began with junior and youth bouts, featuring a shocking mismatch which left the audience more traumatised than it would before the rest of the evening. In these bouts it was easy to pick the victor from build and aggression alone. There were few who could enjoy the brutality when it was directed at such young, and already bruised, faces.

The crowd breathed a collective sigh of relief, mixed with awe, when Leeds' Joe Kim stepped into the ring against Cambridge's Alex Bird. The punches were landing cleaner, with both men much further from exhaustion

than the boys had been. In the first round Kim was the clear leader, his movement and power frequently oppressing Bird. At the start of the second, Kim produced the finest punch the crowd would see all night. As the bell went, he moved forward and caught Bird cleanly on the chin with a ferocious right. Bird tottered and fell. Never mind the count of ten; he spent the whole of the round on the canvas.

Cambridge's Sarafidis brought his tiger-like fighting style to the ring in his middleweight bout, but his punches were not straight enough, and he was stopped in the second due to heavy bleeding above his right eye, caused by his Leeds opponents' superior ability.

In the heavyweight category, Cambridge's giant Wordsworth was on the fortunate end of a mis-match. For all three rounds he hit his man almost at his own leisure. However, his reach and strength were so far superior to that of his opponent...

continued page 26



Wisbech conceded more than they had in all their other games combined this season

Daley Cranstone