

VARSITY



Early learning: *Varsity*
stops at the fashion tent



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The victory salute: Walsh (third from left) celebrates her victory on Wednesday night with members of her campaign team

Walsh wins CUSU Presidency

WOMEN'S: MICHELLE NUTTALL SERVICES: JENNIFER COOPER
WELFARE: VICKI MANN ACADEMIC AFFAIRS: DREW LIVINGSTONE

Lucy Phillips

LAURA WALSH was elected CUSU President on Wednesday night, defeating Tom Dye and Robin Sivapalan into second and third place respectively. The final count saw Walsh with 1780 votes and Dye with 1517.

Speaking yesterday, Walsh told *Varsity*: "I'm really pleased. I feel I ran the right campaign and gave the right messages". Walsh said of her opponents, "All three of us did really good campaigns, with equally good messages". She hopes to com-

bine her ideas with those of the defeated candidates, saying "The main message is for CUSU to be more visible, to interact more with colleges and JCRs, and to find out what services students want us to provide".

Walsh is one of four women who will fill the five CUSU sab-batical posts next year: Jennifer Cooper will serve as Services Officer, Vicki Mann as Welfare Officer and Michelle Nuttall as Women's Officer. Drew Livingstone was re-elected as Academic Affairs Officer.

Nuttall said: "I think it's won-

derful that so many women have stood in the CUSU elections and have been elected. Women play a vital role in the university and this year we'll have a sabb team which reflects that. Some will say this proves we don't need a Women's Union, but it's interesting that Jennifer, Vicki and myself have all been involved with the Women's Union in some way, which surely reflects a Women's Union that supports and empowers its members."

Outgoing Women's Officer, Jo Read, called Walsh "an excellent role model" and said that

"Equality of opportunity does lead to equality of outcome."

Part-time Officers have been declared as Martin Arrowsmith for Education, Aleisha Goubourn for Ents, Matt Simms for Green, Dan Swain for Higher Education Funding and Thomas Cox for Welfare. Dave Smith and Juliet Mullin will hold Open Portfolio positions as Action Officer and Mental Health Officer respectively. Walsh will serve as Treasurer of the Union next term before taking up position as head of CUSU in the summer.

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Accusations of homophobia levelled at Ballare after student night

- Nightclub owners issue denial
- College JCR's asked for support

Adam Edelshain

BALLARE NIGHTCLUB has been on the receiving end of allegations of homophobia after two separate incidents on Wednesday 2 March.

A student has alleged: "My boyfriend and I were dancing together and just kissing. Nothing other than kissing. Then a bouncer came over and swore at me and waved his arms. I carried on kissing my boyfriend and then he grabbed me and started swearing and shouting."

"We were feeling intimidated so we chose to leave, but the bouncer grabbed us and made us wait outside. We were taken out through a side door and weren't allowed to get our coats."

The individual, who has requested to remain anonymous, further alleged that the Ballare door staff member concerned had said: "This is not a gay night" and "Fuck off and never come back." He also stated: "I have nothing against gay people but I don't want you in my club again".

The accusations come after a long series of events that started when witnesses from Jesus College reported to Mark Fletcher, Jesus Welfare Officer, that they had seen door staff separate two different gay couples on the dance floor, and that at least one of the couples was forced to leave.

A letter was written by Fletcher to Ballare and then copied to all student JCRs which outlined the incident and requested support.

Further to this, Olly Glover, CUSU LGBT (Lesbian Bisexual Gay Transgender) representative, invited Fletcher to attend the LGBT executive meeting, where the possibility of filing a report to police was discussed.

Mr Glover later spoke to Ed Waters, General Manager of Ballare, who presented a different picture. Waters is reported to have told Glover that both couples were displaying behaviour of an overly explicit nature and that they were asked to tone it down.

Further to this statement, Clare De Silva, Press and PR spokesperson for Ballare, reiterated that "one couple was asked to tone their behaviour down, and did so. The other couple were abusive to our door staff."

De Silva reiterated that the club does not tolerate homophobia or any other bigoted policies. But the individual involved said: "I categorically deny anything other than kissing was going on. I have a list of witnesses who can confirm this."

A meeting between the two parties involved in the argument has been arranged. A joint statement may be issued as a result of the meeting.

News in Brief

Fair Trade Formal

Cambridge's first Fair Trade Formal is happening at Emmanuel this Sunday to mark the end of a successful Fair Trade Fortnight.

Fair Trade guarantees a fair deal for producers and consumers: the market has leapt by 51% over the last year, with the UK overtaking Switzerland to become the biggest Fair Trade market in the world.

Sama Sama Rescheduled

Sama Sama, a concert at the Junction featuring Amy Winehouse, has been rescheduled for Tuesday March 15. The event is raising money for victims of the Tsunami disaster. British Asian Music Award nominees, Sonik Gurus, will also be playing.

Rag Bungee

Over 60 people took part in a sponsored bungee jump for RAG Week on Sunday. RAG President Dominic Hinton, who was of those who hurtled the 200 feet to raise money for charity, said that 'everyone who took part seemed to really enjoy it'. Over £77,000 was raised by the jumpers.

Comic Relief

Red Nose Day is tomorrow. The nationwide charity effort raises money for disadvantaged people in the UK and Africa.

Overseas Applications

UK universities may be facing a financially devastating drop in applications from non-EU students. A spokeswoman for Universities UK said the shortfall 'could cause huge problems for institutions and compromise their success and competitive edge'. Applications from China and other Far Eastern countries, whose students pay full fees, fell by more than 25% in the last academic year.

LSE Quotas

The leaking of LSE internal admissions criteria has provided the first firm evidence sought by independent school headteachers that universities are deliberately favouring applicants from the state sector. The scheme supposedly 'top-slices' good candidates from poorly-performing state schools. It was described by the HHC as 'deeply unfair'.

Student law review

The launch of a new Cambridge student law review will be held on 14th March, at the law faculty, 6.30pm.

Warnings over white car scare

Kay Stevenson

SEVERAL COLLEGES have issued warnings this week about a suspicious white car spotted in the West Road/Grange Road area of the city. Over the past week many students have come forward to express similar concerns about being approached in dubious and sometimes threatening circumstances, by what is likely to be the same car.

The driver, described as a 40-50 year old white male, often accompanied by passengers, has been pulling up alongside students to ask for money to help pay for petrol. Reports claim the driver also had blood and scratches on his face, appearing as if he had recently incurred a head injury. While concerns have been high

for the safety of females alone at night, both genders have been approached for cash.

The occupants of the car started a conversation by asking the passer-by if they spoke English. They then engaged the pedestrian in a long explanation of how they had traveled from Bournemouth to meet someone, who had subsequently failed to turn up. The driver professed to have no access to cash cards or a phone. Typically requesting £20 to £30, the driver even went on to offer to drive one graduate from King's to a cash point to get the money.

In a city with a high number of beggars on the street, some suggest students have become accustomed to being stopped in the street for money. King's Grad Welfare Officer Sally Gore asserted: "Whilst the

request may have struck people as slightly odd, it doesn't necessarily give huge cause for concern until individuals realize that there are so many others being targeted."

One recent graduate explained how a car pulled up and tried to engage her in conversation while waiting at the taxi rank by Christ's College: "I had no real reason to think there was anything strange. He seemed polite and earnest but kept asking questions which did leave me feeling slightly unnerved."

Students are urged to report such events immediately to the police at Parkside station; this will help them in their ongoing attempts to identify the occupants of the car. Members of the public are reminded to remain vigilant.



Grange Road, where a number of students have reported being approached by a man in a white car, asking for money.

Chine Mubughu

New bursary scheme unveiled

£7m pay package to be introduced in time for top-up fees

Oliver Tilley

CAMBRIDGE University has unveiled a new bursary scheme this week, to stem fears over the increased financial burdens expected after top-up fees are introduced in 2006.

The scheme, expected to cost the University £7m per year, will provide bursaries worth up to £9,000 over three years and £12,000 over four years for those eligible. Mature students could receive up to £15,000 over a three-year course and £20,000 over a four-year course. One-in-five undergraduates are likely to be eligible for a bursary, with one-

in-ten getting full support.

Professor Alison Richard, Vice-Chancellor of the University said "it is of the utmost importance to us that a Cambridge education is affordable for any student in the UK. For many years our programme of undergraduate support has been among the largest in the UK, and the new Cambridge Bursary Scheme builds on that commitment. This will ensure that, as today, all our future students can focus on their education, and not on how they are paying for it."

The scheme will come into effect in 2006 when, subject to approval by OFFA, the

University plans to introduce Tuition Fees of £3,000 for all of its courses. Fees are expected to generate an additional annual income of £21 million,

when they have been fully introduced.

A statement from the University said "the Cambridge Bursary Scheme

has been designed to ensure that students from less affluent backgrounds can cover all of their living costs. No student should have to take a paid job during the intensive study period in term."

A similar initiative has come into force in Oxford University this week, called 'Oxford Opportunity Bursaries', with Chancellor of the University Chris Patten echoing the sentiment in Cambridge by saying "It's not what's in your pocket, it's what's in your head".

The new scheme will also free up existing funds and enable the University to boost support for students with exceptional need.

The Cambridge Bursary Scheme explained

- * Every student who qualifies for the full £2,700 maintenance grant will be eligible for a Cambridge Bursary worth £3,000 - making a total of £5,700 for each year of their course;
- * Every mature student eligible for the full maintenance grant, will receive a Cambridge Bursary of £5,000 - taking their annual support to £7,700;
- * There will be no limit to how many students can receive this support;
- * The scheme will be tapered to avoid 'poverty traps' and will cover students whose household income falls in the range of £16,000 to £34,000 pa.

Close battle for Union presidency

Amy Goodwin

THE CAMBRIDGE Union has elected its President for the Michaelmas term. Current Treasurer Jenni Scott, a second year at Pembroke College, snatched victory from rival candidate Adam Swersky with a margin of only three votes in an election which proved one of the closest in Union history.

It also saw the highest turnout in recent years. Over 450 members voted, meaning that despite the extended voting hours many were still queuing outside at 9pm on Tuesday evening. All the candidates pointed out how closely the two phenomena of rocketing turnout and unpredictable results were linked. "It's always really hard to get people to cross town to vote", confirmed Adam Swersky, "but this year people seemed to realise that their votes really counted". "It was absolutely nail-biting", agreed Jenni Scott. Three

recounts were needed before the results could be announced.

Despite the "undeniable tension", it was emphasised that the election was "remarkably clean and fairly fought". Swersky said: "Jenni and I are still good friends and I can't think of anyone who is angry at anyone else". He then admitted that he was angry with "three specific people" in Cambridge but has "no way of knowing who exactly they are."

Luke Pearce, who was elected Treasurer, said that the election was rendered "a great success" by the lack of any accusations of malpractice despite the absence of clear frontrunners and the fact that every post was contested. The 'amicability' of the election was stressed by this term's President, Alasdair Ross.

The election was also remarkable for the fact that all three officers elected are in their first year at Cambridge. Zahra Khan will become Ents Officer in Michaelmas, whilst Alyson

Thompson will take over as Senior Officer and Luke Pearce won the post of Treasurer. Scott stated that she was "extremely excited" about working with the new team. "As all three have served on Committee before, they'll bring experience as well as new ideas to the workings of the Union." Swersky pointed out that people who are involved with the Union for a long time have a tendency to become "institutionalised", and therefore Scott is "extremely fortunate" to be working with such a 'fresh' line-up. Thompson added that all the candidates standing had been "well-qualified and enthusiastic members who feel strongly about the future of the Union."

The stronger mandate assured by the increase in turnout has made the team "very aware of their responsibilities towards the Union's members", Pearce stated. "I feel honoured that so many people had faith in me, and I

realise there is a lot of hard work to be done'. Scott hopes the 'positive mood' will allow her to oversee 'the best Michaelmas ever'. However, others have warned against complacency, pointing out that a turnout of 450 of over 8000 members within Cambridge is an improvement, but not as 'impressive' as has been claimed. Scott is amongst those who voted in favour of a motion to introduce online voting brought by ex-President Bobby Friedman on Monday night that failed to pass. What Friedman terms 'an awkward squad' retains doubts about the technological feasibility of the measure.

CUSU Women's Officer Jo Read remarked on the 'powerful impact' of a week that saw two women, Laura Welsh and Jenni Scott, elected as Presidents of the largest societies in Cambridge. 'Although their sex is not the be-all and end-all, and obviously the most important thing is that they

work well for their members, I believe they both serve as wonderful role models."

Meanwhile, defeated Union Presidential candidate Swersky described his involvement with the Union as a "short-term love affair ... I haven't fallen out of love. I'm not going to hang around being a nuisance, but I definitely want to stay involved."

Election results

President: Jenni Scott

Senior Officer: Alyson Thompson

Treasurer: Luke Pearce

Ents Officer: Zahra Khan

Members were also elected to the House and External Committees.

Cambridge fashion

Amelia Worsley

A STUNNING ARRAY of student designs were paraded on the catwalk at the third annual Cambridge University fashion show on Sunday, held at The Guildhall. Over 30 student models, both male and female, as well as the musicians Shekere, performed to a packed audience who were in high spirits. The show focussed more on student designers than in previous years. "Over half of our runs are mostly or entirely designed by student designers," said the Creative Directors. Some clothes were also borrowed from local shops.

This year, the show had a "heightened dramatic and the-

atrical element", with themes ranging from Fairytale and Arcadia to the tribal 'Mud on bodies, paint on faces'. Each run was individually choreographed in accordance with the designs, with students moving "like caterpillars, mad hatters, ballerinas and robots".

Agata Belcen and Lucy Styles, the show's Creative Directors, said, "We were really grateful to all those involved for making it all so enjoyable."

The first Cambridge University fashion show, held two years ago, caused such a stir that it ended up on the pages of the celebrity magazine *Hello*. Photographs also appeared in tabloid newspapers last year.

National press interest this

year focused on the triplets Lil, Helen and Kate Armstrong, as well as Vanessa Feltz's daughter, Allegra, who are all in their first year. Helen said: "We were asked to take part and thought it would be a good opportunity to meet new people. It's easy to just stay in your college and go out with your people there... We wanted to take part because it's raising money for charity," Kate added.

Proceeds from the show will go to victims of the Asian tsunami. Last year's show raised hundreds of pounds for several charities, including SPECeast, a charity which helps underprivileged children in the UK, and Task Brazil, which supports the country's street children.

Women's Week agenda

Imogen Walford

THIS WEEK Cambridge celebrated the annual International Women's Week. There were a variety of events going on around the University to mark both women's progress in breaking down prejudice and the need for further change. This year marks the 94th event of this kind. Traditionally the event fell on the 8th March, which is now a national holiday in many countries. Over the years it has developed from a single day's celebration into a whole week. Although International Women's Day is marked by all the universities throughout the country, it is particularly strong in Cambridge, with one of the most active women's unions in all the British universities.

Over the course of last week a wide array of over thirty events were put on, organised by Jo Read, CUSU's Women's Officer. CUSU has aimed to use the Women's Week to achieve a practical purpose.

There were self-defense

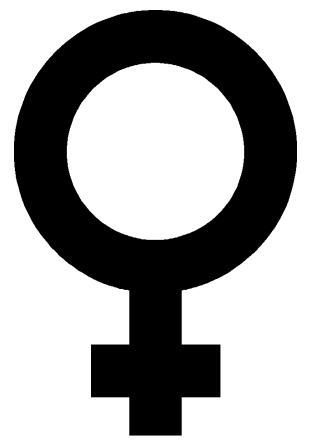
classes to allow women to protect themselves more effectively as well as debates on work / life balance and how to encourage representation of women within the university. Read told Varsity that she was "happy with the turnout of events" and denied that this was a women-only event. The high proportion of men at events has left CUSU confident that they were "raising awareness for everyone".

Despite this, general reactions were summed up by one Newnhamite polled who stated: "It's one of those things I feel I should be more interested but with everything else I have to concentrate on doing it inevitably got ignored!" But Read was keen to point out that women's issues do not begin and end with the week, highlighting the events that happen fortnightly throughout the university.

The week was described as a 'celebration' and getting everyone together just to enjoy themselves featured largely. King's and Jesus colleges hosted formals; there was a fair

and Newnham's bar hosted an event. To lighten the tone of the week, Newnham also took part in a 'Sex and the City' watching night.

There were information sessions on women in the developing world and in war zones, such as Iraq as well as a Amnesty letter writing session for victims of persecution based on their sex. "Diversity and looking at people as people" were Jo Read's stated aims for the week and on the basis of the events alone it seems to have been a success.



GEEMA Challenge

Lillie Weaver

LAST SATURDAY saw 90 ethnic minority students from across the country visit Cambridge to take part in a special "challenge day" organised by GEEMA [Group to Encourage Ethnic Minority Applications to Cambridge]. The course is run to persuade under-represented groups to apply to Cambridge, and to promote the benefits of higher education in general.

The teenagers attended lectures in English, Maths, Politics and Law, as well as attempting some more 'hands on' challenges, such as building and racing small boats. The course is supposed to dispel myths about higher edu-

cation, as well as giving students a taste of real University life. Nikhil Gomes, the Cambridge Admissions Office Schools & Colleges Liaison Officer thinks that too many students see the prospect of doing a degree unappealing because they "don't want to spend another three years in a classroom", and wants young people to realise how different University teaching is to school. By attending lectures on a wide range of subjects, students are also given the opportunity to consider choosing a subject not offered at school.

One of the day's highlights was a session in which the students studied code-breaking

techniques, and were shown a demonstration of a genuine "Enigma" machine – the infamous encryption device used by the Nazis during World War II, which was eventually cracked by the Allies.

The main aim of this, and the many other events run throughout the year by GEEMA is to challenge the traditional perceptions of Cambridge by school-age pupils. Chirag Patel, 16, says GEEMA has helped to change his opinion of the University. "Before I came to Cambridge I did not think there would be many ethnic minorities. I use to think it was for rich white people. But people changed their minds."

Polish ambassador visit

Charlotte Keane

ON MARCH 3 the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, Zbigniew Matuszewski, visited the Department of Slavonic Studies for a ceremony that celebrated the return of the study of the Polish language to Cambridge. The Polish Ministry for Foreign Affairs will be funding the course in Elementary Polish which begins in October 2005 and will be open to all members of the University. At the end of the year long course participants will be given a proficiency test in Elementary Polish.

Poland's recent admittance to the European Union on May 1 2004, makes this decision particularly well-timed and is part of a program during which the Department for Slavonic Studies hopes to re-introduce courses in other Eastern European languages. These will run alongside

the current Russian language courses that the department presently offers.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the University by Professor Simon Franklin, present Head of the Department of Slavonic Studies, who said: "We are enormously grateful to the Polish Foreign Ministry for funding this course. EU expansion has strengthened the economic and political links between the UK and Poland, which makes it more important than ever for us to be able to teach Polish to our staff and students."

The visit also included a meeting with the Master of Corpus Christi College, Professor Haroon Ahmed. The Ambassador visited an ad hoc exhibition of medieval manuscripts at the Corpus Christi Library. This included a collection of books from a convent in Elblag, Poland.

This is an important step for-

ward for the teaching of modern languages in Cambridge as it provides more opportunities for a greater choice. Both Oxford and University College London offer an undergraduate degree in Polish and in many other Eastern European languages which means that Cambridge needs to match them in order to continue to attract the best and brightest. If the courses are not offered then there can be little hope that those students who want to study a broader range of modern European languages will apply to Cambridge rather than a university which offers a broader range.



Universities in high demand

HEFCE chief draws attention to continuing deficit

Chine Mbubaegbu

THE HEAD of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (Hefce) has warned that this year's applicants to the UK's universities will find it more difficult than ever to get a place.

Hefce's Chief Executive, Sir Howard Newby, said that the 9% surge in applications, improvement in A-Level performance and demographic changes which have resulted in an increase in the number of teenagers, will mean that gaining a place at a university this year will be more difficult than in previous years.

There are concerns that despite the government grants of £6.3bn for teaching and research announced yesterday – an increase of 5.6%, which will provide for an extra 21,900, these provisions are not sufficient. The number of UK teenagers seeking admission to England's higher education institutions this autumn numbers 29,800.

A spokesperson for the Department for Education and Skills said: "Our universities are among the very best worldwide and there should be healthy competition for places. We're making steady progress towards the 50% par-

ticipation target."

Oxbridge and other members of the Russell Group which are research-led universities, will receive higher increases in funding than other universities.

Vice-President of the National Union of Students commented: "The many departmental and course closures at campuses have demonstrated the impact that favouring research over funding has on students and teachers. We can't encourage students to go to university only to find that research is prioritised over their own academic development."

Science Matters

Ecstasy linked with depression

Cambridge University researchers have revealed a link between heavy ecstasy use and depressive symptoms in some people. The report published in the American Journal of Psychiatry suggests that an individual's genetic make-up may affect how vulnerable they are to long-term psychiatric problems following chronic ecstasy use. Up to two million ecstasy tablets are taken every week in England. The UN drugs watchdog has reported that ecstasy use in the UK is the third highest in Europe.

Dr Jonathan Rosier, previously a PhD student at the Department of Psychiatry, University of Cambridge and now based in the USA said: "There is evidence here that ecstasy use can result in depression in some vulnerable people".

Ecstasy is known to affect serotonin, a key brain chemical in the regulation of mood and emotion. Previous studies have suggested that ecstasy users may experience an unpleasant lowering of mood for up to three days after taking the drug. Ecstasy can sometimes cause episodes of severe depression to develop. Cambridge scientists looked at 66 ecstasy users, 30 cannabis users and 28 healthy volunteers who had not used any drug. They studied the gene which controls serotonin in the brain. Everybody has two copies of each gene, and there are two possible versions which people can carry, so they can either be classed as II, Is or ss.

Performance on an emotional processing computer test where people are asked to respond to happy or sad words was abnormal in those ecstasy users carrying the s version of the serotonin transporter gene, a known-risk factor for depression. In addition, ecstasy users carrying at least one copy of the s gene reported significantly higher levels of depression than controls. Both of these effects were particularly pronounced in the ecstasy users with two copies of the s version of the gene.

Non-drug users with the ss type displayed no such problems and no differences were observed among cannabis users who belonged to the different genetic groups.

Dr Rosier pointed out that people were unlikely to know what genotype they were, and therefore if they were at high risk. But he added: "There is some evidence that people with the ss genotype have more family members who are depressed."

"People with the ss type have been associated with depression in response to stressful life events. It may be that ecstasy is another type of stressor, albeit one which has a more direct effect on the brain". Whilst the research had looked at heavy users, Dr Rosier said: "If people who are casual users have that kind of family history, they should think twice about continuing to take ecstasy".

Rachel Cooper

Spotlight on Science

This year's Cambridge Science Festival will kick off on Wednesday 16. The series of lectures encompasses subjects ranging from stem cell research to nutrition, global climate change and Einstein's theorems. Tim Radford, Science Editor of the Guardian, will also chair a panel discussion on the future histories of science on Wednesday 23.

Amy Goodwin

Stem Cell Research

This week saw the launch of a new initiative which has brought together leading figures in the field of stem cell research in the Eastern region.

Doctors, scientists and biotech executives as well as government regulators, charity representatives and ethics experts were among the 200 who attended the launch of the East of England Stem Cell Network (EESCN).

Dr Mary Archer, Chair of the organisation and Professor Roger Pedersen spoke at the event.

The first of its kind, the network aims to further knowledge in the area of stem cell research by bringing together academic, clinical and commercial bodies.

The launch comes as the government announced on Monday that there is to be a £1bn increase in science spending, with stem cell research being mentioned as a priority.

Chine Mbubaegbu

Junction theatre opens



The Junction

Anna McIlreavy

THIS WEEK the Junction opened up its brand new arts facilities after 8 years of planning, fundraising and building. The new theatre, education space and an art and new technology laboratory are aimed at inspiring the next generation of artists, musicians and audiences.

The new theatre, Junction 2, is the first purpose-built public theatre to open in Cambridge since the 1930s.

Paul Bogen, Artistic & Executive Director commented "These creative spaces bring The Junction another step closer to realizing its vision of being a National Centre of Excellence for the presentation, creation and

production of new art".

The new spaces will allow artists to experiment with different performance styles and lighting designs.

The theatre is opening up with the East Meets East festival - the very first International Festival of Eastern European Theatre to be held in the East of England.

Commenting on the new season of events, Lucia Hogg, The Junction's Head of Performance said, "The Junction's opening season of performance is filled with new work that we feel passionately about. The work we are presenting is sometimes experimental, hysterical, challenging, beautiful and engaging, all will offer artistic excellence as part of the package".

E-grade degrees

Rumina Hassam

THE GOVERNMENT scheme of offering students degrees via an online university, UKeU, has been condemned by a committee of MPs as being a failure and for wasting £50 million of public money.

The e-University folded last year after only 6 months, having recruited a mere 900 students. It was predicted to become a 'flagship provision of UK higher education excellence' by David Blunkett, who initiated the project whilst Education Secretary during 2000.

It was originally forecast that there would be 110,000 students within six years despite courses costing an average of

£44,000 per student - more expensive than studying at either Oxford or Cambridge.

Despite the scheme failing, bonuses were paid to senior members of staff much to the committee's outrage, a move defended by Sir Anthony Cleaver who himself received a £44,914 bonus, saying that the payment was in line with best practice.

The committee feel that the bonuses paid to the senior staff were unacceptable. Ben Sherman, the Chairman of the Committee said, "UkeU was a terrible waste of public money. The senior executives failed to interest any private investors and showed an extraordinary overconfidence in their ability to attract students to the scheme."

Treasurer quits

Charlotte Forbes

EMMANUEL COLLEGE Students Union was rocked last week by the resignation of its Treasurer, Hans Gangeskar, amidst allegations that he failed to communicate with members regarding society funding and carried out his job irresponsibly.

The motion demanding Hans Gangeskar's resignation stated that he 'does not best serve the Emmanuel community'. Due to be voted on at an Open Meeting on Monday night, the motion was surpassed by Gangeskar's pre-emptive submission of his resignation last Sunday.

The controversy has led several college members to speculate that personal disputes may have played

a role in the course of events.

Rupert Myers, a friend of Gangeskar's, claims that he was unfairly attacked, and that 'trivial matters became an unprofessional dispute' in the ECSU Exec.

ECSU President Peter Parkes, despite supporting the motion, strongly disputes any claims of a personal vendetta in the Exec. Parkes stressed the rights of members to use motions demanding Executive resignation, but states that in this case it was not done 'without considerable thought and discussion beforehand'.

The position of Treasurer has now been filled by the former Assistant Treasurer, Stefan Renold, and a by-election for his replacement will be held next Wednesday.

Parker's Piece: still not out

Nicola Simpson

CRICKET WILL continue to be played on Parker's Piece thanks to local support and funding from Cambridge-based IT company Intergence Systems, who have offered to sponsor the ground and pavilion £3000.

Cambridge City Council recently announced that it was

no longer prepared to fund the grass maintenance of wickets due to under use and a budget shortfall of £11,500.

The council says that the ground was used for only 45 days out of 120 last summer, but there has been such overwhelming opposition to their decision that they have determined to find funding for the upkeep of the ground. A campaign was launched by Cambridge

Evening News to save the 170-year old tradition.

The pitch launched the career of legendary batsman Sir Jack Hobbs, who was spotted at the wicket on Parker's Piece in 1901. The first cricketer to be knighted, he finished his Surrey and England career with 61,237 first-class runs and 197 centuries.

The decision to maintain funding has met with approval

from such individuals as former England captain Michael Atherton, a former student at Downing College who used to play for the University.

However, Coun Joye Rosenstiel, who holds the city's portfolio for Community Development and Leisure, warned that funding was only secured for the next year, and the long-term future of the pitch remained under threat.

Construction controversy

Joe Gosden

BLUESTONE, A construction company which has been used extensively by the University of Cambridge, made staff in the Cambridge area redundant last week despite making a £28 million profit. This has provoked outrage from both staff and the construction industry union UCATT.

The company is owned by construction industry giant Morgan Sindall, which recently reported pre-tax profits up 34% on last year and has a turnover of £1.2 billion. Bluestone itself recently boasted that since July it

had won more than £35m worth of new contracts.

One worker, who requested not to be named, said "This just isn't fair. To lay these people off after making all that money is not right. It's immoral. I really feel for them. I know it is the parent company that has made all this profit but it still sticks in our throats." Bluestone proudly claimed that they "Care about people, their rights and ownership by taking responsibility for our actions" in a recent advertising campaign.

In a statement issued late last week, Bluestone said that the redundancies were due to the

acquisition of building firm Benson, managing director Ray McAuley adding that "When two businesses merge there will inevitably be some duplication of roles and the need for fine tuning".

Bryan Rye, UCATT regional secretary said that he would be speaking to the firm as soon as possible about the redundancies. He said "I want to know why these redundancies have been caused, and if it is being done as a result of another company being bought, then I would like to ask them why". Local MP Andrew Lansley also pledged to look into the situation.



Chine Mbubaegbu

Bluestone announce £28m profit

Genetic Diversity

Jamie Brockbank

ALL MODERN humans originate from Africa and there is a steady decline in human genetic diversity the further the geographical distance away from East Africa, according to research published this week by the University of Cambridge Genetics Department.

The article published in the *Current Biology Journal* on 8 March argues that the geographic distance from East Africa along ancient overland colonisation routes is an excellent predictor for the neutral genetic diversity of present human populations, explaining 85 percent of the observed variance at a worldwide scale. The study found a significant correlation indicating that the further the human population from its most genetically diverse point of origin in Ethiopia, the lower its genetic variability.

The research was carried out at the Department of Genetics Balloux Laboratory in the Downing Site by the team of Dr Francois Balloux, Dr Andrea Manica and Dr Franck Prugnolle. Research leader Dr Balloux said, "We are very excited with these results. This means that information on the geographic co-ordinates of present populations alone is sufficient for

predicting the genetic diversity, adding compelling evidence for the Recent African Origin (RAO) model."

East Africa has been regarded the "cradle of mankind" since the pioneering discoveries of the 1950s at Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania, by Cambridge educated Louis Leakey and wife Mary. Recently, the earliest known hominid fossils, dating some 5 million years, were located further up the Great Rift Valley in the Wollo Valley, Ethiopia. But despite the consensus on the African origins of early man, there have remained competing and conflicting hypotheses about exactly how and when the more advanced direct ancestors of modern humans developed in Europe and Asia.

One of the leading theories, the "Recent African Origin" (RAO) postulates that the ancestors of all modern humans, homo sapiens, originated in East Africa, and that around 100,000 years ago these recognisably modern humans left the African continent and subsequently colonised the entire world. This migratory wave of homo sapiens fully replaced established, but less biologically advanced, hominids such as Neanderthals in Europe and Homo erectus in Asia.

The alternative "multiregional" theory disputes the exclusive origination of homo sapiens from Africa. It states that after an initial colonisation from Africa of the habitable parts of Europe and Asia millions of years ago, geographically dispersed pre-homo sapiens man evolved simultaneously over much longer timescales, in these multiple regional centres, into the modern homo sapiens population of today.

The RAO theory appears to be powerfully reinforced by the Balloux Lab's findings because such a statistically significant relationship between location and genetic diversity is only compatible with the exclusive origination of homo sapiens in Africa, who subsequently spread throughout the world. The researchers also showed that the loss of genetic diversity along colonisation routes is continuous with no obvious genetic discontinuity, thus suggesting that humans cannot be accurately classified in discrete ethnic groups or races on a genetic basis. Dr Balloux sees important medical implications resulting from the predictions: he believes scientists will be able to find out which genes are in natural selection and which ones "protect" us against specific diseases.

New Hall celebrates



Courtesy of New Hall Development Office

Dr Madeleine Albright addresses the audience at the New Hall fundraising evening sponsored by BP

Lucy Phillips

NEW HALL formally marked its fiftieth anniversary on Monday night by launching a major fundraising campaign at London's Science Museum.

The evening, a drinks reception followed by dinner, was attended by over 180 high profile guests, as well as 20 current students and 20 college Fellows. Dr Madeleine Albright, who was the first female US Secretary of State and ambassador to the United Nations, and is a director of the Georgetown University Women in Foreign Service Program, was the keynote speaker at the event.

Dr Albright said, "I am delighted to be able to support New Hall as it embarks on this new and exciting phase of development. I believe that to have economic stability and health and political development, women

have to be fully employed and part of the system – politically and economically empowered. Education is the key to making that happen."

New Hall's President, Mrs Anne Lonsdale CBE and Lord Browne of Madingley, CEO of BP, also addressed the audience.

Mrs Lonsdale said: "As a modern and international college in an ancient university, we have built up an enviable record of helping very able women achieve their full personal and intellectual potential and go on to play an important and valuable role in tomorrow's world." Senior alumnae present included Investment Banker Haruko Fukuda, Judge Ann Campbell, Director of the Coultauld Institute of Art Dr Deborah Swallow and Sky weather presenter Lisa Burke.

Juliet Redhouse, a third year NatSci at New Hall, attended the

evening. She said, "It was a really proud moment for New Hall. There was such a great mix of people." Since New Hall was founded in 1954, the college has grown from 16 to 450 students. Some of its buildings, which date from 1965, such as the white dome covering the Dining hall and the barrel vaulted 'Rosemary Murray' library, are listed Grade II by English Heritage and have recently undergone a multi-million pound makeover.

The evening has so far raised around £33,000 but an alumna has pledged to match this amount, taking the total to £66,000, with gifts still coming in. The college aims to raise £8 million by June 2007. The money will be put towards teaching and research, new graduate housing and facilities, student financial support and maintenance of the college's art collection.

CU Amnesty protest



Amnesty International in a cage protest outside King's College; a protest is organised for this weekend.

Anna McIlreavy

CU AMNESTY International are campaigning this weekend for the freedom of the Burmese prisoner of conscience, Thet Win Aung, by staging one of their well-known 'cage' weekends on the front lawns of King's College.

The Amnesty 'cage' weekend has been held annually in Cambridge for forty years. A wooden cage will be set up on King's College lawn at 5pm today, and volunteers will take shifts to sit in it so that it is manned at every point during the 48 hour demonstration. Other members of the Amnesty International Group will be present to collect donations and encourage people

to sign their large cloth petition.

The case of Thet Win Aung illustrates the human rights crisis in Burma where a military regime called the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) are in power. This party took power in 1962 after a military coup saw the democratically elected government overthrown. All political opposition and freedom of expression are outlawed, as are student unions. Since 1988, when he was a high-school student, Thet Win Aung has taken part in organizing student protests against the government in Myanmar, and was imprisoned in September 1991 for nine months because of his activities as part of a student union.

During this period of detention he was severely tortured. But Thet Win Aung was not deterred from the cause and following his release he became a leading member of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions, the unauthorized umbrella organization for student unions in Myanmar. Forced to go into hiding after an attempted arrest in 1994, Thet Win Aung nevertheless continued taking part in student protests, and, in 1998, helped to organize student protests against the poor quality of education and denial of human rights. In January 1999 he was sentenced to 52 years' imprisonment, which was increased to 59 years after further interrogation.

Abortion row

Chine Mbubaegbu

CUSU HAVE hit out at criticisms that they have not met the demands of the legal letter sent to them by the solicitor of the University's Pro-Life society.

The Pro-Life Society issued a statement saying that CUSU had failed to meet the legal demands made of them after they were angered by what they interpreted as CUSU's promotion of abortion campaigning groups.

A letter had been sent to the student's union in early January in which David Foster, the Pro-Life Society's solicitor setting out a number of questions that needed to be answered in order to avoid further legal action. It stated: "If they fail to answer all of the enclosed questions by Tuesday February 9, then legal proceedings will be issued without further notice."

Patrick Leahy of the Pro-Life Society said: "Despite having almost two months, CUSU have failed to come up with an explanation of who made the decision to affiliate

to Abortion Rights and the Family Planning Association."

The Churchill student continued: "Their refusal to communicate with our solicitor means that this will almost certainly end up in court as we have exhausted all other options. We will be making a decision regarding this as soon as possible."

CUSU President Wes Streeting refuted these claims, however, saying that the accusations put forward by the Pro-Life Society were a misrepresentation of the facts. He said: "It has taken more time than we anticipated, however, our solicitors wrote to Antonia Dale's [Pro-Life Society President] solicitor explaining the situation."

Streeting continued, saying: "They need to be a bit more patient. We wouldn't have been able to cover the information in as much detail as they wanted in the time that was suggested."

He said that draft letters had been drawn up and that CUSU would be answering the questions put to them in due course.

Gappers survey

A RECENTLY published study has exposed the common experience students have on their gap year travels. The three-year study undertaken by Lucy Huxley, a PhD student at Manchester Metropolitan University, has shown that the majority of gap year travellers do not interact with the indigenous population of the country they are in and stay mainly with fellow Western travellers.

Despite initially asserting that they had communicated with the local population, further questioning revealed that this amounted to little more than hand gestures. Travellers stuck mainly to popular tourist locations, frequented by other English speaking backpackers and rarely ventured outside of this social framework.

Whilst most of the students interviewed felt that their travelling experience had been a positive one that had increased their confidence and maturity many said that if they were to go again they would do things differently, and be more adventurous.

Gwyneth Harrison



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2.00 p.m.	Osiris v. Blondie
2.30 p.m.	Lightweight Women's Boat Race
3.00 p.m.	Women's Boat Race
3.30 p.m.	Lightweight Men's Boat Race
4.30 p.m.	Prize-giving

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Do students waste job opportunities?

Rachel Willcock and Sam Richardson on the challenges of finding a job in the Real World

The end of Lent term is a frightening time. Suddenly exams are looming before we have even recovered from the Christmas hangover. However, final year students are faced with the even more terrifying prospect that the ball they have just bought a ticket for marks the end of their Cambridge life. Despite the proximity of the inevitable step out into the real world, many Cambridge students are still unsure of what field they want to go into or how to go about doing so.

Gordon Chesterman, the Director of the Cambridge Careers points to a trend amongst students in delaying making any career decisions before they have finished their finals. Students' first priority, he says 'is securing the all important 2.1 that is so vital in today's job market.' In response to this, the Careers service is holding a Summer Event this year for the first time on the 29th June. This will involve a host of companies, ready with immediate employment opportunities for the next year coming to recruit graduates the week, before graduation.

Though Chesterton reassures students that the first priority in Cambridge is to gain a degree rather than a job, as 'you are here at Cambridge for only three years whereas you will have the Careers Service for life,' there is no denying that for graduates to secure jobs in the most competitive fields, this involves them putting in the groundwork, months and even years before traipsing up to the Senate House in the summer.

But despite the trend towards

later applications, a Varsity survey has found that 46% of final year students already have jobs or courses secured for next year, in everything from accountancy to academia and public service to publishing. Interestingly, the destinations chosen by third year students differed considerably from the career intentions of the freshers who answered the survey. Final year students were twice as likely to want to go into banking, management consultancy or public service, and half as likely to want to go into the media or charity sector.

46% of finalists have jobs or courses secure for next year

Of nearly 100 students who responded to the survey, 48% felt they had been under pressure to pursue certain careers. Of these, the majority cited pressure from other students, although 14% implicated the Careers Service, and 19% put it down to the student-run organisation Cambridge Futures.

Other students have cited the difficulty in gaining relevant work experience for careers in the charity or media sectors. For while banking and consultancy internships usually occur during the summer, work experience in more competitive careers is notoriously difficult to get. Cambridge students are further hampered by the fact that the university strongly discourages students from taking on part time work. A university spokesman told *Varsity*, "we dis-

courage it because we believe that students should concentrate on what is after all a very intensive academic term."

But a fifth of students surveyed felt that the university's inhibition on part time employment made it 'difficult to get work experience that could lead to jobs'. 9% of students had done work experience or internships during term time. One respondent said that, "Without part-time work in the field that I am interested in I would never have been able to get into the job in broadcasting that I have secured for after graduation."

Summer experience is fine for traditional careers like banking, but less traditional roles require year-round flexibility. My degree did not suffer." A second student argued that, "I work for a publishing company in Cambridge during term time, and I think that experience was crucial to my securing a job in that field for next year. It's bizarre that the university lets you spend time on a play or sports team, but not in part time work, unless that part time work is in the college bar, library or development office, which just goes to show their double standards."

The survey showed that 80% of final year students who work during term time have secured jobs for next year, compared to 40% of students who stick to their degrees. But Mr Chesterman said that, "the Cambridge careers service does not promote work in term time. We try to tease out of employers a range of internships and shadowing opportunities that will allow students to fit work experi-



Window shopping for jobs. But increasing numbers of students are delaying starting a career

ence into the vacation." Nearly two thirds of students have done work experience in the vacation.

Chesterman also notes that though the private sector is still a popular choice with Cambridge graduates, young people are increasingly considering the work/life balance issue. Along with a national trend in top professionals downsizing to lower paid jobs, students are growing more sceptical about the extent of time sacrifice they are willing to make for a top salary. National economic conditions have meant decreases in the number of management consultancy and I.T. jobs available. Public sector work still remains popular, with Chesterton claiming there to be a greater range of jobs becoming available in this

area. Nevertheless, traditional professions remain popular with a rise in graduates entering teacher training from 56 in 2003 to 69 in 2004, 100 graduates entering the health care sector and 122 students taking on further legal training.

Interestingly, though only 164 graduates decided to take time out, this is part of a consistent decrease from 7.8% in 2001 to 5.8% in 2002 and then 5.2% in 2003. Cambridge Careers service suggest that this is symptomatic of increased student debt which puts pressure on graduates to start being financially independent as soon as possible. This financial strain may be a reason for the findings in our survey that show that many final year students do in fact have work sorted out. It

also may explain the 141 Cambridge graduates working in non-graduate level jobs such as van driving, waitressing or working as receptionists or bar staff: a way of playing for time whilst they are still unsure about what career to go for.

In all, it seems that although 73% of students surveyed felt that a Cambridge degree helped find a career, this is only the first step towards getting work. Despite the difficulties that may face students in terms of the intense pressures of a Cambridge degree and increased debt, the general message from the Careers Service is that in today's competitive market, if you want to secure that dream job, the sooner you start looking the better.

Case study - consultancy



Anush Newman - NatSci

What? I'll be working for "BT One IT", BT's new IT company. I'm on the fast-track scheme so I spend two years moving around while being trained.

How? A recruitment company called me, as I was JCR President. I had a phone interview, face to face interview, and assessment day.

Why? It's a pretty good job - good hours, good pay - which actually sounds like something I'll end up liking.

Case study - publishing



Sam Richardson - SPS

What? I'm on the graduate scheme at Harper Collins. I spend two years moving around gaining experience, which should lead to a good long-term job there.

How? I applied online and submitted my CV. There were two written rounds, then two assessment days.

Why? They seem like a great company - the scheme and interviews are really well organised - and I think I'll enjoy it and hopefully make a good contribution.

Case study - teaching



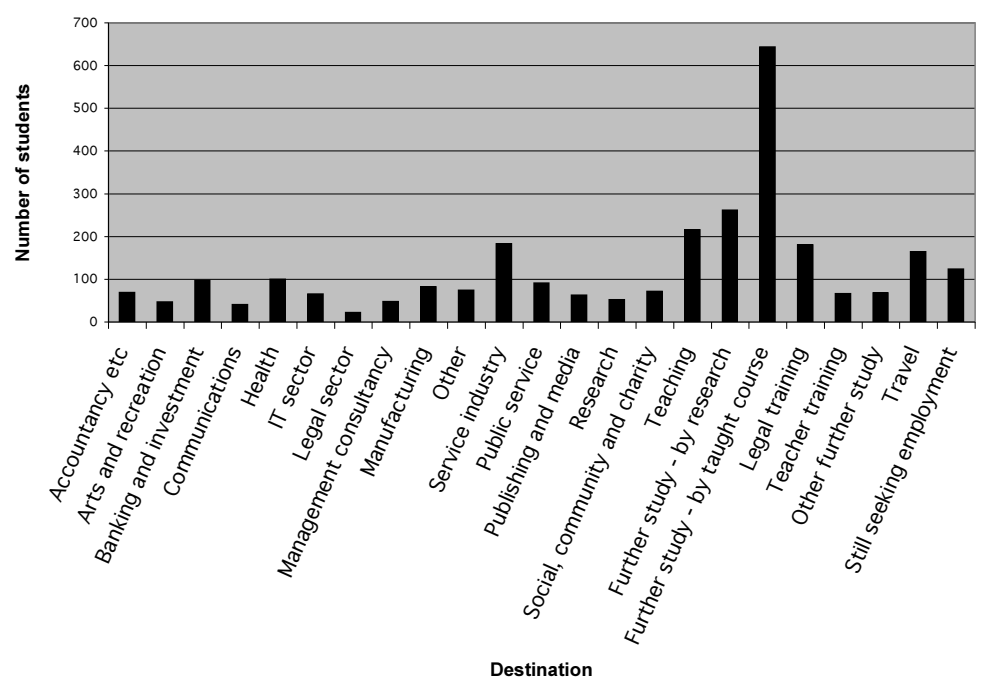
Mark Simpson - Classics

What? I'm going to teach classics at Cheltenham College (not Cheltenham Ladies College!)

Why? I searched on the TES website for Classics Teaching jobs, applied, was interviewed, and accepted, all within a week.

Why? Classics is still useful in the 21st century. I hope to become a vicar, and teaching requires many similar skills. I'll go into the school wanting to communicate love of classics and of Jesus.

Destinations of Cambridge Undergraduates



Source: Cambridge University Careers Service

Reacting to a global warning

Climate change is a hot topic, but are we looking for the right solutions?



Henry Bowen
DEPUTY EDITOR

This weekend, Cambridge Greenpeace is planning a protest which will publicise the failings of the American government in addressing the growing concerns about global climate change. On Monday, Lord May, President of the Royal Society and former chief scientific adviser to the Prime Minister, gave a speech accusing the United States of undermining global efforts in tackling climate change. Climate change is a hot topic, but is the demonisation of the American government the most important part of the fight to control it?

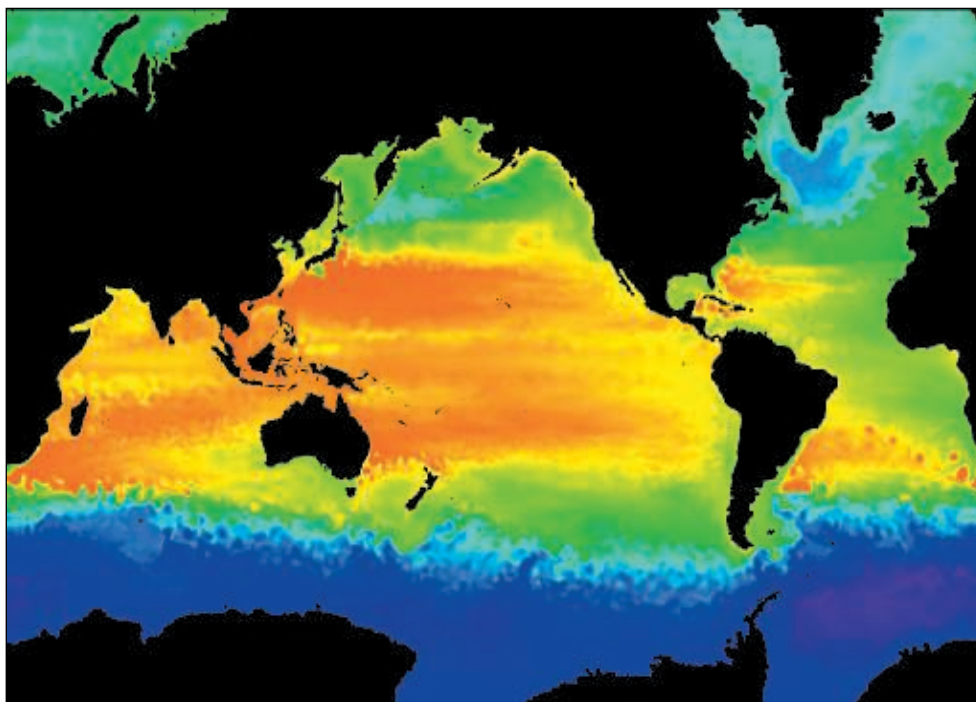
The University of Cambridge has long been at the forefront of global climate research. It was scientists in the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) who first discovered the hole in the ozone layer in the 1970s. It is the BAS and the Scott Polar Research Institute which have been compiling some of the most convincing evidence that the fluctuations in global weather patterns are becoming increasingly severe. Very few still dispute the existence of global warming. Charles Anger, Vice-President for Engineering Design for Sustainable Development, has said that "the scientific debate

about whether climate change is a problem is over."

Understanding of the causes of global warming is becoming more detailed, even if knowledge of its full implications is still speculative. One of the principal culprits is widely accepted to be elevated levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which absorbs reflected radiation instead of allowing it to escape into outer space. Most of the efforts in the environmental battle have been focused on regulating the emissions of greenhouse gases. But this is proving a difficult and costly task, particularly with America refusing to agree to the limits specified by Kyoto protocol. Deeper changes are needed that will fundamentally alter the way we consume energy before climate change is brought under control. Research in the University is looking into what changes these might be.

When the Architecture department was saved earlier this term, it was ordered to restructure and focus on sustainable design. Approximately 60% of our energy is consumed in buildings, and progress in this area will certainly be of significance. Buildings such as the 'Gherkin' in London are pioneering ways of minimising energy consumption through careful use of solar radiation and natural (ie unforced) convection.

The Department for Engineering has created a Centre for Sustainable



Global oceanic temperatures hold the key to climatic events such as El Niño

Development whose research includes waste water management and urban design. Other research within the department is investigating renewable energy sources and energy efficiency. The Cambridge Programme for Industry is a non-profit organisation within the university whose aim is to "build leadership capacity of business, governments and civil society to respond to the challenges of sustainable development." The power of this approach is not to be underestimated: persuading

companies that sustainable development is actually worth their while is more powerful than a swathe of regulatory legislation and international accords.

The worldwide condemnation of America's failure to ratify the Kyoto agreement is not misplaced. However, it is not through sheer bloody-mindedness that George Bush is behaving in this way. In a market economy where the dollar is king, the concerns of future implications will unfortunately always take lower priority over

present profits. Complaining about this short-term attitude is not going to make a difference. Research by scientists and engineers into new forms of energy and efficiency is the only means by which more environmentally sound practices can be made attractive. Cambridge is one of the leading institutions in the world where this type of research is being conducted, and attention should be turned to these potential carrots as well as just the political sticks which are currently being brandished.

The present and the particular - and beyond



Robin Sivapalan

Our union is like a mixed ability classroom; different colleges with different needs and things to offer and the library monitors and head girls running the show. But also on paper some 19,500 diverse people trying to make things better, find a bit of happiness, shag and glance at perfection.

But I know of walls of silence and how they affect us, personally and collectively, when they seem immovable. I know what it's like to not have a voice no matter how much you might try to speak. And I also have an inkling of why people are often unable to listen to each other. I'm aware of some of the conventions and bureaucracies and disengagements that keep us apart – call it apathy, disillusion, cynicism, sadness, individualisation, isolation, fear, not having ever thought or believed what a union could feel like; when the dialogue restarts I think we'll find more chorus than cacophony because few things are very complex or insurmountable to understand and resolve.

This week has been an eye opener. Cut to the core, and

speak to the people who have been pitched against you as arch nemeses, and there's not much, worth mentioning, to distinguish us. Re-engaging with CUSU to stand as a union representative after having spent many months off doing theatre bits, you see things afresh. I walk around with my eyes open and with my ears alert for all the talking and holding forth I do.

And being a theory person, a little more than an activist, I'd put it like this: we are in turns hopeful and pessimistic; sometimes we just want to concentrate on what we want and need for ourselves, and at other times we make smaller and larger gestures of connection and good-will and solidarity with friends. And then, all of us do our bit for the stranger, for that person we don't know and might never meet or ever understand the particulars of their situation. The basis of our union is surely about understanding all of this in us and, crucially acting upon it collectively.

I didn't necessarily think that our union would put the world to rights and certainly had little faith that I need be a protagonist in that. I still don't retract that I think we could and I might have helped that. I don't think 500 or so votes is great. 500 people at all that might tick a box to say that they're willing to give it a try, is I

think, a hopeful situation. It was more than that though. This election has been touching and more positive than I could have hoped alongside the result.

And then I've enjoyed getting to know Laura and Tom better. Especially Tom and his awesome campaign team, who against every prejudice I'd padded myself in to prep myself to stand against them, were on the same page and had a fucking point to make. And Laura and I who have worked with each other a fair bit, having a chance to hear each other out and realise our respective talents and find ourselves on the same side of the table.

If we all acknowledge that these voices and agendas are legitimate and should be heard, then most of the time it is possible to lend at least nominal support in solidarity of genuine issues of any individual or portion of the student body. And also if we believe in both democracy and our union, and exercise a commitment to both, then no issue; local, international, personal political can be out of bounds in our union. In fact I see no distinction between the two. We look to the other as much of ourselves to learn.

Now this election didn't really happen from the point of view of face to face engagement with students in an organised and

issue led way. Credit to Laura and Tom for getting out there with their names. I thought the ground I needed to cover was on issues, after having seen the TCS and *Varsity* coverage, so wrote long expositions for the web. But also there have been other issues, ones of racism, misogyny and personal hurdles with friends and eating and confidence to surmount all this week. Because we're all people.

This is where the Union needs to take a long and honest look at how it runs its elections. There was pretty much consensus that these elections were a farce with organisation and elections rules and ruling, the upshot of which meant that few students had more to go on than names and an A5 manifesto and some fairly inane profiles.

Now everyone involved in the elections process knows that in sum, it was one of the most amazing experiences and we all learnt exponentially, and mainly from each other. There is genuinely every reason to pledge our support to a union of all of us in Cambridge. I think if the elections had worked and you'd all have got to meet us and heard us out, it would be commonly held that CUSU is actually in a good way.

I have every confidence in Laura in much the way I would

in any student here who chooses to come forth. We all have different principles and talents and time to give to a union, but I think Laura's come to a sound conclusion. CUSU has to change. I'd like to see this next executive team and council, and this next community of students come together in a union that doesn't see services and campaigns as two prongs that placate different colleges differently, but as something that every student is entitled to and should partake in across the university.

If we can look both at the present and particular and then beyond it with integrity, creativity, commitment and good faith, then really anything we want of a union can happen. The positives of the comprehensive are fundamental. They hide away nothing and no person and no issue. There is no bubble. And when the mixed ability classroom works in the comprehensive school, playing to everyone's strengths, it is a microcosm of how I'd see society.

So I'm happy to see Laura go on to do an amazing and committed year of work for our union. More people should. And I'll go back to London to teach. It's been a wicked run. I'll do my bit in the coming terms as we all should. Good luck Cambridge University Students' Union.

Seeing Red

Katy Long

Another week, another King's story: King's lurches from crisis to catastrophe, dragging *Varsity* headlines with it. Of course, King's has a reputation to uphold, famous for its "revolutionary" students. But look again: are their demands really so radical? Every student should be angry that their genuine concerns over the new Senior Tutors, in full knowledge that their appointment passed only by a single vote. Yet still more galling was the casual dismissal of students' grave doubts over Dr. Moggridge's suitability as merely 'the anonymous distribution of rumour, gossip, and personal attack.' The fact remains: neither graduate nor undergraduate body have confidence in the appointment, and their decision to state it publicly was not taken lightly.

We have come to expect evasion and omission. On Thursday the Provost claimed that the fellowship was fully behind the new Senior Tutors, in full knowledge that their appointment passed only by a single vote. Yet still more galling was the casual dismissal of students' grave doubts over Dr. Moggridge's suitability as merely 'the anonymous distribution of rumour, gossip, and personal attack.' The fact remains: neither graduate nor undergraduate body have confidence in the appointment, and their decision to state it publicly was not taken lightly.

The blame for this latest crisis can not be levelled at individuals alone: it has been all too easy in the past few years to direct anger, frustration and disbelief at the Provost, the Lay Dean, the Bursar or the Senior Tutor depending on the issue of the day. But the failure is systemic. With their approval of Moggridge's appointment, every member of the fellowship has assumed responsibility for a decision made despite wide misgivings even among themselves. Regret after the event is a hollow apology.

The silent majority in the fellowship can not absolve themselves of responsibility. Many are still radical in their beliefs, and share their ideals with their students: but through tacit acquiescence with bad decisions, they are slowly undoing the work of their own unfinished revolution. Apathy, indifference and arrogance are no defence against the fact that it is they who have been entrusted with the safekeeping of King's. Yet at present the fellowship appears to lack the courage or the conviction to make the difficult decisions that could provide a rescue from decline.

The malaise in King's runs deeper than a single College appointment, and it is for this reason that current events are relevant to a wider audience. The past forty years have provided King's with a proud legacy of radicalism, admitting state school students and women when to do so was to court controversy. But today, conformist and complacent, King's fellowship is in danger of becoming a conservative body.

King's is suffering from a chronic deficit of leadership: Thus, it may well be that the only group who can prevent further mismanagement – apart from the fellows themselves – are alumni using the power of their pounds to demand reform. But until then, expect King's public lurch from crisis to catastrophe to continue.

The two monkeys on my back

Adam McNestrie wonders if he could live without obsessions to keep him going

An alarming thought occurred to me a few moments ago in my kitchen (as they are wont to do). It crossed my mind that for my life to function properly I needed two obsessions to run concurrently, much in the same way that a remote control needs two AA batteries or a runner two legs. I realised that, in a day which was apt to stand as a microcosm of my existence, I had spent the vast majority of my time and efforts reading for my degree and working on behalf of my nascent politics society.

As soon as I was up and fed I went to the library to begin work; excluding breaks for meals I left only at ten o'clock. Then disdaining potential social contact in the bar or at the ent that was happening, I rushed to the computer room to write letters and emails for the politics society. I realised that as my life stands it is devoted overwhelmingly to these two objects: succeeding in my degree and making a success of my politics society. Don't be fooled by the double-use of the word success though, I don't consider this to represent some sort of meta-obsession.

Perceiving the crutch which these two obsessions represented for my life I started to review my biography. Before the politics society I did indeed have two obsessions: my school, and then university, work and my girlfriend, with whom I had an intensive, almost claustrophobic, relationship. A few weeks after my girlfriend and I broke up I first raised the idea of forming a politics society with some of

my friends. But this worrying pattern stretches back even further. Before my work became an obsession I was obsessed with physical fitness to the point where I went to the gym five times a week for up to two hours at a time. Disconcertingly this obsession came to a rather abrupt halt in February 2002: when I started revising for my AS-Levels. For almost the whole of my quasi-adult life I've been obsessed by a combination of these four things, although only ever two at once. They have represented the things on which I spend most of my time and energy; the things about which I think and talk; and the things by which I measure my achievement.

One obsession was my girlfriend, with whom I had an intensive, almost claustrophobic, relationship

I can only conclude from this that I am possessed of obsessional energies or impulses for which I need an outlet. The reason for having two obsessions seems to be that it allows me to use up more of my energy and time than if I had just one because if I get bored of one I can use the other. I suppose that I have kept it to two because I didn't want to lose the focus, and the all-but unremitting concentration that constitutes an obsession. These obsessions seem to serve several psychological purposes. Firstly, the focus which they provide gives me a sense of obvious purpose and direction,



If you're going to be obsessed with anything, be obsessed with these two

something which saves me from having to make difficult decisions about priorities. Secondly, concentrating my efforts in just two areas bolsters my self-esteem because it means that my achievements in these areas are relatively high. Thirdly, it allows me to dissipate all of my energies. Fourthly, it allows me to see how close to perfection I am able to come in any one area by focusing my efforts to such a great extent. Fifthly, it allows me to construct a very simple life narrative in which I am defined by my commitment to, my discipline in, and (hopefully) my excellence in, a very small number of endeavours.

By living through these almost randomly selected obsessions I can live a life shorn of

much of the ordinary complexity. I lack guidance, I lack the ability to make decisions, I lack the resolution to prioritise and I lack the ability to time-manage.

I don't know if I could make it on the outside

By choosing just two obsessions and concentrating on them I am trying to negate or circumvent these difficulties. In many ways it is a cowardly and myopic way to structure and live one's life. It does remove these problems, but it is a pessimist's life designed to troubleshoot and it lacks the wondrous diversity and the life-enriching uncertainty of lives free from the de facto dogma of obsession.

My dilemma reminds me of *The Shawshank Redemption* – not in the clichéd sense that I am imprisoned by my personality – but rather in the sense that I am institutionalised. After Brooks Hadlin commits suicide Red et al discuss what happened to him and Red says that decades in prison had made him incapable of living on the outside: they had institutionalised him. Brooks was aware of the injuries that living in prison did him, as I am aware with my obsessions, but he was no longer capable of living without the support to his life that prison had become. Like Brooks I don't know if I could make it on the outside. Without my obsessions I might be afraid all the time.

Broadside

Archie Bland

RAG week, eh? It's mad! You'll never guess what my mate Stu did the other day, right, he put coleslaw in his sock and wore it on his knob! No but seriously though it's all in a good cause. No yeah probably Africa.

Piss off. And piss off, Stu, you utter twat. No, wait. Come back, Stu. This is coming out wrong, and I anticipate a collective howl at my mean-spirited cynicism if I don't qualify my point a little, and I do so want you to listen, Stu. So let me explain: I am firmly in favour of charity. Of course I am. Being against charity would be like being against puppy dogs, or love. Obviously, give all you can; and kudos to those who give so much time to organizing it. Any event which regularly raises six figures for Those Less Fortunate is obviously an unqualified Good.

The point is not that RAG is a force for evil. The point is not even, really, anything to do with Stu. The point is, there's something deeply fucked up about the fact that this kind of attention seeking should be necessary at all. And I don't think I should feel like a pariah for not really finding it that funny, and I resent the implication that I should suspend my critical judgement just because your semolina boots or your baked bean bath or your spaghetti suit (always with the food, inexplicably) are meaningful as well as deeply lame.

But listen, Stu. Keep doing what you're doing. You're all right by me, and the world is a better place because it's got you in it. Just don't expect me to feel good about it: in the end, there's nothing very funny at all about the fact that our collective generosity varies in direct proportion to how many crocodile clips you've got attached to your nipples.

Abortion should be a debate, not a war



Jon Swaine

Few issues arouse such dispute as abortion and a woman's right to choose. While it seems impossible that fundamental disagreements over the colliding spheres of doctrine, legality and thorny, real-life pragmatism might soon approach consensus, Britain has seemed fortunate to enjoy a sufficient degree of calm surrounding the matter to enable reasonable, respectful debate. It is well known that the United States has not been so lucky; there abortion clinics have been firebombed and since 1991, three doctors and four members of clinics' staff murdered.

Depressingly, a foul bunch of fundamentalists seems determined to start a similar spiral of events here. Having personally threatened senior BBC executives with death should they dare

screen *Jerry Springer: The Opera*, and preventing Maggie's Cancer Centres from accepting a large, 'tainted' donation from the production for fear of threats made against its clinics, Christian Voice recently made clear its plans to target pregnant women and staff at abortion clinics around the country, intensifying its campaign against the 'tidal wave of filth' currently afflicting the UK.

In the US clinics have been firebombed

Religious tension seems in a depressing state of limbo across the world at large and within our cosy, false microcosm of Cambridge. While the tabloid-backed Right continues to capitalise on the proliferation of thinly-veiled Islamophobia born of the War on Terror, closer to home the (seemingly annual) overly-histrionic clashes over the right of a certain hooded group familiar to us all to the unsolicited distribution of religious material to the University population mirrors an ugly trend on the

Left; fervent defence of universal equality and tolerance in principle combined with a quick exuberance in the mocking of specifically Christians – apparently more permissible than, for example, equally distasteful jibes aimed at Muslims. Defending the little guy is laudable; throwing the same rocks because the bigger guy is predominantly white and numerous is hypocrisy.

The situation has merely been intensified by the government's draconian proposals essentially reclassifying any sensible debate of religious values 'incitement to religious hatred', playing into the hands of reactionaries' retorting cries of 'political correctness gone mad'. But Christian Voice and their leader Stephen Green simply provide fodder for this lazy Christian-bashing. To their credit, mainstream Christian groups have utterly denounced the behaviour of the group, distancing themselves from it.

Abortions in Britain have reached record levels. In 2003, the total number was 181,600, compared with 175,900 in 2002. The number of girls aged 14 and

under having abortions is more than 1,000 a year. This is a miserable state of affairs, and efforts should be increased to reduce these figures. But that anyone might believe it could or should be solved by brutish sensationalism and the violent targeting of emotionally and physically vulnerable women is appalling.

It could well be said that pro-choice campaigners have gone so far as to undermine their case. Too often, their glib, stubborn insistence of the absolute immutability of mother's rights has belittled the difficult moral dimensions of this act of ending a life. Their silence after last year's publishing of incredibly detailed scans of a twelve-week old foetus was conspicuous and telling. Indeed, being lumped into such a morally-careless camp may have dented John Kerry's chances of winning last year's Presidential race. Much has been made of the Democrats' need for a system of clearly ethical progressiveness if they are to mount a substantial challenge in 2008.

It therefore came as a pleasant surprise last month to see Hillary Clinton poignantly express her belief both that the right to and availability of legal abortion is utterly imperative and that abortion is always a moral tragedy; that this is a dilemma never easily solved. This combination echoes her husband's notion that abortion must be 'safe, legal and rare'. Both offer simple but wise

Abortion affects fathers too

proposals. Surely we should be carefully pro-life to the extent of recognising the need for a morally pragmatic, free society, where the vital right and ability of a woman to direct what happens to her body should be carefully weighed against the right to life of an unborn child. Impeccable logic is simply too blunt an instrument here.

A dynamic, united front determined to attack the root seems sorely lacking. More sophisticated education on and more effective addressing of the causes of unplanned pregnancy, the

aggressive provision of contraception, the encouragement of a better adoption culture and improvements to the systems of support for mothers could be hugely effective. The elections for our own student representatives have sparked impassioned debate on the role of men in women's issues in Cambridge. Abortion affects fathers – men must be as mentally and practically equipped to prevent the need for abortion; greater cooperation and consultation with them from within a women's union felt by some often to demonise them is surely a sensible place to start.

Will the warring ideologues agree to compromise on a tragic but necessary middle ground? It hardly seems likely. Both extremes appear determined to continue fighting their impractically dogmatic corners, while the abortion figures keep rising, and those of us saddened by attempts at blanket pontificating on a subject so intricately and personally nuanced have our desperation for a decrease in the need for abortions prolonged.

Lucy Phillips



"Many of the results were tight; very few were won by clear-cut margins; and even fewer were foregone conclusions"

This modern love breaks me

Aren't you fed up of sweet nothings? But how to say something real?

So you meet a girl. Your relationship is doomed from the start, because it's 1. fictional and 2. intended to demonstrate how the hell of modern living stops us communicating with other human beings. You're saying you want a real girl? Cambridge is a loveless town. Don't push your luck. You're saying you want a boy, not a girl? University is a time for trying new things, my dear. But trying to write an entire article about romance without specifying genders is not one of them.

Anyway, her name's Amygdala (her parents were eccentric neurosurgeons) but you can call her Amy. Amydala's an appropriate name because that's the part of the brain that releases adrenaline and other hormones into the bloodstream, and when you first see her you tremble with lust and fear. Somehow you get talking, but you can't hear anything she says because you're in a club and the music's too loud, so you just nod and smile and sometimes throw in something like 'Did you know, there are some species of deep-sea fish that deliberately release their intestines into the water to distract predators?' because you know she can't hear you either. Anyway, even if you could hear each other, it probably wouldn't be interesting. A recent survey said that two thirds of British adults wish for more meaningful conversations and less small talk.

So you exchange numbers, and then, over the next few days, text messages. Neither of you read anything the other person writes, you just look at the number of 'x's at the end. Perhaps you also carefully change every 'your' to 'yr' and every 'could' to 'cd' to give the impression that you're in a hurry to get to your next exciting social engagement and

"Love was never about abstract promises and flaming hearts and clear sight"



Ned
Beauman

you haven't already spent half an hour over the message. You almost bump into her in Sainsbury's near the poultry but you fling yourself into a nearby aisle just in time because your hair is bad that day.

Soon you add her as an MSN contact. You sometimes wonder if, with the help of those little smiling or frowning faces, you can actually express your emotions better with a chat program than you ever could in real life. But then you're talking and she uses a symbol that just shows up on your end as random letters. She says you have to upgrade your MSN. You do so, and suddenly you have a hundred more yellow cartoon faces to choose from. What the fuck are you meant to do with those? Do you even have that many emotions? Is everyone else's soul rocked by such extraordinarily complex passions that you're just a cipher in comparison? Is there something wrong with you? When would you ever use that little sheep? What are you, a robot? That day you find yourself saying thank you to a cash machine after it gives you your money.

Things just get worse when you try to make her a mix CD. Maybe you use mix CDs to show affection because you're unable to go down the more conventional routes like, say, giving a direct compliment out loud. You listen to a lot of songs about love,

but the lyrics are all things like 'I will love you forever' and 'I would die for you' and 'I'll never let you leave me', and you think maybe you've been in love but it wasn't much like that, it wasn't about abstract promises and flaming hearts and clear sight, it was odd and bewildering and just like real

Soon you find yourself saying thank you to the cash machine after you get your money

life but more so. Did you get it all wrong? Then you come across a song like 'This Modern Love' by Bloc Party, and the heart-breaking way the singer says 'Do you want to come over and kill some time?' reminds you that the real communication between people in love isn't in pre-packaged poetry, it's in that kind of banal little phrase which means so much more than it says. But songs like that are out-numbered, on the radio if not in your record collection, and you're not so sure about things any more.

You call her to see if she wants to go the cinema. You've been spending so long on MSN that, once, when she says something funny, you accidentally say 'LOL' out loud instead of actually laughing, but she doesn't notice, and apart from that it goes well. The

ads come on. There's one for McDonald's, where a man brings his girlfriend a McDonald's bagel as breakfast in bed. (They're both unattractive, because this is What Not To Do.) The 'joke' at the end of the ad is the woman blurting out 'I love you' and then both of them looking shocked. The audience is in stitches. What an idiot! There's no way he'll fancy her after that! Everyone knows you should never, ever display any emotional vulnerability to someone you're sleeping with! Now for the next ad, this time for Lynx. A younger man and woman (they're both good-looking, because this is What To Do) walk through the streets gathering up their clothes after a night of passion. They get to a supermarket, find the last of their garments, and part company without a word. Is the message that men who wear Lynx have meaningless sex, or more that men who wear Lynx are too clever to communicate in any way with their sexual partners and therefore don't risk forming any kind of dangerous emotional attachment?

No, boys don't know how to talk to girls, and no, girls don't know how to talk to boys, and no, they never have and they never will. But, now, more than ever, it's a miracle if even a single authentic word passes your lips without being stifled by bad examples and bad modes of communication. I'm not saying I know what to do about it. I can barely make myself understood to a waiter, let alone a potential *amour*. But I'm afraid this article is over, and so is your virtual fling with Amygdala. I hope you had fun. There are plenty more fish in the sea. Some of which, did you know, deliberately release their intestines into the water to distract predators?

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VARSLTY

An agenda for change

Election results are rarely plain and never simple. In the Graduate Union on Wednesday night, where Laura Walsh was elected CUSU President, there was genuine hope of victory amongst several candidates who went on not to win the position for which they had campaigned. Many of the results were very tight; very few were won by clear-cut margins; and even fewer were foregone conclusions.

And all this despite turnout continuing to be low. Walsh's eventual margin of victory over Tom Dye, by 1780 votes to 1517, shows that her mandate to preside over the student's union, though marginally increased compared with last year, remains a small percentage of the student body. Voting elsewhere in the elections suggests similarly low levels of turnout. This is not Walsh's fault, of course. But the measure of her success as president of CUSU may lie in the number of votes cast in the battle over her successor. The students of this town remain thoroughly disengaged from their student union, and Walsh's first task must be to address the growing feeling that CUSU is not a very necessary entity. She is likely to be an effective and disciplined president, who delivers reform and progress on those issues her manifesto gave weight to. She will need to be a more public figure than her two immediate predecessors, both of whom have worthily sacrificed celebrity in the name of dedication to their cause(s), but at the cost of student interest in the work of CUSU.

Dye's campaign accelerated throughout an intensive week of hustings. His team performed with rare energy and unstinting commitment, and there is a lesson not only for Walsh but also for the entire new CUSU executive in his campaign: some students want to depoliticise CUSU. Such a course of action was recommended in this column last week, and Walsh's handling of politically divisive issues such as top-up fees will be a key test of her presidency.

Feminists the world over, and especially in Cambridge, cry for a time when Walsh's gender passes without remark. So the observation that she, the current president of the Graduate Union, the president-elect of the Cambridge Union, and the Vice-Chancellor of the University are all female, might be a little aggravating to them. But it is a historically unprecedented situation, and that alone makes it noteworthy.

Why, then, must we retain a Women's Union? At CUSU council last week those running for Women's Officer gave a thoroughly unsatisfactory answer to this question. Women are not an under-represented minority in Cambridge, and if there is a case to be made for the preservation of the Women's Union, it is the first task of the incoming Women's Officer to make it.

Politically, these are interesting times in Cambridge. Walsh's election is symptomatic of evolution rather than revolution. But the mood in the air, like that on Wednesday night, is one of exciting uncertainty. That ladies and not gentlemen are occupying some of our more celebrated positions adds to that.

The jobs we love to hate

It's hardly surprising, is it? More undergraduates at this University end up as bankers than as charity workers. The Bar and the City, with their promises of financial comfort, are still more attractive to Cambridge's undergraduates than less lucrative but more philanthropic careers such as the public services. We're not as selfless, after all, as some of those tsunami appeal email lists would have us believe. But we're not as selfish as we used to be either, and that is a cause for celebration. The proportion of students going into teaching is significantly higher than it was once was, and there are now more trained and competent medics emerging from this University than ever before.

The statistics we display this week (Analysis, page 7) points to a change in the mood of jobseekers in Higher Education more broadly. A significant number of undergraduates do not immediately step onto the career ladder: many go travelling, others wander without direction through their home towns, searching for a stop-gap job, and a large proportion pursue further study. There's nothing particularly wrong with this; crippling student debts mean short-term fixes can be necessary, and tourism tends to be a good thing for home economies as well as tourists. And if we are to believe Einstein, who said that "Education is just the progressive realisation of our ignorance", then the fact that so many undergraduates pursue further study is to be applauded – the more so if it should increase the sum of human knowledge, or further alert a few arrogant undergraduates to their ignorance.

Earlier generations of undergraduates in the University were not destined for such differing career paths; they tended mostly to join the BBC or Foreign Office, or deal with rejection from one of those two institutions by re-applying. Today's students not only have a wider choice of possible career paths, but also live in a culture where unorthodox and less secure careers in the Arts, for example, are more socially acceptable. Not enough enter careers for selfless reasons, or because they recognise their capacity to decrease the pain of suffering people, and feel the compulsion to act upon it. But then the history of humanity suggests that clever people have always been selfish, so the fact that Cambridge's students are becoming slightly less driven by a desire to be rich is worth recognising nevertheless.

Letters

letters@varsity.co.uk

Letters may be edited for space or style

CUAI misfires (x3)

Dear Sir,

I was interested to see the response my letter has generated. Several friends of mine in Amnesty have said I was wrong to say that they don't care about tackling the wider causes of violence. Amnesty, they say, is part of a wider campaign of conflict reduction, where Oxfam and members of IANSA try to reduce tensions. I am happy to withdraw my original complaint. But that leaves the question of why I made it.

Before writing my letter, I spent some time reading the student papers and the websites of the organisations that make up the campaign. Nothing I could find in relation to Control Arms talked about conflict resolution. I checked again this morning, and after half an hour, I finally found something.

It was on the 'safer communities' page, the eleventh item out of thirteen in the campaign's plan of action. To find it I had to go through page after page explaining why the small arms trade caused everything from political repression to domestic violence against women.

This isn't just absurd, but counterproductive in the

extreme. By trying to explain so many complex issues as the result, rather than the cause of gun troubles, it trivialises the most serious problems that the world faces. It makes it harder to rally support for better solutions. I'm sure this was not the intention of the campaign's creators, but what sort of message does it send when Amnesty tells us to support arms restrictions because they are a major cause of illiteracy?

We've got to remember that there is something which turns ordinary people into murderers. It is poverty, it is fear, it is ethnic hatred. We need to focus on fostering development, building law and order and bringing peace to the world's trouble spots. This is a broad humanitarian message that cannot be repeated enough.

Guns are stupid, pointless and lethal, and should be brought under control. But they are not the cause of the world's problems. Amnesty and its allies need to make this clearer, if we are to keep our sense of proportion.

Yours Faithfully,

Michael Dnes
Trinity College

Market in Higher Education?

I was saddened to read in your article, "College for sale on eBay" (page 3, February 25) that Oxford had fined the 'seller' £50. I'm sure the eminently superior staff at our own institution would take the much more sensible attitude of having a good laugh.

Confident that this will be the case, I am considering auctioning off Cripps Court, Queens', in which I dwell. Its removal (assuming anyone bids) will substantially increase the value of the rest of Queens', which I can then auction separately for an even higher price.

NOTE TO COLLEGE /UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES: I'm not actually going to do this. Therefore please do not fine me.

Laurie Marks,
Queens'.

Eroding liberties

Dear Sir,

We live in a time when serious and genuine allegations of institutionalised racism have been brought against supposed

protectors of British civil liberties such as the police and the armed forces.

Consequently, bogus, publicity seeking protests such as those made by Heerak Christian Kim as detailed in last week's *Varsity* make a mockery of the attempt to rid this country's institutions of racial inequality.

Furthermore they endanger the valuable work carried out by the access initiative to promote a view of this university that is free from racial (or any other) prejudices and encourage students from ethnic minorities to apply.

As a member of the college to which Mr Kim pertains I have no trouble at all in believing the allegations of improper conduct brought against him by female members of the law faculty.

Moreover I would suggest that a more appropriate title for his book might have been, "Why Didn't Cambridge University Law Faculty Push Me Out Of Their Library Sooner? Reflections On Why I Am Unable To Keep My Hands To Myself."

Rhona Brown
Jesús College



IS FOR EDITOR

Applications are now open for the Varsity Michaelmas 2005 Editorial Team. For more details see www.varsity.co.uk. Deadline for applications is 20th May.

The Irishman who lost his tongue

As the fun and frolics of St. Patrick's Day approach **Conor McDonough** describes the richness and vitality of the Irish language sadly in decline



Conor McDonough

CU Irish Society keep Irish culture alive

My first memory of the Irish language is of reading storybooks in reception class. Mici the monkey, Rirá the fox, and Lulu the pig were my first Irish speaking acquaintances and through their endless tea parties my eyes were opened to the possibility of communicating in a language other than English.

I attended an Irish-medium primary school and was immersed in my native lan-

guage and culture. Living just one parish east of the Connemara Gaeltacht (the largest region in Ireland where Irish is spoken as a community language), I have learnt, loved and used the language. Its decline is saddening.

Irish is a difficult language in which to be precise, but is ideal for the wildly exaggerated storytelling that has been the skill of the Irishman for over a thousand years. Curses and blessings

are abundant. It's much easier to write colourfully in Irish than soberly. The imagery in Gaelic poems and stories can seem garish and hyperbolic; expressing extremes of emotion, rage, jubilation, sadness, and abiding resentment.

In Irish stories, the madman, the unloved lover, the bereaved, are given centre stage and free rein to tell their stories. In Donal Og, a Connemara song, the jilted female admirer swears

blindly at Donal: "You have taken the east from me; you have taken the west from me; you have taken what is before me and what is behind me".

This focus on the broken person and the wild emotions that possess them can be understood in the light of Ireland's status for hundreds of years as a broken nation. Ireland has been personified countless times as a woman, lamenting the situation in which she finds herself, whether as a young girl whose lover is away, a decrepit old woman whose children have sold her or. Controversially, in Sinead O'Connor's 'This is a Rebel Song,' Ireland is a woman whose love for England is unreturned (How come you never said you love me, Englishman?). In all of these, Ireland is a passive partner in a relationship with the world that is tragically incomplete, even truncated.

The Irish tongue has been shaped by the national consciousness. Feelings are described as being 'on' one: ta bron orm means literally, there is sadness upon me; ta athas orm means happiness is upon me. This passivity in emotion reflects the historical oppression of the Irish people.

What is being lost, is as much a cultural vessel as a means of communication. Its idiosyn-

crasies are the results of disturbances in the Irish psyche. The language holds within it much that defines Irishness and translation only carries a shadow of this across the linguistic divide. While about 45% of people in the republic claim to be Irish speakers, the vast majority fail to make daily use of it.

The language has been crippled by the very people who wish to preserve it.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Cultural and Literary Revival, championed by Yeats, Synge, Lady Gregory, Douglas Hyde and the like, swept the country. Conradh na Gaeilge (the Gaelic League) was set up in 1893 and by 1926 there were timiri or representatives of the League in most Irish towns. In 1926, over half a million used Irish every day. With independence, Irish was established as the first official language of the state. Since then, and despite a massive educational campaign (every child in the republic must study Irish from the ages of 5 to 18), Irish use has declined steadily.

The language has been crippled, some would argue, by the very people who most wish to

preserve it. Government after government has paid lip-service to the language, standardised it, given grants to those who speak it, set up Irish language TV and radio stations. There is a plethora of official and semi-official organisations that tend to every aspect of the language, from its use among young people to its prominence on road signs. All this has had very little noticeable effect.

The great advantage that the Welsh language movement has had is that speaking Welsh was a countercultural activity for so long. Unfortunately, Irish sits firmly in the lap of the Establishment.

Unless, of course, you're living in Northern Ireland during the Troubles, in which case speaking Irish is countercultural and rebellious. With the thinnest of linguistic resources, healthy Irish speaking regions were established in Belfast. In the past ten years alone, the number of Irish speakers in the North has doubled. Out of Long Kesh prison came a whole new dialect of Irish, born in the cells of IRA prisoners— it wasn't quite Gaelic, Jail-ic maybe?

However, for us down south, rebelling is the last thing on our agenda. Yeats' aphorism seems more relevant by the day: romantic Ireland is dead and gone.

The forgotten troubles next door

Stacey Gregg reflects on the social impact of conflict

In 1997 the Good Friday Agreement put an end to all the 'troubles' in Northern Ireland, and the people realised the errors of their ways: Adams and Paisley kissed and made up, somebody smothered Paisley Jnr. in his cot and everybody pretended not to notice; sales in balaclavas plummeted and Americans found better things to do with their money than buy toys for naughty provo boys...

Well, it might have happened that way for all the British know. But to be fair, given the miniscule amount of news coverage Northern Ireland now gets it's not really their fault. The average Cambridge student knows more about what's going on in Palestine than they do in their own backyard, often the only difference they see between the DUP and the SDLP is that one's longer than the other.

I don't blame them; for years Southern Ireland and Westminster have been trying to offload Northern Ireland, the ugly kid who hangs around, stealing your crisps

and crying every time he's left for more than ten seconds. Both sides of the political divide often feel let down, displaced and a wee bit lonely.

A new breed of NIPPLEs has emerged: Northern Irish Protestant Professionals Living in England

Suicide rates among young males are nearly double that of the rest of Britain. In the relative calm after the storm of civil disturbance, new problems related to the socio-economic implications of job insecurity and claustrophobic communities beginning to open up to a brave new world have inevitably started to surface.

New pressures and a dearth of social support make for grim problems; paramilitaries running money laundering rackets and scams are internationally recognised as a powerful mafia. The recent collapse of decommissioning, the

suspected IRA bank heist and the McCartney murder cover-up, are echoes of days hoped dead. Racial attacks are at an all-time high and a research survey last year found homophobia to be "normal and justifiable to many" throughout Northern Ireland, with 8 out of 10 people suffering verbal and physical abuse as a regular occurrence. Nearly a third of respondents claimed to have attempted suicide.

Reasoning behind bullying, increased smoking among young girls, high rates of heart disease and poor health among men often relates back to the macho, risk-taking culture, a residual effect of the war mentality of the troubles.

The stigma attached to anything 'new-fangled' contributes to the retardation of Northern Ireland's crawling peace process and the continued brain drain of young people leaving for 'the mainland' or 'downsouth,' to the extent that a new acronym has appeared, NIP(P)LE's: Northern Irish (predominantly Protestant) Professionals Living in England.

Many embryonic NIPPLE's are floating around Cambridge, some quietly trying to naturalise, detach from the motherbreast and learn what's going on in Palestine like the rest of the crowd, some proudly exercising their membership to the wonderful and rich region of Ulster.

This St Patrick's Day while we celebrate our heritage we should also become a bit more sensitized to the current socio-political situation...it needs all the support it can get.

The new CU Ireland Society presents an exciting program of events for St Patrick's Day this year:

Sunday 2pm. Trinity Hall Music Rooms, Irish Music by Una Monaghan and the O Dubha Family

Thursday 12pm, St Johns Pitches, Intercollegiate Galic Football Tournament

Thursday 5.30pm. St Patrick's Day Eucharist, Kings College Chapel followed by Irish themed dinner at Kings.





Photo King



The new Macedonian PM milks his winning policy.



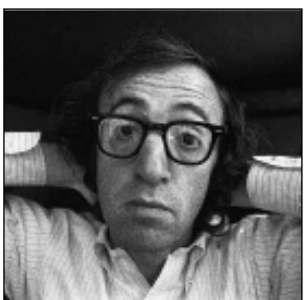
This is PC gone mad.



This is PC gone mad.



"I can fit my thumbs in my ears"



"And what? My whole fist goes in"

NEWS King in brief

CUSU ELECTI-



Red Admiral

This year's fiery CUSU Presidential election campaign is hotter than ever before. Three candidates, all genuinely human, all with real beliefs and pets, stand for what is perhaps the smokiest Presidential campaign ever boiling witnessed. Notwithstanding these, no campaign would be good without its fair share of dollop of controversy.

Mysteriously, less than 0.000000000001% of the candidates are friends which has led to lip-curlingly interesting allegations that point towards the minimal percentage of minority applicants successfully gaining entry



This cheerful woman was ineligible to vote and was forcefully removed.

into Oxbridge this and last year. Each candidate has travelled the globe, campaigning for what he or she (yes, you did read that right!!!!!!) believes in. Many of the people they have touched have been genuinely

touched by what each of them have had to say. Some twice.

But unlike previous years', this year's CUSU President can only be one single individual: male or female; black or white - plus combinations. So what exactly are they promising the people of Cambridge and, more specifically, the students of Leeds?

One promises the biggest tits since sliced bread; the other, really great banter and a laddy pint; and the other, a series of short plays based on the lives of pig-mentally challenged women in today's Britain at the ADC every weekend, every term - plus workshops.

It's certainly great that student apathy is, once again, not as dead as it used to be or could have been. "But will this simply turn into a popu-



President Putin's supporters attended the last CUSU rally

larity contest?" we hear them/her cry. "Is this simply an opportunity for cocaine-fueled-rich-kids to go and put on a fashion-show or some kind of circus show for the elite", claims a slightly misinformed Ms Barraclough of South Teeside. YOU DECIDE.

The tide has turned! 72 days on: Tsunami jokes finally acceptable.



Teddy McHart

The wait is over! It's been one month, 3 weeks and two days since December 26th, but at long last jokes about tsunamis are back on the menu - and they're delicious! Popular maritime comedian Captain Starboard exclaimed yesterday 'Phew! It's been a dry 72 days. Which is more than can be said

for areas of Asia. 72 days ago! In the aftermath of the December's tragedy, his ocean-themed patter was no longer acceptable. 'In the aftermath of December's tragedy,' he complained, 'my ocean-themed patter was no longer acceptable.'

I've had to turn to land-based material - grass, dirt, stones - but it's weak. It's just weak. I'll be the first to admit it is weak. What audiences want is jokes about the ocean - pacifically the Atlantic. That's what goes they go for in the clubs. Anchors, cod, currents,



The wait is over.

current affairs, currents affairs, rents, currants affairs.

As everyone knows, the period of down-time (or should I say drown-time)

after a 'disaster' is directly related to the body-count (or should I say drown-count) of that alleged disaster (or should I say sea-tragedy) and can be expressed by the equation $\pi/4[\text{angel of death}]9/\text{splash}$. For instance, after the First World War laugh-mongers endured 8 long years in a comedy no-man's land whilst 9/11 hijack victims were cracking jokes as the second plane hit.

For the tsunami the time is now up. It's punsoon season and we can't swim!

King Comment



'Logicus'

Columnist of the Year

My four-year old daughter says to me 'there's a small possibility that Chelsea will win at the weekend.' To me, this seems a patent falsehood. Either they will or they won't - forget the small possibility.

This reminds me of an increasing tendency which I have noticed within British journalism, and in particular

Swiss, for the journalist not to say, in writing, what I later say, in writing. The advantage of this is that as long as it continues I can continue to write novel, incisive journalism and incisive, journalistic novels. But either this is a good thing or a bad thing - ie. it's a good thing, and forget the bad thing.

This is something that Tony Blair will do well to remember when he travels to Switzerland later this week, and in particular, year.

I must say (and in no way does this contradict what I said half a century ago in Paris...) that 'Logicus' is a pseudonym.

King Current



Chris Spate

So it's that time of year again: the general election. But where are the candidates? Try naming them... Exactly. You can't, huh? Now try naming the major parties. OK. Still struggling... Now find the word for the imminent process of voting. Election. You only know that because I just said it.

And why don't you know anything? Empathy! Utter empathy. Go on, utter it: Emp. A. Thy. Feels good, don't it? Rolls right off the

chops. Do you know why it feels like that? Because no one fucking cares.

So, here we go again.

There are men (and women) who are forced to remain in cells for crimes they committed weeks ago. Am I the only one who fucking cares?

In Britain - yes, we do still live in Britain - we aren't citizens, we're subjects, and the subject is an unbridled passion for not giving a leper's whisker about anything.

I have walked through these streets and I have felt their emptiness, and most profoundly in the night. And I have spoken to our friends... nah, they ain't my friends - vested interests...

Let bells ring.

Health King

- Don't give up smoking, give up being such a knob-head.

Religion King

- God infinitely tall.

Nature King

- Eerie winged mouse blind as a bat.

Fashion King

- Spring is *hot* this season.

New Writing

A political satire

or

'Take That, Westminster!'

'Aye, Me Lord, Aye!'
Aye?
But WHY?!

Is this a ship?
A political ship
The SS FRAUD

Ahoy Tony Blair
Ahoy mistress Boothroid

Boothroid?
Haemorrhoid more like it

The lady of the house is a
haemorrhoid.

'Here here!' - Here?
But WHERE?!

Where are you, my 'right
honourable' friend?
My right honourable

CUNT

'Into the Void'



Sharon and Darren don't know where they are. Or who they are. In fact, they don't know anything at all. With a hilarious script that exposes the fragility beneath normal human interaction, this play looks at the pitfalls (and thimbles!) of modern, comic, excessive, ongoing, highly intelligent wordplay. ADC Theatre, Cambridge, 11.00pm, every day this year.

VARSITY

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/ g u i d e	// s t a g e			/ m u s i c			/ t h e r e s t		
FRIDAY 11	19:00	Corpus Christi Playroom	Smorgasbord	LIFE	Boogienight	70s and 80s music	EVENT	17.00	Working for Women and the
	19:30	Fitzwilliam Auditorum	Jesus Christ Superstar	FEZ	Funk Star	Quality funk & break beat			Developing World @ Christ's College
	19:30	Pembroke New Cellars	An Ideal Husband	UNION	Bengalis in platforms bop	Alternative	SPEAKER	19:30	Tom Wise MEP @ Trinity College
	19:30	Emmanuel College	Mrs Warren's Profession	CLARE	C.R.Y.P.T.I.C. vs cusuENTS' Eklectix	Hip Hop/Urban	SUPPER	19:30	Cambridge University Jewish Society
	19:45	ADC	Noises Off	CORN EX	Glitz, Blitz and 70's Hitz	Glam Rock			@ The Student Centre, Thompsons Lane
	19:45	New Court Thtre, Christ's	Mythmaking				CLASSICAL	20.00	Chorus & Organ @ King's College
	20:00	Judith E.Wilson Studio	The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant				CLASSICAL	21.00	Phantasmagoria Vocal Ensemble @ Clare
	21:30	Corpus Christi Playroom	The Freshers Play				EVENT	22.00	Oneg-booze and schmooze @ Culanu
	22:30	Pembroke New Cellars	Bailegangaire				FILM		Night of the Living Dead/Dawn of the
23:00	ADC	Medics Review 2005						Dead @ Caius	
SATURDAY 12	19:00	Corpus Christi Playroom	Smorgasbord	LIFE	The Big Party	Dance, 60's and club classics	CLASSICAL	19:30	Quincentenary Concerts @ Christ's
	19:30	Fitzwilliam Auditorum	Jesus Christ Superstar	FEZ	Eternal	Soulful American House			College
	19:30	Pembroke New Cellars	An Ideal Husband	KINGS CELLARS		Hip Hop, DnB, Classic Beats			
	19:45	ADC	Mrs Warren's Profession						
	19:45	New Court Thtre, Christ's	Noises Off						
	20:00	Judith E.Wilson Studio	Mythmaking						
	21:30	Corpus Christi Playroom	The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant						
	22:30	Pembroke New Cellars	The Freshers Play						
	23:00	ADC	Bailegangaire						
23:00	ADC	Medics Review 2005							
SUNDAY 13	20:00	Cambridge Arts Theatre	Mastana:2005	LIFE	The Sunday Roast	Suporting CU Hockey Club	CLASSICAL	14.00	Irish Music @ Trinity Hall, Music Room
		Judith E.Wilson Studio	The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant	CORN EX	Jake & Elwood	Jazz	IWW	15.00-16.00	Self Defence Classes @ New Hall
MONDAY 14				JUNCTION	Flamenco Classes	Takes you to the heart of Seville	MUSIC	20.30	Songs in the Dark @ Clown's cafe
				LIFE	Live is Life	International student night	FILM	20.00-22.30	The Incredibles @ Christ's College
				FEZ	Fat Poppadaddys	Funky and soulful sounds	EVENT	20.00	Cabaret au Chocolat @ Emmanuel's
							CLASSICAL	13.15	Handel, Staruss, Poulec @ Clare Chapel
TUESDAY 15							FILM	20.30	He Loves Me...He Loves Me Not @ Trinity College
		Homerton Auditorium	Rom.com	LIFE	Unique	CUSU's lesbigay night	AEROBICS	18.00-19.00	Kick Bo @ Christ's College, New Court Theatre
		Fitz Hall, Queen's	Vigani's Cabinet/Sprung	BALLARE	Top Banana	CUSU ents flagship night			
	19:30	Corpus Christi Playroom	The Dybbuk	FEZ	Ebonics	Mix of hip hop, dancehall, reggae	DISCUSSION	18.10-19.30	Penetrating Male Elites @ Jock Colville Hall, Churchill
	19:45	ADC	My Fair Lady	PONANA	Dynamo d'n'b	With Hospital's Logistics and Commix playing			
23:00	ADC	Smoker	JUNCTION	Sama-Sama	Amy Winehouse Charity				
WEDNESDAY 16									
		Homerton Auditorium	Rom.com	BALLARE	Rumboogie	Godfather of Cambridge nights	DISCUSSION	19.00	Fuck that Shit: Apathy, alienation, anti-politics @ Trinity College
		Fitz Hall, Queen's	Vigani's Cabinet/Sprung	FEZ	Mi Casa Tu Casa	International student night	CLASSICAL	20.00	CUMS 1 Mahler Symphony No5 @ Concert Hall, West Road
	19:30	Corpus Christi Playroom	The Dybbuk	CAIUS	The Bomb	Featuring Shorty with Sketchy, Recoil and The Dhol Cartel	CLASSICAL	21.00	JCMS recital Luke Busbridge @Jesus College
	19:45	ADC	My Fair Lady				FILM		Weekend (French) @ Caius
23:00	ADC	Evelyn Budden; Auctioneer							
THURSDAY 17									
		Homerton Auditorium	Rom.com	COCO	Urbanite	CUSU's night of hip hop & rnb			
		Fitz Hall, Queen's	Vigani's Cabinet/Sprung	FEZ	Wild Style	Award winning night of hip hop			
	19:30	Corpus Christi Playroom	The Dybbuk	LIFE	Lady Penelopes	RnB and hip hop			
	19:45	ADC	My Fair Lady	KAMBAR	Foxie	Pop, emo and indie			
23:00	ADC	Evelyn Budden; Auctioneer							

VARSITY TRUST AWARDS



- The Varsity Trust offers funding to students for journalism courses in 2005-2006.
- A scholarship and/or bursary or bursaries may be awarded to students graduating at either Cambridge University or Anglia University in 2005 who are about to embark on an approved course in journalism in the coming academic year.
- The level of the award will be determined by both need and merit. The maximum value of an award will not exceed the DfEs maximum for the fees for a post graduate course (£3010) but applications for smaller sums will be considered and are encouraged.

To Apply:

- Send a CV, the names and addresses of three referees, cuttings demonstrative of your work in student journalism, together with a statement of approximately 250 words on your motives for becoming a journalist.
- Please also include details of any other potential sources of funding and income; a detailed breakdown of how it is proposed to meet the fee and maintenance costs of the course to be undertaken is expected and must be included with all applications.

Eligibility:

Students may apply before any offer to study has been received, but any award will be conditional on successful applicants taking up a place on an approved course in journalism or photo-journalism. The Trustees hope to be in a position to make an election or elections in the early part of the Easter term. Interviews will be held for shortlisted candidates.

While experience of student journalism is a pre-requisite, applicants need have no experience writing for Varsity.

**APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO ARRIVE BY TUESDAY 26TH APRIL TO: THE VARSITY TRUST,
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Wed 16th: Speaker - Afif Safieh, 7pm
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Facing Fears: Is it mind over matter?

Zoe Smeaton examines a possible link between culture and psychology

"In this world, nothing is certain but death and taxes."
Benjamin Franklin

Defined biologically, death is a 'cessation of an organism's vital functions', such that reversal of the process is impossible. The physical mechanism is understood then, but dying is more difficult to describe with such clarity when considered on a spiritual level. Whilst some believe in reincarnation making 'death' an impossibility, many of us are left unsure as to what our final fate may be.

This uncertainty, along with the unfortunate combination of our survival instincts and awareness that death is inevitable, creates the potential for terror, and leads many people to have at least a nominal fear of death.

Despite these fears, most of us manage to go about our daily lives without living in constant panic that this day may be our last. This might imply that humans are capable of not being terrified of death after-all, but some psychologists suggest that in fact we are so terrified of death that we have evolved mechanisms (in particular the notion of self-esteem and our subscription to particular 'world-views' or cultures) so that our minds can repress the fear.

This hypothesis, known as Terror Management Theory (TMT), was proposed by Greenberg, Pyszczynski, and Solomon (initially in their 1986 paper "The causes and consequences of the need for self-esteem: A terror management theory") but originates ultimately from the writings of Becker, who proposed that fear of death can be protected against by seeking and boosting self-esteem.

Despite the arguments of many evolutionary biologists to the contrary (for instance pointing out that fear has developed to enable us to overcome specific and immediate threats, so that we should not fear death generally) TMT seems to make sense intuitively. By subscribing to a particular cultural worldview we can give ourselves 'symbolic immortality' by association with a group, the longevity of which will exceed that of any individuals; and by meeting the standards of that worldview, we can increase self esteem to convince ourselves of our own importance. This enables us to 'buffer' our fear of death.

In 1998 (in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*), Holly McGregor and colleagues (including Greenberg, Solomon and Pyszczynski) reported findings

in a paper entitled "Mortality Salience Motivates Aggression Against Worldview-Threatening Others" which supported the hypothesis that when faced with death we strive to uphold our own belief system.

The group found that after considering their own death, participants allocated a "particularly large amount of hot sauce" (obviously to cause discomfort) to people holding different worldviews to themselves. Only a normal amount was prescribed to a person sharing their own beliefs who had previously allocated the participant unpleasant juice though, indicating that when forced to face our mortality we will act to protect our own culture.

This evidence supports the TMT idea that subscribing to and supporting a worldview is a result of our fear of death. In some cases, particular beliefs can offer an even more obvious mechanism to deal with fear of death – many people believe in the afterlife or in reincarnation, meaning their fear of death can effectively be eliminated.

Rei-ki (literally 'universal life force') is a simple method of life energy renewal originating from Japan, in which a practitioner acts as a channel, directing universal life-force energy through

their hands into a patient, or into a part of their own body. This energy then induces a sense of calmness, and higher levels of the life force energy enable a more healthy and productive lifestyle – making Rei-ki a popular complement to medical procedures.

Rei-ki is not a belief system as such because it is compatible with all religions, but it does offer a worldview of sorts. Nicola Manning, a Rei-ki Master in London, explained that "If we live our lives by Rei-ki ... we become a channel for giving and receiving unconditional love from the Highest Power."

In essence, we are all surrounded by and are a part of a universal life force: it is this force which can be accessed and channelled by Rei-ki practitioners, and because our souls are a part of this force, we can never 'die'. Instead, our souls are continually being born into bodies in order to learn certain lessons – lessons which we can 'choose' during our life and which enable us to advance spiritually.

Once the lessons have been learnt our souls go through a transition and move on to learn more lessons within a different physical body.

Nicola told me that "death is merely a transitional phase at



Zoe Smeaton

which point our soul has fulfilled its current purpose, and is returning to the Divine Light" and in fact she blames our society for our fear of death, "in our current materialistic, 'possessive' society, much of our fear of death stems from selfishness; how much those left behind will themselves feel bereft of the deceased's living presence".

According to this opinion then – which is also supported by some evolutionary biologists –

our fear of death is in a sense created by our world-views, rather than, as TMT suggests, our fear causing us to develop and uphold certain world-views. Clearly there is much disagreement as to the origins and effects of our fear of death, and whilst many will probably fear death to some extent throughout their lives, others who believe in reincarnation will live entirely unafraid, in the knowledge that we never truly die.

The physical symptoms of fear and related anxiety

Exam Term: for many this is synonymous with 'Stress Term', and in most cases the problem stems from a fear of the unknown – no-one can predict their results entirely accurately – and this 'intolerance of uncertainty' is now recognised as a contributory factor in many cases of anxiety.

In extreme cases, fear can lead to debilitating anxiety as one of a range of conditions, including the so-called Panic Disorder in which patients suffer 'panic-attacks'.

The exact nature of a panic attack varies from person to person, but typically feelings of intense dread occur – sufferers may feel that they are going mad, losing control or even are

about to have a heart attack. Coupled to these emotions are frightening physical symptoms including chest pain (some scientists estimate that around one quarter of patients visiting GP's about chest pain are panic disorder sufferers), headaches and hyperventilation.

Physiologically, anxiety and fear are characterised by the release of adrenaline which initially raises heart rate and increases blood supply to the muscles. If prolonged stress occurs then more problematic physical symptoms may develop.

The increase in blood flow to muscles following adrenaline release means that less blood is directed to other areas, for

instance to the gastrointestinal tract, in which the 'mucosal blood flow' is reduced. This drop in blood flow results in a decrease in mucous production which has consequences in the stomach: mucous here acts as a barrier, protecting cells from damage by the hydrochloric acid released to kill bacteria in food and to enable certain digestive enzymes to work efficiently.

If the production of mucous is reduced, then symptoms of gastritis (irritation of the stomach lining) and potentially stomach ulcers may follow. Whilst fear has evolved as a useful mechanism for survival, it is clear that nowadays it has some less pleasant consequences.

Parkinson's: probing the problem

Picture the scene: you're suffering from Parkinson's disease. The condition is getting progressively worse. Then some French guy offers to cut your skull open and stick electrodes in your brain. I don't know about you, but I'd be a little apprehensive. However, this is exactly what's happening with the development of a radical new treatment.

Parkinson's is a neurodegenerative disease in which a certain type of nerve cells, which are found in a part of the brain called the substantia nigra, start to die. The cells play an important role in the control of our muscles – essentially they are the "accelerator pedal" or "on-switch" of our

movements. If these cells are active then we can move, but in Parkinson's disease, as more and more of these cells die, sufferers find it increasingly difficult to move about, eventually suffering total paralysis.

There are also cells in the brain that act as "brakes", controlling our movements. If the activity of these cells can be reduced, then moving becomes easier. Doctors in France have developed a way of implanting an electrode into the brain and wiring it up to a "pace-maker" which provides a high-frequency electric current. This has the effect of deactivating the "brakes" cells in a closely controlled way. In the past, surgery

was used to remove parts of the brain, which has similar results, but is much more crude and can cause permanent side effects.

The electrodes are not a cure – eventually the degeneration just gets too severe – but it can strikingly reduce symptoms. People who were once unable to move have walked again, quite literally at the push of a button. As the disease progresses the power can be turned up to provide stronger treatment. The new method is still in the experimental stage, and is very expensive, but if it proves completely successful it promises an increased quality of life to many Parkinson's patients.

Jamie Horder

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Claude Schneider/bluepulsar.com

Eye-catching designs at the Cambridge Fashion Show

pick of the week



Music: Dive Dive

APU SU Bar, Thur 17th, 20.00

Oxford-based talent who gatecrashed the singles chart (no not the indie chart, the *chart* chart) recently with their Idlewild/Fugazi-like art rock. Should be a triumphant night, they're going to be big.



Poetry: Broken Words

The Junction Shed, Mon 14th, 19.00

A collision of music and poetry 'with bite' that promises to be progressive and energetic, at the Junction's brand-new theatre venue.



Theatre: My Fair Lady

ADC Theatre, Tue 15th-Sat 26th, 19.45

You know, like *She's All That*, but cockney, and Edwardian, and with singing. It's going to be a spectacular show, featuring Cambridge's finest.



Film: Somersault

Arts Picturehouse, from Fri 11th

This stunning debut about a teenage girl's sexual awakening won 13 Australian Film Institute awards, including best film, screenplay, director, actor and actress. Not seeing it would be like saying you don't actually like beauty or truth.

Cambridge and fashion, not words that fall in the same category in my head. I'd still like to think of Giles from *Buff* and the one with the teddy-bear from *Brideshead* as our sartorial mentors. But the fashionistas have been crawling out of the rhinestone-encrusted woodwork of late; demonstrating that knowledge of seventeenth-century metaphysics and being able to wear cowboy boots without looking like you're going to a fancy-dress party are not mutually exclusive.

Weeks after the launch of our very own glossy fashion mag *Prep*, the third annual Cambridge fashion show arrived and the well-heeled punters were queuing around the block to get in. It was, by all accounts, spectacular. With six collections called things like 'I can't explain myself said Alice because I'm not myself' and 'His line is bold, his colour lifeless', the models pouted, the clothes were suitably otherworldly and genuinely innovative (tutu worn around the breasts, anyone? Underpants with a hood attached?) and the global trend-setters were scribbling away in the front row (Vanessa Feltz was *definitely* spotted).

Whereas in previous years the designs had been closer to the high-street, this show 'wasn't about being informative and showcasing the wearable,' according to the show's creative directors, Agata Belcen and Lucy Styles. No, this was high concept stuff, and half the runs were designed by students themselves.

The impeccable choreography was one of the features that make the show more than just people walking up and down looking burdened by existential ennui. 'We were looking to invoke a mood for each of the runs,' Agata and Lucy

Sartorial Tutorial

Robots, drummers and sexual chemistry: **Jessica Holland** reveals all at the 2005 Cambridge Fashion Show

told me. 'The models had to become more characters than mannequins, which is probably where it differed most from last year. The choreography supported this idea of theatricality and at times there was almost a narrative.'

One of the most interesting collections featured a man dressed like a WWI squaddie flashing a light into the eyes of factory-line robot-models who then jerked down the catwalk looking like they were about to blow a fuse. Other collections involved synchronised dance, romance, ballet and a lot of sexual chemistry.

the well-heeled punters were queuing around the block

A well-timed reprieve came in the form of a performance from brilliant hand-drummers Shekere, whose orgiastic African-influenced polyrhythms set the tone for the 'Mud on bodies, paint on faces...' run and catalysed the audience's transformation from polite spectators into the cat-calling mob left whooping at the show's end.

But come, I hear you silently imploring me for the information you *really* want. What should

you, the common sandwich-eating mortal, be wearing? What tips can you glean from this conceptual extravaganza?

more than just people walking up and down looking burdened by existential ennui

Boys, it's all about braces, and, as always in fashion, looking like a girl. Looking like a girl but being smouldering and macho at the same time. Sorry, can't really help you with that one. Apparently, having one trouser leg rolled up higher than the other is also a look but we'll let that one slide. After all, you are from Cambridge and there's only so much you can get away with.

Girls: the reign of knuckle-dusting cuffs and floor-skimming bootcuts is o-v-e-r. Go as baggy as you can stand, but with cinched-in cuffs and ankles from knee to ankle/ elbow to wrist. Waistcoats are good and can apparently be doubled up as skirts if you're in a fix; and layers of net are recommended for instant fucked-up-ballerina chic. Any more questions? Someone get me a goddamn machiatto.

Varsity Arts



Boys toys: Louisa wears plastic police helicopter from Oxfam (Bridge Street); sleeveless puffa from Catfish. 6 pin bowling: green dress from Reiss, green hooded jacket and coloured skittles from Oxfam (Bridge Street). Chess invasion: red polka dot dress and chess pieces from Oxfam (Pimlico)

All heroin and no heroines

Ellen E. Jones muses on why literary detectives aren't what they used to be

We are obsessed with murder, aesthetically speaking at least. Why else do the novels of John Grisham, Dan Brown, and John le Carré continue to frequent the best seller position at every new release, and every whiff of treachery, mystery and death? Is it the escape into a seedy world from the safe distance of a paperback's sleeve, or the more virtuous comfort of moral affirmation that whoever 'did it' will eventually be brought to justice?

This is not a new phenomenon; since Edgar Allan Poe created the Chevalier C. Auguste Dupin crime fiction has grown into a literary class of its own, and a very lucrative one too. The obsession began with the charismatic, aloof, and super intelligent detective who has become a model for modern-day heroes. But in the beginning, there were no smouldering good looks and heroines to be saved from the jaws of death; detectives were not sexy characters.

Far from Robert, the hero of Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*, ending his quest snogging a beautiful French girl somewhere in Scotland, Sherlock Holmes was more likely to end his with an opaque put-down for Watson, before disappearing into a heroin-induced haze. How did this narcotic-dependent, super-intelligent outcast become the Casanova of our crime thrillers today?

Crime has merged with romance, and demands are now made upon the protagonist to be a community-minded, caring man of good breeding (I'm thinking

potential father to my children) as well as a detective genius.

The other side type of literary detective is the home-loving, non-expert who pursues justice through hell and high water, and for what? For love, of course. Walter Hartright of Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* is such a man. He falls in love with Laura Fairlie and becomes entangled in evil Count Fosco's plan to steal Laura's identity, and thus her inheritance.

This may sound a little panto; and indeed Andrew Lloyd Webber has simplified the plot of this novel into a very successful musical. Crime fiction translates well onto stage and screen, as the stereotypical characters formed in the nineteenth century are easily manipulated and caricatured. The model has changed very little.

Walter is the hero, Laura the heroine, and Marianne her moustached half-sister. In a sense it is panto, as Fosco (the wicked step-mother) charms the reader and the characters with his eccentricities and self-aggrandizement.

We become fascinated with Fosco, the criminal who is supremely intelligent and almost sexy, not Walter, who is a bit of a wet blanket. Fosco is attractive because he is able to place himself above the law. As he himself says, "When the criminal is a resolute, educated, highly-intelligent man, the police, in nine cases out of ten, lose." What if the criminal has so enchanted you that you prefer to think of his ruthlessness as intelligence, and dream of his kidnapping and escaping with you to join his secret society?

Perhaps the most ambitious of crime fictions is Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. Here, the hero, or anti-hero, Raskolnikov stretches the genre through his powerful first-person narrative, almost to breaking point.

The philosophical discussion on the justification of crime for a 'greater good' goes beyond the bounds of this fiction. Dostoevsky is less concerned with who 'did it' and who gets the girl; and is more concerned with why, and with who defines justice itself? This is not a crime novel in as much as it refuses to conform to its genre.

Crime fiction, although it reveals something of the world of crime, never becomes one with it. We, the readers, stand apart, and our role is to perceive, to judge, to condemn. Crime fiction addresses those "nine cases out of ten" that Fosco refers to; the cases that are so fantastic that they would defy detection and arrest. In crime fiction, these "nine out of ten" are solved.

Aestheticism may seem like an escape, as Thomas de Quincey attempted to abandon the moral of murder and consider it as "one of the fine arts"; but it is only a temporary escape. The overwhelming tendency of crime fiction is to be normative.

Crime fiction sticks to the bounds of the law; and even when the law is impotent, fiction can bring in the incontrovertible power of poetic justice to ensure that the evil are punished; the innocent are protected; and the hero gets the girl. Our obsession is of the more virtuous kind; but I still dream of Count Fosco.

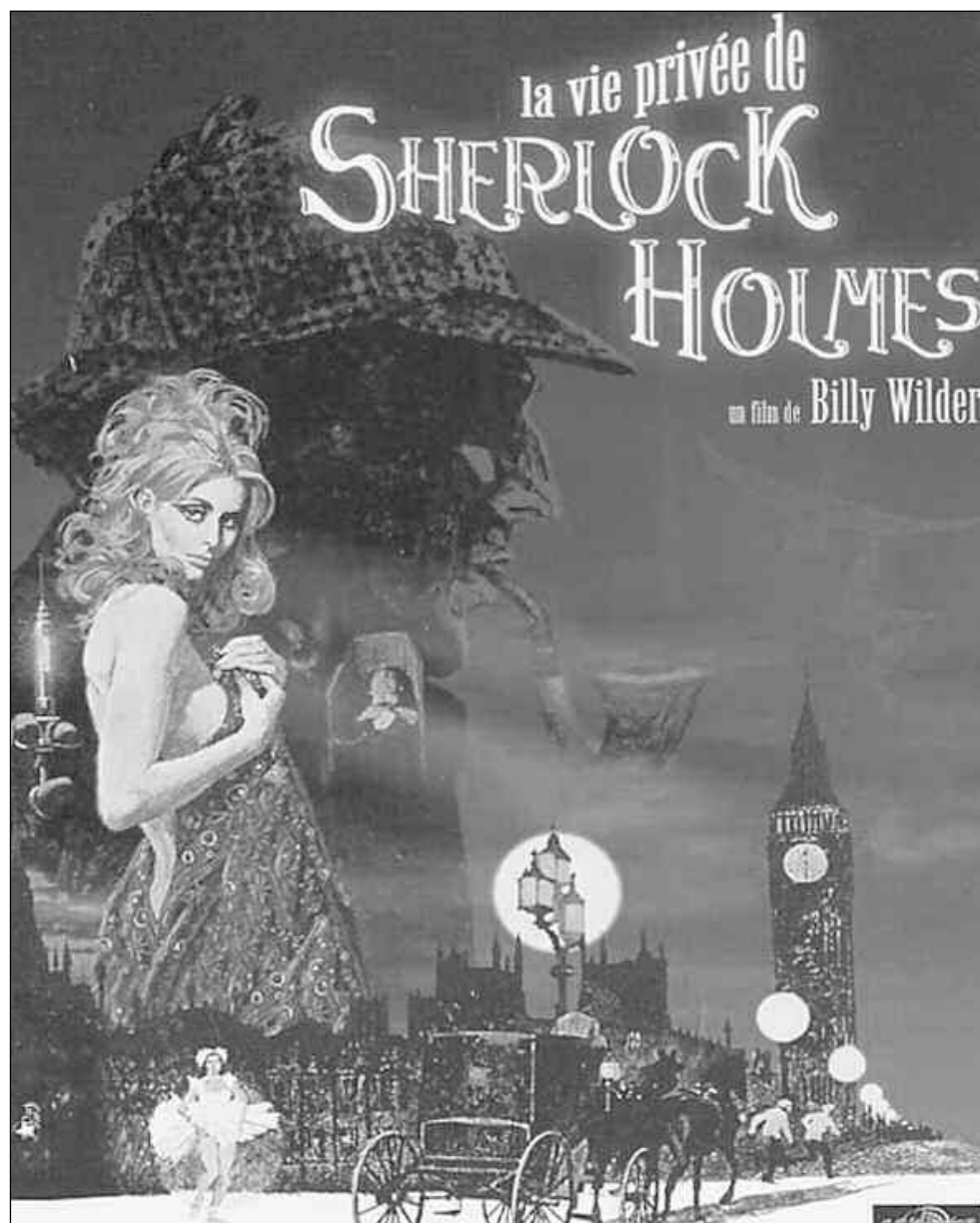


image.net

The Billy Wilder film focused more on Holmes' lady-killing skills

Varsity recommends

The American Way of Death

by Jessica Mitford

Published in 1963, over forty years before Six Feet Under came along to show us just how weird funerals can be across the pond, Jessica Mitford's *The American Way of Death* explores the excesses and absurdities of the American "death care" industry. Inspired by her husband's efforts to establish a non-profit funeral society, which provided simple and cheap funerals for its members, Mitford's sharply satirical work dispenses with objectivity and fixes firmly as its target those who try to turn death into big business.

In *The American Way of Death* the typical American funeral is deconstructed and all of its components laid in front of the reader, from the purchase of the casket, with its obligatory hard sell, to the peculiarly American phenomenon of embalming.

Mitford quotes extensively from trade magazines and catalogues, effectively letting the funeral directors offer their own sales pitch, and along the way we are treated to such bizarre

products and practices as the "Fit-a-Fut Oxford", specially designed footwear for the discerning corpse, and the concept of "memory pictures", otherwise known as viewing the deceased's embalmed body.

One of the book's highlights comes with a graphic account of the embalming process, which reads almost like a training manual for any aspiring mortician but is laced with a comic irony that makes the description of the gruesome manipulation of the body is subjected to all the more shocking.

As an infamous "muck-raking" journalist, Mitford was unafraid to suggest that some common funeral practices may just be cons, but *The American Way of Death* is more than witty exposé. At its heart is the question of whether capitalism and compassion can ever be allied.

As a satirist Jessica Mitford is quick to emphasise the more ridiculous side of the undertaker's trade, but her main concern is with the inherently exploitative nature of a profession that encourages people to believe that the best way of showing respect for the dead is by buying the most expensive coffin you can.

Sophie Allen

Poetry Commotion

Angus Wight talks to Tim Smith-Laing about the challenges young poets face, and his plans for a journal to overcome this

AW: What problems does a student poet face at the moment?

TS: At the moment a gap in the publishing forum exists for students serious about writing, and of a particular standard, who do not possess the confidence or the style that the foremost literary magazines desire.

In the top magazines where competition is tough, advanced publishing from established professional poets takes precedence over unknown student writers. Set against this are the several young writers' magazines which do a disservice to those young writers they aim to support. Poems are published with the name of the author and 'aged 17' tacked on the end, as if an excuse for the quality of the work.

It seems the editorial basis for these magazines is that because the writers are young the poetry is allowed to be bad, and this attitude results in work being published for which neither poet nor reader has any respect. This leaves many student writers with little opportunity, sup-

port or encouragement.

AW: What will be the intentions of your magazine?

TS: We intend to provide a large forum for new voices in poetry, gathering work from universities across Britain - not just Cambridge - concentrating on student writing, but not excluding non-university students.

It will help young poets to catch the attention of larger publications

I am an undergraduate at Pembroke and my collaborator on this project, Jon Grossman, is an American post-graduate. There will be an editorial panel all members of which are writers of poetry who will ensure a catholicism of taste in the publication process. The team will reflect the broad range the magazine aims to represent by including undergraduates and post-graduates.

While respect should be

maintained amongst the team, we nevertheless want to include many different tastes and with a wide range of representation we will be able to accommodate different sensibilities with an element of subjectivity ruled out if possible.

The editors will not be using this magazine for self-promotion however; members of the team will have to look to publish their work elsewhere. The criteria for what does get published will be specifically work from students which deserves attention now rather than stuff which may need more time to develop.

And we will not be printing the ages of the authors! In this way we aim to provide a stepping platform for talented young poets, a magazine which will help them to catch the attention of the larger publications.

AW: How will the magazine function?

TS: The first issue will most likely have to be published on

the internet as an exemplum. After that funding should be available from the Arts Council and the British Council. We will aim to publish three times a year in keeping with the university term system, starting this coming Michaelmas. We will publish a Granta-type magazine including poetry, essays, photo essays and prose works.

For the moment the editorial panel will be based in Cambridge but this is for logistical reasons rather than any intellectual bias. In the same way, although we want the emphasis of the magazine to be on 'young' writers of a student age, we will rely initially upon the university network for its ease of communication.

The editorial team will be open to offers of help in the publication process and would be particularly interested to hear from any fellows who might be able to provide support, ideas or contacts in other universities.

For more information email ts369@cam.ac.uk

NEW IN 2005

#8 The Pipettes



For everyone bored witless of Stella-swaggering idiots loudly declaring themselves the new Stone Roses between 'being proper Northern, like' and dousing their lank mullets in chip fat, salvation has arrived. The Pipettes are the anti-Kasabian: beautiful, pretension-free and slinging three polka-dot handbags full of songs you can *actually* dance to. Taking Phil Spector's Wall of Sound as their inspiration, Becki, Julia and Rose have the dulcet harmonies and infectious hand-claps to rival the Shangri-Las and the Ronettes, while backing band The Cassettes fire off spiky riffs and Hammond lines warm enough to melt the coldest indieboy heart. Having spent 2004 tirelessly trekking the London circuit, this year promises to take the band to more distant corners; support slots for The Go! Team have already impressed many. Keep an eye out for debut 7" 'School Uniform/It Hurts To See You Dance So Well', out later this month.

Jon Swaine

www.thepipettes.co.uk

Not set for a Fall just yet

The Fall

Junction - 8 March

Review by Sam Blatherwick

An example of the demographic of Fall fans: the couple in front of me had seen the band more than seventy times, including in New York and Moscow, and had booked a week off work to follow them around the country. The fan beside me was at his third Fall gig, having got into them in 1978 when he was thirty-two. A woman behind me moaned that it was one of the most male dominated gigs she had ever been to.

I am a huge Fall fan; they dominate my cd collection and I only envisage the problem getting worse as my life goes on and I continue to buy up their gaping back catalogue. However, this was the first time I had ever seen one of my favourite bands, nearly thirty years after their birth. Simply, they have been around longer than my parents have known each other.

When I say they, however, of course I really mean 'he'. The Fall is very much one constant and his reign across a huge number of musicians who have worked under him. Mark E. Smith trails behind the rest of his band, he saunters onstage in a leather jacket. He looks

like the granddad you always dreaded in comparison to his once biggest fan, he stalks the stage dragging his microphone stands along with him and as

the gig goes on the entanglement of wires and stands becomes ridiculous – but of no concern to the man, he simply takes the next microphone on



Sam Blatherwick

You saw it here first, folks - Mark E. Smith in Diesel jeans.

stage and starts all over again. Sometimes two microphones – especially in the closing song of the main set, 'Blindness', where the layers of sound are so brutal, so bruising and so incredibly powerful that he needs the added velocity to snarl over the racket.

Interaction with the crowd is reduced to a mere "I think you'll like this" before the band rockets into 'Theme from Sparta FC Part 2', and handing the microphone over to members of the crowd to sing along during the final song 'Big New Prinz'.

Surprisingly, they play quite a few older songs – 'Hit the North' and 'Mr. Pharmacist' both being tracks I didn't expect to hear: the band tend to almost exclusively play songs off their latest record.

They also hammer through 'Touch Sensitive', as heard on a recent Vauxhall Corsa advert, but this is probably the most disappointing song of the evening and comes across as fairly shambolic.

This was basically the only downer of the night, though, if we discount the lack of support – apparently the advertised warm-up John Cooper Clarke got lost on his way to the Junction.

'I Can Hear the Grass Grow' is another in the long line of staple Fall covers. I was

told by the guy next to me that it was actually the first song ever played on Radio One, but in the hands of the Fall it is timeless.

Next, 'Open The Boxoctosis #2' is incredibly danceable to, while 'Mountain Energei' pounds like a jackhammer to the skull live, adding so much raw energy to the studio version. Perhaps conversely, the presence of these older songs actually serves to show up just how brilliant the band's more recent releases really are.

Indeed, 'Blindness' is just immense, a powerhouse of sound building and building whilst Smith cries "Blind man; have mercy on me".

A Fall fan claims that no matter how much music he listens to, he always finds himself being drawn back to the Fall. They are very much a band for the obsessive in a certain type of music fan. They have been constantly touring and releasing records for nearly 30 years, and have outlived so many bands whilst still retaining a hardcore base of fans.

Truly, they rip apart other bands; they ooze charisma and never seem to age. This is surely because they never look back – only to the future, and specifically their next album or tour. Personally, I can't wait for the next chance I get to see them.

<http://www.visi.com/fall>

The Low-down

Was Yaqoob wakes Minnesotans

'Oh look, it's Low, and they're still quiet'; bassist Zak Sally is unhappy with the pigeonholing they've received from the press. What is surprising is that much of it comes in the wake of The Great Destroyer: their 8th album is a break with the minimal instrumentation and sparse production of previous releases. They appear to have found a distortion pedal in the home basement they still record in, and also have a song called 'Pissing', which is, like, a rude word. The temptation to ask Zak whether the band rehearsed for their last LP sitting on a frozen lake in the American mid-West, wearing beaverskin hats and staring at a mournful sky was almost overwhelming.

But surprised reactions to radical change are to be expected. This Minnesotan post-rock trio have been an object of critical veneration for over a decade. Their consistency encourages lazy stereotyping, almost as much as their oeuvre of atmospheric, contemplative and awesomely slow records do. But the band has developed a broader appeal – as singer Alan Sparhawk has said on moving to major(ish) label Sub Pop, this didn't itself influence the band: 'All you can do as an artist is find the coldest house in hell and go there'. When I ask him

whether he sees The Great Destroyer as a major break with the soporific past, Zak hesitates, 'When we were making it, it felt like a pretty big jump', but



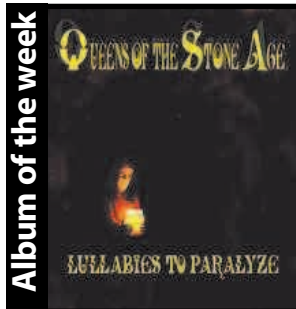
Was Yaqoob

adds, 'but if people cared to go back to the last few records, there's nothing that hasn't been seen before'.

Treading tentatively, I asked whether the band set themselves up for labelling as, among other things, 'snore-core' by playing slowly. 'Instead

of it being a wanky, jokey experiment, it was a pretty amazing, fulfilling way to play'. Getting perhaps a little defensive, Zak adds 'for better or for worse, we have created a tiny little world. It's ours'. So, when critics compare them to Simon and Garfunkel-meets-Joy Division, is that an unpleasant intrusion into the bubble? 'There's never been one band for any of us. We love both of those bands, but then we love the Bee Gees. Either way its not saying much' So what are their influences? He brushes me off. 'When it comes down to it, it's the three of us working in the basement – it's not like we're bringing Mariah Carey records down there'.

Quite. On the future, Zak says 'It's great that bands like Radiohead sell out tours, but we don't. That's okay. More people listen to our music than we ever thought would. But we try not to have expectations...we know they'd be dashed' A none too cheery thought to end on, but Zak adds, 'it doesn't matter, we just do what we do'. Which should hopefully ease the pain when Kerrang! decide to describe them as 'weird people from American who play slow'. Low will carry on making idiosyncratic, quietly beautiful music regardless.

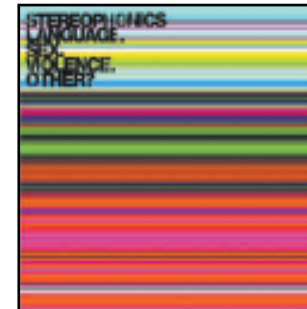
www.chairkickers.com


Album of the week
Queens of the Stone Age
Lullabies To Paralyze

If Josh Homme could be distilled, his would be a tonic powerful enough to immunise the world from all the effects of passing fashions and seemingly irreparable disaster. On their fourth album, and first since the ejection of toxic twin and bass-wielding talisman Nick Oliveri, Homme's Queens return more energised, vital and necessary than ever. Perhaps in response to suggestions of control-freakery, Homme devolves lead vocal duties to Mark Lanegan on opener 'Lullaby', a brave move whose glorious fruits are a worthy pay-off. Somehow managing to shed any hint of rock-flab excess since the already-lean *Songs For The Deaf*, ferocious discipline is shown throughout songs like 'Burn The Witch' and 'Little Sister', guiding this confident buzz-saw of a collection home triumphantly.

Jon Swaine

Released on March 14th through Polydor



Stereophonics
Language. Sex. Violence. Other?

Love them or hate them, the Phonics are back. This band really do inspire extreme reactions. Back in my heady days of youth, their accessible brand anthemic tunes a decent lyrics brought them a devoted following. But what this album was meant to achieve, I have no idea. They have abandoned the sound of earlier releases, and for what? Half the album passes in a blur of single-tempo, brash guitars and unnecessary distortion. The lyrics that are audible are instantly forgettable. A couple of obviously chart-worthy tracks do catch the attention, such as the sub-Manics 'Dakota'. But this album lacks vibrancy or coherency. When Kelly Jones growls "Look at me now", you can't help but be disappointed with what you see. Unless these boys rediscover some of their early energy, I can't help but feel we have long since heard the best they have to offer.

David King

Released on March 14th through V2



Moby
Hotel

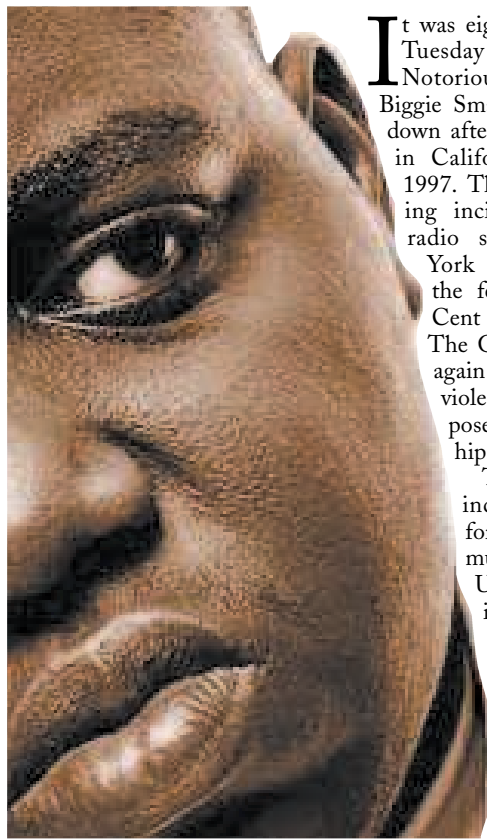
Now *Play* has been spun on every car ad and mathmo's CD player in Cambridge, Moby follows up with *Hotel* (no-one really listened to 18). The follically-challenged one brings us more plodding electronica interspersed with 80s discopop – *Hotel* offers the old tricks: chilled beats, bland guitars and a harem of croaking female guest vocals. But this time, Moby has celebrated turning 40 by mellowing out...even further. There are some moments of lyrical beauty: "If I could kiss you now/I'd kiss you now again and again/well I don't know where you begin/and where I end" and the cover of New Order's 'Temptation' is brave. But if you want to hear either, don't rush to Fopp just yet. Wait for the next Ford ad to come on the telly. At best, *Hotel* is a sleep-aid to rival a cocktail of Gin and Nytol. At worst it's formulaic. "Hold onto people – they're slipping away." Into a coma?

Mary Bowers

Released on March 14th through Mute

Live by the word, die by the sword

Niccie Simpson looks at the controversy surrounding the violence of hip-hop culture



It was eight years ago on Tuesday that The Notorious B.I.G., aka Biggie Smalls, was gunned down after leaving a party in California in March 1997. The recent shooting incident outside a radio station in New York connected with the feud between 50 Cent and his protegee The Game raises once again the issue of the violence that is supposedly endemic in hip-hop culture.

The \$5 billion industry accounts for around 13% of music sales in the US – however, its image has been marred by gang violence due to the activities of high profile artists and a litany of shootings and rapper-killings.

None have been so high-profile as the murders of Tupac Shakur and Biggie. When 2Pac was shot and robbed in November 1994 he accused Biggie of involvement, leading to the east coast/west coast feud that would climax in the deaths of both – Shakur in November 1994, and Notorious B.I.G. 6 months later.

However, 2pac, who has had more posthumous hits in the UK than any other artist including

There is a tendency to demonise hip-hop

Elvis, had been involved in violence long before this – amongst other things, he had been arrested in 1992 when a fight he was involved in resulted in the accidental death of a six-year-old boy, and had been accused of forceful sodomy of a female fan.

However, the murder of Run DMC's Jam Master Jay in 2002 was something of a surprise – nothing in his past linked him to thuggery, and his group pre-dated

the guns-'n'-gangstas image of later artists. However, it is all too easy to blame MJ's death on the violent culture of the hip-hop generation. Hip-hop critic and writer Angus Batey said that "There is a tendency to demonise hip-hop, but you can't blame the music for something like this."

All of this has inevitably led to many asking the question: Does rap music glorify real-life violence? Supporters of the genre say the biggest problem facing rap is unfair media portrayal. The media's role in fostering rap's image for its own ends has often been questioned – it is good at self-policing and will stop promoting violent rappers only if the public decides they no longer want to watch and listen to it.

It has never been proven that representational violence leads to actual violence. There is desensitization, perhaps, and a discourse of aggressiveness, but how that translates into actual aggressiveness is ambiguous. Rap is far more multifaceted than the media gives it credit for – we must

remember that lyrics give voice to violent experiences in the inner city that many don't want to admit exist.

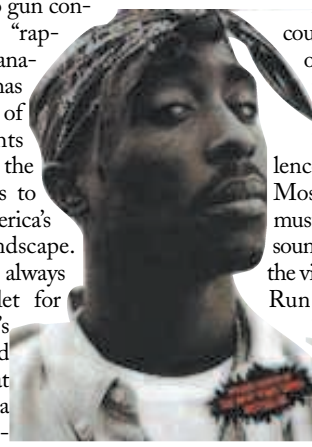
Does rap music glorify real-life violence?

While the media has focused primarily on violent lyrics and images, many other artists have been trying to harness hip-hop's potential political power to deal with issues ranging from education funding to gun control. Called "rap-tivism", some analysts believe it has the potential of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s to transform America's political landscape. Hip-hop has always been the outlet for poor people's frustration, and if it parlayed that energy into a political grass-

roots movement, it can transform the nation.

One thing is certain – the industry needs to transform from within to become a more powerful and positive social force. We should not, by any means, attempt to censor or dictate artistic direction, but too often rap artists focus on the "gangsta fairy tale" without mentioning the repercussions.

We must concede that that artistic images *do* influence behavior, therefore the industry has a responsibility to counter the glorification of guns and street hustling with a realistic message. After all, "you can't sow violence and reap peace". Most importantly, we must be careful not to sound the alarm bell about the violence of hip-hop – as Run reminded us in "Rock Box", "we got all the rhymes and all the rhymes/we don't drop dime and don't do crime".



Ligeti gets a look-in at Kettle's Yard

Pianist Simon Smith discusses the Ligeti Etudes he will be playing in his lunchtime recital today.

Ligeti composed the first book of his series of Etudes in 1985 and the second book was assembled more gradually, between 1988 and 1994. The third book was begun in 1995 and is theoretically ongoing. So far, there are 18 Etudes in total, and Ligeti has arranged the Etudes of the first two books in such a way that they form a musically and dramatically satisfying sequence when performed in order.

With the exception of the first piece, I will be playing the twelve Etudes chosen for this recital in order, divided into two groups of six. Etude 6, which ends the first group, is the last piece in Book 1 and as well as being one of the longest is the most complex in construction and probably the most technically demanding. Etude 13, the penultimate piece in Book 2, is by far the most dramatic – and violent – of the whole series, and is an overwhelmingly powerful conclusion to the second Book (after which Etude 14 is perhaps a little superfluous).

As with much of Ligeti's music, the Etudes place extreme demands upon the performer, in terms of agility, velocity, endurance, and crucially, independence of the two hands. Ligeti has said that he wrote such uncompromisingly difficult music because of frustration with the limits of his own piano technique. One might argue that occasionally he has gone a little too far, but when played by a performer such as Pierre-Laurent Aimard (the composer's favourite pianist, whose recording of the Etudes (Sony) must surely rank as one of the greatest recordings of anything, ever) all such doubts vanish.

As a mere mortal, however, all I can do is offer my very best approximation of the composer's wishes.

Simon Smith

Kettle's Yard, today at 1.10pm – Admission Free

Keeping the legacy alive

Sam Blatherwick on John Peel's replacements

Whilst I'm not one for petty national pride, we have very good taste in this country. Where else in the world would the death of a DJ who span records made in bedrooms make front page news? There's a very good reason for this – the BBC has consistently been there for anything which wouldn't get a look in on commercial channels. At night, especially, they provide an essential service for all alternative music fans outside the M25. Through the unique way it is funded we can listen to indie, techno, bhangra, rap, and ambient.

However, with the death of John Peel last Autumn a gap was left in the schedules. Rob Da Bank kept the seat warm until the New Year, but this was only a stopgap. Not until January did

Radio One announce their replacement. Not able to pick simply one successor to "keep the legacy alive" they finally settled on three, from different backgrounds, relatively young and enthusiastic.

So: three different nights with three different DJ's. On a Tuesday night the show is presented by Huw Stephens, a Welshman who is better known for his work with 'The Session in Wales'. Wednesday nights is in the hands of Ras Kwame from 1Xtra and on Thursdays Rob Da Bank takes charge.

So far the shows have more than lived up to expectation. Initial fears have been dispelled by the presenters' enthusiasm for the music, and excellent guests: Ras Kwame gave a brilliant inter-

view with Benjamin Zephaniah and Huw Stephens welcomed Gruff Rhys, frontman of Super Furry Animals to perform tracks from his solo album.

However, Rob Da Bank has become a highlight – he not only plays a wider variety of records than his colleagues, but also has a superb rapport with his team which puts across a charming amateurishness reminiscent of his predecessor. "What time is it Louise?" questions Da Bank on air – "HARDCORE TIME!" comes the call from the back of the studio. I last saw him opening for Panda Bear at the back of the Portland Arms in January. He reads poetry over a minidisc player – and if that's not enough to rush back from the bar for on a week night, I don't know what is.

Jimmy Page: legend

Andy MacDowall

About a year ago, I received a phone call from a friend. "MacDowall," he mumbled, "come up here. Amazing. Fuck." I hurried upstairs, not quite knowing what to expect. There he was, hunched on the edge of his bed in his dressing gown (it was 3pm) over his computer monitor, on which was a blurred and frozen image of skinny man on stage with an electric guitar. "Jimmy. Amazing," he said. I had always thought the idea of music DVDs was the music, but my friend disagreed; forwarding the footage frame by frame, we watched as Jimmy Page slowly leant backwards. "Just watch him...amazing."

I never imagined my Led Zeppelin obsession would be quite as pitifully onanistic as this. But my friend had a point. Live, they were, I believe, unrivalled. More faultless than The Who, louder than The Stones, usually playing about six to eight times longer sets than the Beatles. No band pushed themselves to the very limits on stage to quite the same extent.

And they looked so good as well; John Bonham at the back driving the Zeppelin on with incredible power, even in his last days, when he himself was driven on by gallons of vodka and fistfuls of amphetamines. JPJ in his white suit, half-smile always on his lips. And Jimmy: fingers darting along the frets, playing with a shrug like he didn't care, and somehow always managing to look like he was playing air guitar.

Jimmy Page took the reins of the defunct Yardbirds, the only remaining member of that visionary band who hadn't



Page regretted not removing his guitar before taking a slash.

returned to Blues, given up or been sacked for being pissed. In 1968, he cobbled together a band with session musician and arranger John Paul Jones and two little known Black Country artists.

More faultless than the Who, louder than The Strokes

From a first practice in a basement in Chinatown to being probably the best selling band per release in the history of pop music, Jimmy's perfectionism and plain talent took the band to higher and higher levels. The band toured in Scandinavia on behalf of the Yardbirds before releasing three albums in less than two years. By this time thirty years ago, they had released six stunning albums, culminating in

Physical Graffiti, a double monster containing songs from all of the band's styles – oh, and the appalling 'Boogie With Stu'.

Even in the early days, the band were popular and powerful enough to make unprecedented demands for percentages from promoters and venues. So reluctant was the band's huge manager, Peter Grant, to cede any profits that he used satellite images of festival attendance to prove that he was being underpaid by the organisers.

And at the eye of the storm of music and hype, there was one constant. It was the brilliance of Jimmy Page. Ah, what of 'Stairway'? One of the most requested songs ever on US Radio, the stuff of every amateur guitarist's legend. No 'Stairway'? Denied! Perhaps only 'Hotel California'.

What to watch
My Fair Lady


*ADC, 15th - 26th March,
19.30pm*

Arguably the strongest musical theatre talent in the university assembled into one cast. Jacky Evans shines as Eliza and Ben Deery is back, after a not so very long break. Promises stunning costumes too. You may even spot Sam Kitchener if, Zack Simons the director threatens, he turns up to rehearse. Could this be the finest musical in a term of many rivals?

Evelyn Budden, Auctioneer

*ADC, 16th - 19th March,
11pm*

*This year's Harry Porter Prize winner written by
Luke Roberts*

Finishing strong: A peek at things to come

Diagnosis

Preview by Chris Knight

It's been a long time since the Footlights automatically took their revues to the London stage, but then 'Diagnosis' is not your average Footlights revue. It is more of a surrealist whirlwind that blows through theatrical conventions, systematically laying waste to any attempt not to laugh. It is, as Varsity said, "extremely funny".

Originally an ADC Lateshow in October, the original cast of writer Nick Mohammed and Simon Bird will be performing 'Diagnosis' at the Hen and Chickens in Islington from the 22nd of March. It is part of the Guerrilla Theatre season for new writing, with a strict 'No Frills' approach. This, as Mohammed points out, was never going to be much of a problem for 'Diagnosis' which prided itself on using no props anyway. Apart from Bird's refusal to learn his poem, reading it off a piece of paper.

The lack of set and props is contrasted by the play's very original use of projection, with a superbly drawn anime sequence and a very funny side-swipe at film credits. But not everything will survive the transfer to the big league. The audience participation will be dropped (rightly so in my opin-

ion), probably in favour of a mime to music and other areas will be tinkered with although there is no need to properly rewrite.

Of more worry, is how the humour will transfer. Cambridge audiences have a

Cambridge audiences have a reputation for being easy to please

reputation for being easy to please, London less so. How will the quick-fire dialogue, the seemingly random interjection of genres and very segmented ending fare? Bird and Mohammed aren't too worried, and feel that if the performances are confident the audience will be drawn in. This is probably a fair assessment, and will only help both grow as performers, and Mohammed as a writer, to get reactions from audiences that are not used to them or their style. Neither expect the sort of reaction they achieved in Cambridge (although for anyone still around, a bus will be going from Cambridge to Islington on the 23rd), but I cannot see the show bombing entirely. It's simply too funny.

*Hen and Chickens Theatre
22nd-25th March, 7.30pm*

Jesus Christ Superstar

Preview by Alex Williams

Dom Carter has long dominated the musical theatre stage in Cambridge, and in recent terms seems to have paired up with Mark Stanford, the two appearing together in 'Apocalypse: The Musical' and 'Merrily We Roll Along'. It may well be the familiarity of working with each other so frequently that has given their stage relationship in 'Jesus Christ Superstar' so wonderful an edge. They generate a perfect blend of the latent passion and dangerous tension that ultimately leads to betrayal. Though Carter has a particularly strong falsetto, both are magnificent in tackling the challenging vocals, Stanford belting out his lines with terrific emotional power.

The Fitzwilliam Auditorium is a new dramatic space essentially designed as a lecture theatre, and this is its first major production. Bearing this in mind, the staging and sound are incredibly impressive. Lyrics are lost a little too frequently, but this is more than made up for by the dynamism of the cast, who throw themselves into the magnificently performed music. It's therefore a shame that this energy has no structured means



of expression. There is no choral choreography to speak of. Instead we are presented with four dancers whose white clothes distinctly separate them from the rest of the cast who improvise their way through otherwise solid blocking. As a result, the middle and back stage space tends to be used over the front, problematic in so large a space.

The costume is vaguely seventies hippy, rapidly establishing a rough context in which to situate the action. At the show's end, Judas undergoes a hilarious transformation, rushing a decade forward and bursting into view dressed in what one might describe as an MC Hammer outfit, baggy white trousers and startling red jacket.

Indeed, the show is stuffed with imaginative visuals that maintain interest. A sand pit, which at first seems simply to make a mess, is revealed to hide a deadly secret. The cross that dominates the back of the stage increases rather than diminishes its symbolic potency by its constant presence, helping create a deeply moving climax.

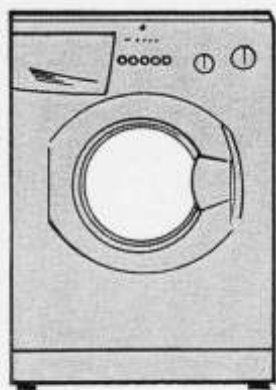
A review of this musical wouldn't be complete without mention of the smashingly comic King Herod's song. Postgraduate Richard Benwell returns to Cambridge to fill this cameo spot and doesn't disappoint. So go along and make the Fitzwilliam Auditorium's first major production the success it deserves to be!

Bevan

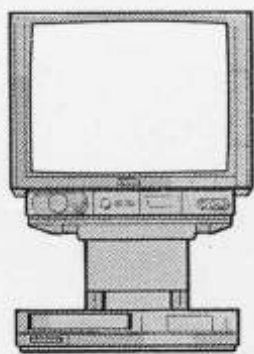
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Nothing on Noises Off

Megan Prosser celebrates with sardines

'That's farce. That's the theatre. That's life'

Michael Frayn, a masterful translator of Chekhov as well as the creator of political triumphs such as 'Democracy', notes in his introduction to 'Three Sisters' that its 1901 cast found it "unactable." The same could be said for 'Noises Off' from a first reading of the script. This clearly, however, has not daunted director Tim Froggatt who wrestled with the task of presenting a play within the play - 'Nothing On', the touring farce in which Frayn's creations themselves are acting. That the cast achieved the problematical coalescence with the split-second precision that Frayn demands is a tribute to a fearless team.

Each page of script for Act II is divided into two columns, detailing action on different sides of a rotating set. They must mesh for audience involvement to be maintained. The ADC's audience from the start seemed unafraid to react, even shouting

helpful suggestions to the characters; a sense of engagement stimulated by the planting of actor Ben Hadley ('Lloyd Dallas') within the auditorium. Blue fleur-de-lys on yellow walls provided 'busy' decor for the hectic play, although more elaborate furnishings might have increased this effect. The six-door set, crucial considering the play's first draft was simply called 'Exits', was ambitious but worked well.

This is a rich, slick production

Bursting onstage, Garry's (Matt Bethell) height and strong physicality made him brilliantly suitable for increasing energy in the early scenes. Freddy demonstrated a childish glee, harmonised with onstage wife Belinda's sprightliness in the best duo of the production (Seaton Gordon and Emma Back), and Tom Grayson Ford presented Tim as a disarming blend of 'diet-

coke-break' and inexperienced techie. Rapid exchanges between Spyrides and Bethell were particularly notable for smoothness.

Sadly, lines were not always audible from the tiered seating. More on-set preparation would have inevitably helped pace, bringing a bigger climax to Act 1, and there were moments when doors were opened at the right moment but the actors seemed unintentionally slow to appear. However, these things were never apparent in the later acts due to actors' increasing focus.

Stating the dramatic impossibility of playing a 'love scene from cold in five minutes', Ben Hadley easily held focus for the beginning of Act II with his excellent character development. As 'Nothing On' got underway the mood was reflected 'backstage' by blue light (although parts of the set were too dim) and soon, axes were being thrown with acrobatic effortlessness while fish were landing with satisfying plops everywhere, this

clamour cleverly contrasted by Poppy's dejected figure. Every actor possessed an assured, likeable comic ability, seemingly content whether the audience laughed or not (and they inevitably did).

Act III brought on yet more sardines, leaving brine-soaked trails of destruction on the floor and on the actors. As the scent steadily diffused through the theatre, and wordplay reached its best, the audience felt gloriously comfortable, rewarding with enthusiastic applause well-delivered lines such as Cripps' wonderfully dry 'I must make another plate of sardines... to celebrate.'

This is a rich, slick, production that well reflects Frayn's ambivalent relationship with the theatre, having been once spat upon in the street by a dissatisfied theatre-goer. Guaranteed to attract audiences of all ages, and send them home glowing.

ADC, 8th - 12th March, 7.30pm



Jackson's Way on a winning streak by Nick Mohammed

Overnight sensation Jackson's Way took the Edinburgh Festival Fringe by storm last year when little known Will Adamsdale's first ever comedy show won the prestigious Perrier Comedy Award. Will originally brought Jackson's Way to the Festival as a one week experiment; trying out the show in front of an audience in order to develop his character, Chris John Jackson - a seriously deluded motivational speaker - further. But after a series of ecstatic reviews and a whirlwind of buzzing word-of-mouth he extended his run, leading, sensationally, to the winning of the 2004 Perrier Comedy Award.

A feat which, Will admits, still surprises him now. Even as he drives away from yet another hugely successful gig, part of his nationwide tour, Will's modesty is

as outstanding as his delicious caricature and a joy to behold: A role-model to any budding performer, with the added bonus of just-so-happening-to-be the 'hottest new property in UK comedy' (The Scotsman).

Will trained in straight acting at the Oxford School of Drama and started gaining acclaim on stage in 1999. His comedy background is impressively sparse, given his recent and incredibly prestigious success. "Jackson's Way", says Will, "started life as a sketch in a pub cabaret night and was later developed with the help of Battersea Arts Centre (BAC) Producer Kate McGrath through BAC's pioneering Scratch programme.

The Underbelly run, last summer, was originally only scheduled to last a week...and that's

where it all took off."

So is life coach Chris John Jackson actually based on anyone? "Chris John Jackson isn't really based on anyone specific, I didn't go out of my way to research such people", speaks Will, "he's perhaps a slightly exaggerated version of me, but mine and his relationship is difficult to pin down. It's maybe better to look at Chris' relationship with me, rather than the other way round; I think he thinks I'm his manager - but we've kind of fallen out! I would say that rather him being based on anyone, he's more a product of the jargon-infested world we live in today. I think that we can all relate to that".

Immediately after Will completes his tour, he will be performing at the Melbourne Comedy Festival after which he will return

to London for a three week run at BAC before jetting off once more to New York to perform at the Brits Off Broadway Festival. "I honestly don't know what I'm going to do next, it's all so unpredictable" muses Will. Rest assured, whatever project Will Adamsdale does decide to pursue next is a box of delights just waiting to be opened and we are all very much in for an illuminating treat.

Jackson's Way is both a comedy about a man on the edge whose approach to life celebrates the futility of pointless acts and a satire on the world of self-help and corporate jargon. Come and revel in this brilliant commentary and watch Chris John Jackson shine.

ADC, Sunday 20th March, 8.30pm

Smorgasbord

Review by Imogen Walford
Corpus Playroom, 8th-12th March, 7pm

Seven plays, six writers and six directors: Smorgasbord's success is as hit and miss as can be expected with the huge number of different styles on display. Smorgasbord primarily exists to showcase new writing. The fundamental problem with some of these scripts is that they don't know what they want to say. Pieces such as Angus Wright's 'Beware the Children' are light, fluffy and amusing but lack anything more.

Andrew Poole's 'Prisoners' tries to engage with contemporary culture in its portrayal of two Western soldiers in the hands of what seem to be Islamic fundamentalists, but sadly the piece lets itself down with a clichéd presentation of the 'clash of civilisations'. There is a very real sense with the scripts that the writers feel constricted by genres: both Sam Jones' 'Keeping Going' about an

aspiring playwright and Lawrence Hooper's 'Hell' are very self-conscious pieces of 'theatre'. For quality of writing though, 'Keeping Going' is easily the best piece on show for the way it plays on conventions and Jones' confidence in its own simplicity. Smorgasbord is patchy but does have some strong sections of acting and visual impact. Chris Adams complements the bizarre fantasy of 'Beware the Children' with his quirky, childlike staging and Kai Tabacek's interpretation of 'Hell' is visually very strong. The most coherent piece of the whole selection is Daisy Black's 'Anna's Answer'. In this study of how differently people can relate to the one central figure of Anna, Eva Augustyn puts together a slick, well paced play with an extremely good cast. It's difficult to single people out but Paul McCormick deserves particular mention for pulling off the part of an ill, well-meaning father on the verge of alcoholism and conviction. 'Anna's Answer' is the highlight of the evening.

An Ideal Husband

Review by Becky Seales
Pembroke New Cellars, 8th - 12th March, 7.30pm

'An Ideal Husband.' Was written during the 'Naughty Nineties,' the twilight years of the Victorian period during which the English were becoming increasingly conservative in their social mores. Wilde, an avowed aesthete, rebelled against the pious cluckings of the straight-laced majority, favouring a life of individual freedom and social theatricality, and opined that the world should be judged not by its moral probity but by the beauty of its artifice. In 'An Ideal Husband,' he dramatized this clash of value systems by amalgamating the contemporary forms of farce and melodrama, framing them in timeless Wildean wit, and subverting them to ironic ends while still successfully pulling off a conventionally romantic, 'happily-ever-after' denouement.

Director Edmund Highcock has chosen to base his rendering of

this scintillating play on Oliver Parker's lavish film adaptation, and despite lacking the latter's twelve million pound budget and the additional lure of Rupert Everett, it does make for an entertaining night out. The acting is mostly extremely assured and well-sustained, and although I felt that the play lacked pace at some crucial points, this was largely made up for by some sparkling dialogues, notably between Ben Irving as the dashing indolent miscreant Lord Goring and Catherine Spencer as Miss Mabel Chiltern, the unashamedly decorative damsel determined to save him from his bachelorhood, his misbehaviour and his father by coaxing him down the aisle.

Given the limiting size of the performance space, the decision to stage the play in the round is an intelligent one, although incorporating scene-changes into the play itself where possible would have added further polish. 'An Ideal Husband' is not, ultimately, brilliantly conceived, but it is brilliantly written, well-rehearsed and very good fun.

Mrs. Warren's Profession

Review by J. J. Adams
Queen's Theatre, Emmanuel College 8th-12th March

You've no idea how hard I've fought that quiet, insistent voice in my head, which urged me, perniciously, to title this review 'How Not to Do a Play' or 'Why I'd Rather Be Kicked by a Horse than See this Play Again'; on mature reflection I've realized that both are terribly unfair, first to Bernard Shaw, and secondly to the cast who struggled valiantly against some of the most perverse and irrational blocking I've seen in some time.

I admit to be something of a Bernard Shaw cheerleader and, though I'd be the first to admit that Shaw is nothing if not didactic, he nonetheless rises often to a true lyric and poetic

beauty, and takes his place rightly as the second playwright in the English language. Mrs Warren's Profession, glib to say it,

was remarkably ahead of its time in its treatment of the rôle of women in society, and of the state-sanctioned hypocrisy that maintained its corruptions.

The director of the play decided to put the audience on stage with the cast, presumably to make us feel complicit in the hypocrisy of the piece; the unfortunate consequence of this is that for most of the play I was either dazzled by stage lights, or faced with the unappealing prospect of staring at the back of the actors' heads, which, coupled with often unclear enunciation, rendered much of the play more or less inaudible and invisible.

Mixed performances were given by the cast, occasionally convincing, as Mrs Warren in a touching scene with Vivie, but all too often descending into nonsense and pantomime once again. The character of Vivie, who delivered a fine performance with conviction and aplomb, went some way towards redeeming the demerits of the production

They've got the whole world in their hands

George Marshall discusses the attempt to trace paths of visual information from first encounter to the Gallery

I felt high anticipation as I entered the new art exhibition at Kettle's Yard, entitled "The World, Abridged". The exhibits ambitiously attempt to investigate the logical and intuitive thought processes which shape the way we apprehend the world. The work of the five young artists, namely Oliver Bancroft, Mark Edwards, Ryan Gander, Sally Osborn, and Lucy Skaer, is characterised inexplicitly by an underlying epistemological exploration, drawing on the images, information, and places that surround us which collectively constitute our "mind-map". I therefore approached the exhibition eager to discern the extent to which their work realized these relatively abstruse yet decidedly stimulating themes.

The exhibition draws on the images, information, and places that surround us which collectively constitute our "mind map"

One is immediately presented on entrance with an extraordinary pencil drawing by Lucy Skaer, a work entitled "The Wood and the Trees".

This highly elaborate image, depicting a recognisable woodland scene, may be construed as a self-conscious meditation and deconstruction of form, with each part of the composition painstakingly pulverised

Together, they serve to illuminate aspects of the world which would otherwise go unnoticed

into miniscule shards of flat tone. Like her other works, the picture forms a shrewd visual riddle, alluding to the fragmentary forms of analytic Cubism, and thus efficaciously challenges and subverts the way we perceive reality.

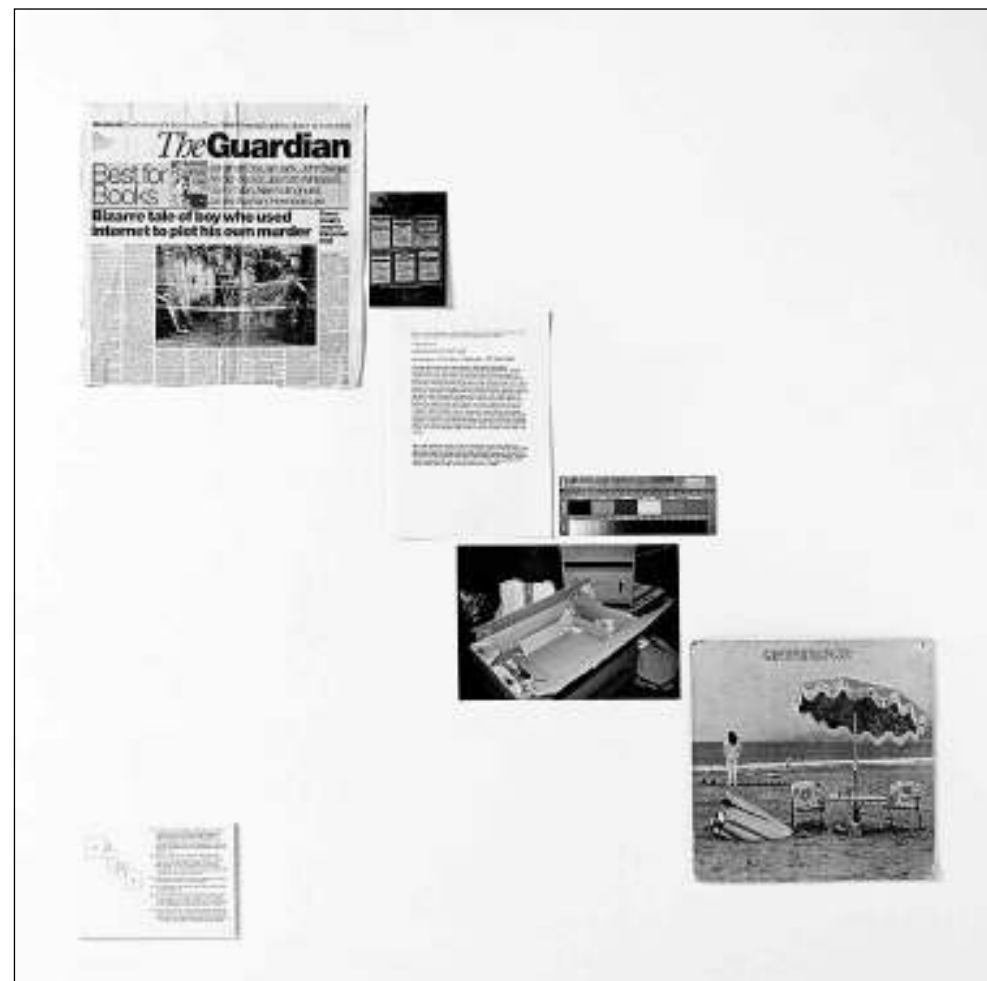
Starkly contrasting the intricate detail of Skaer's work is Mark Edwards's series of large photographs of impoverished and unremarkable landscape scenes. Together, they serve to illuminate aspects of the world which would otherwise go unnoticed. It is perhaps somewhat dubious as to whether these rather mundane photographs genuinely serve to map something of our world. Nevertheless, the use of photography in this instance can be seen to unveil, to quote the eminent critic and cultural the-

orist Walter Benjamin, the "optical unconscious", transfiguring the commonplace into something more intelligible.

The exhibition arrangement then leads on to the highly conceptual work of Ryan Gander. His perplexing series of interrelated frames explore the world at hand and are presented as an enigmatic visual puzzle for the viewer to decode. The comprehensibility of his work is discernible by ascertaining connections between the dynamic ends of his images, as they move from one object, for example newspaper articles including one about murder, to the next, such as a photographic test card. Though seemingly inexplicable, with some insight one may interpret the series as demonstrating the way in which information is processed, coupled with the "production of meaning".

Bancroft's austere installations in film and photography are obscure instantiations of the concepts of memory

The remaining works by Oliver Bancroft and Sally Osborn appear somewhat unfathomable, yet both share clearly observable common themes. Bancroft's austere



Ryan Gander: *To Flash It* (2004).

installations in film and photography are obscure instantiations of the concepts of memory and visual experience. His notable work is "The Hydra Tree" in which four film projectors are employed to fabricate a tall, thin image of a tree, ruptured at three horizontal intervals perpendicular to the image's height. The glitchy and shifting quality of the image may be read as an examination of the precarious transience of photographic images. Thus it is more about the meditation of perception in relation to photography than perception itself. Osborn's large installation is similarly ambiguous, ranging from abstract, architectural sculptures in wood of apparently remembered places, coupled with casual sketches of her personal history.

Overall, the pluralistic treatment of complex themes amounts to a very successful and intriguing exhibition. The star of the show for me was Lucy Skaer, whose alluring and sophisticated drawings are perhaps the most apt at articulating the way we apprehend the world through sensory perception, albeit in an obfuscated mode which initiates the beholder to decipher the hidden object underneath. In addition, her works for me were the most arresting formally, inducing aesthetic emotion into the beholder.

As with most contemporary art, conventional notions of beauty are subordinated in favour of ideas and concepts to stimulate discussion, so if your conception of art is contrary to this, then you may not appreciate certain works on display here. I would, however, urge all readers to visit "The



Lucy Skaer: *Flash in the Metropolitain* (2004)

World, Abridged" as the works, en masse, provoke poignant and enlightening thoughts about perception and reality, and the ways in which those ideas may be represented and distilled into art.

"A World Abridged"
At Kettlesyard from 5th of March - 1st of May

www.kettlesyard.cam.ac.uk

Also worth a look...

Yoshitoshi at
The Fitzwilliam Museum
till the 24th of April

Giovanna Maria Casetta's
Looking Good at Kettles
Yard from March 24th



Oliver Bancroft: *The Hydra Tree* (2003)

Rites of passion

Carly Farthing comes of age with *Somersault* director Cate Shortland

Cate Shortland has reason to be happy. Her quietly affecting debut film *Somersault*, a poignant and poetic tale of a teenage girl's search for intimacy in a wintry corner of New South Wales, has exceeded all expectations as an understated Australian production and received widespread critical acclaim. For a first foray into feature length film, it's the stuff emergent writer-directors dream of. Speaking to me in Cambridge's Arts Picturehouse before a preview of the film, Shortland admits that she's "really surprised even to be here. When we made the film we didn't expect it to go to so many countries. It's the best outcome that you could hope for".

The film's mixture of haunting visuals and naturalism follows 16-year-old Heidi (a stunning central performance from relative newcomer Abbie Cornish) and her obsessive need for emotional and physical contact through transient sexual encounters. It has obviously struck a chord in the film world, proven by *Somersault's* landslide victory at the AFI awards (the Aussie BAFTAs), where it triumphed in every single category.

While Shortland cannot help but be pleased at the critical success of her debut, she believes that such a clean sweep is perhaps indicative of a slump in the production of Australian movies. "It hasn't been a really strong year in Australia for the film industry, so, in some ways it's fantastic to win thirteen awards, but in other ways you just hope the industry

improves". She comments upon the "very conservative government" of her homeland and the negative consequences for its filmmakers: "funding for the arts is not a priority, so it's been very difficult to get films made".

"the actors seemed so intimate, I felt like a voyeur"

The hypnotic quality of *Somersault's* visual style is matched in terms of power by the rawness and honesty of the performances of Shortland's cast, notably from Cornish as the teenager who flees her home after being caught in a clench with her mother's boyfriend, and Sam Worthington, as the emotionally repressed local womaniser whose tentative relationship with Heidi uncovers the weaknesses in them both.

The need for such truth whilst exploring the realms of love and sex was paramount for Shortland, to the extent that she developed extensive back-stories for every single character in the films before writing the last draft of her script: "where they went to school, how they grew up, when they lost their virginity, when they'd fallen in love".

The astonishing naturalism of the performances came from intense rehearsal rather than improvisation, and the writer-director recalls her advice to her actors. "On the first day of rehearsals, I said to them, 'look, I don't care what happens as long as we think it's truthful'. That was a really good thing because if we were on set and something

didn't feel truthful, either I'd cut or one of the actors would say 'this feels like bullshit', and they'd cut themselves. You have to fight for that [emotional truth] and not be lazy."

For Shortland, the often-painful quality of such realism is a testament to its effectiveness. "What I think is great is I used to feel uncomfortable being in the room when we were shooting - not just in sex scenes - because the actors seemed so intimate, and so in "the moment", that I felt like this weird voyeur being with them. It's such a privilege to be privy to that."

"girls are playing at being a woman, and sexuality is part of that"

The film shows a hitherto underrepresented side of Australia in the ski-resort of Jindabyne, with the wintriness of its snowy mountains and rugged terrain echoing the emotional repression and lack of sexual intimacy in a way reminiscent of Ang Lee's *The Ice Storm*.

"We weren't deliberately trying to show the rest of the world another part of Australia, but what we were trying to do was make a film in a part of Australia that we all felt really strongly about and that we all felt was a beautiful under-explored part. There was also the emotional terrain of the film - it's about isolation and also about intimacy, and love, and sex, so to shoot in a really cold, quite harsh environment



The age of sexual innocence - Abbie Cornish and Sam Worthington in *Somersault*

really underscored the moments in the film where you have true intimacy between people."

Somersault's central theme - the use and abuse of an alluring sixteen-year-old girl's sexuality, and an often childish one at that, is one that could become contentious, even exploitative in less sensitive hands, and Shortland acknowledges this. "What I was really worried about was that Abbie Cornish as a human being is so attractive - that people would look at her on the surface and objectify her, and that would stop them having an emotional response. But she's such a good actor that people have responded emotionally to her and forgotten how beautiful she is".

She notes the "friction" she's often observed from male viewers in their conflicted response to the character - at once vulnerable yet attractive - yet reminds me that "it's a reality that girls of that age are kind of playing at being a woman, and sexuality is a part of that".

I ask Shortland about the role

of the female director, and how this affects her presentation of female sexuality in the film. "there's certain things just as a person that I like, that are my taste, that may be a by-product of being a woman and that's why I would say, shoot a scene in a certain way, but I think definitely women are more obsessed with detail and make interior films about the psyche."

Acknowledging that the view that men make films "about conquest and action" is a generalisation, she observes that "women tend to make films about relationships - Jane Campion, Gillian Armstrong; even Sofia Coppola, Lynne Ramsay. A lot of their films are about mood and emotion, not so much about action and plot."

As befits a Fine Arts graduate (she attended the University of Sydney), Shortland lists the numerous influences that contribute to *Somersault's* visual style as the "really intimate, painful, beautiful images" of New York photographer Nan Golden and

the work of suburban photo-artist Todd Hido, "who does amazing long exposure shots mostly at night in America; very moody, dramatic, beautiful photographs".

Less obviously, she also credits the "Japanese pop imagery, the stuff that's done by young Japanese girls" as the inspiration for Heidi's fixation with her scrapbook, the collection of the minutiae and images she encounters in her daily life.

Of the impact of her artistic background upon her film-making, she says "it's just a part of me. I'm really obsessed by imagery - I love a beautiful frame and the symbolism of colour." Even when not behind a camera, Shortland admits that the artist's eye that makes *Somersault* so hypnotically beautiful to watch stays with her in daily life. "Even when I walk around London I'm looking at things, at weird details that other people might not notice. I think it's just my conditioning."

Somersault is playing at the Arts Picturehouse now.

Varsity recommends



Let Samantha Morton get under your skin with a career-defining performance

With the Australian *Somersault* taking us into the heart of female sexuality from this Friday at the Arts Picturehouse (see interview and review above), it seems right to bring to attention Carine Adler's exploration of similar territory in her little-known masterpiece, *Under the Skin*.

The picture marks the film debut of Samantha Morton,

who plays Iris, a young woman in her late teens who loses her mother to cancer. The trauma of the loss sets in motion a primitive, uncontrolled submission to a burgeoning sexuality, and is the trigger of a simultaneous erection and erosion of the female self.

This is, though the use of such an indistinct umbrella term may be too great a generalisation, a feminist film. It

explores the connections between language, voice, femininity, and sexuality. And it's difficult - but then the worthiness of films always are.

Morton is as affecting an actress as ever - this is, to employ yet more generalising gravitas, probably the performance of her career - and, together with Adler's raw, naturalistic direction, she makes *Under the Skin* wholly unmissable.

Student short cuts

Emma Paterson spends two hours with twelve films at the Cinecam Student Film Festival

How much can a filmmaker say in ten minutes? The answer is a somewhat reductive, very uncomplicated 'not a lot'. When it comes to short films, thrown out of the window are extended narratives, character evolution and all those other familiar marks of a feature film.

Thrown in, as demonstrated by the Cinecam Student Film Festival last weekend, are at least one of the following: quirkiness (think a top-heavy housewife jogging through the house in her sweats), home-turf satire (think Cambridge students killing off their academic rivals to ensure the highest first), and artistic innovation (think purple lit car parks, the hyperkinetic composition of a letter, backwards storytelling). Personally, of all these, I'd bin the first, take (with tentative hands) the second, and grab the last.

The festival judges, however - John Pym, editor of the Time Out Film Guide; directors

Toby MacDonald and Brian Gilbert; and Franz Von Hapsburg, head of the Brighton Film School - would have to disagree with me. They announced *Skelettres*, directed by Laura Allsop and Jeremy Davies, as the festival's winner. The film was, in short, a love story playing itself out in a Cambridge college library - boy spies girl, boys woos girl whilst hiding behind a skeleton, girl tangoes with said skeleton (or something).

Pretty cute, yes, but for those of us without a penchant for self-conscious wackiness, this kind of thing begins to grate. As does the story of a boy expecting the second coming, who eats his cigarette and then dives into a river. As does a woman passing out mid-seduction because her corset is too tight.

It's a bit like meeting the girl who wears her hair in a side-ponytail, sports a set of plastic fuchsia bracelets from Claire's Accessories, and says to you, on first meeting,

'Sorry, I'm a bit weird, aren't I?'. Substitute boring, irritating, or, if you're in a particularly foul mood, sickening, for the word 'weird' and you'd be nearer the mark.

Of course, taking yourself too seriously is just as bad. Rob Petit's *Ten Pence*, despite its skilful use of music and direction, made a trite and overly sentimental attempt to capture ten minutes of urban disillusionment, and soft-centre introspection proved just as tiring as off-centre 'madness'.

But it wasn't all bad. *My Dad is Bigger than your Dad*, directed by Kirsty Dootson, managed to be moving rather than mawkish. And Beth Stratford and Caroline Williams's *Letters*, the best film of the festival, was a triumphant ten minutes following a man who, as he tries to reply to a child's doodle with words, becomes stunted by writer's block. Visually innovative, and curiously affecting, this short was nothing short of brilliant.

Are students too lazy to watch football?

Adam Edelshain tries to work out why students aren't on the terraces

On average 1% of Histon FC tickets are sold to university students. Given that the average league attendance is less than 300, this works out at less than 3 students per match. While for some this may just be another meaningless fact, it bothers me quite considerably. Football loving students are not actively supporting the local football sides in Cambridge.

This begs the question, why? Perhaps all the football fans at Cambridge and APU are rushing to see Cambridge United at Histon's expense (unlikely though given their ailing attendances and resulting money troubles). Or maybe every football loving Cambridge student had essay crises that happen to coincide with every home game.

Too much work is a ridiculously poor excuse for any football fan (a real fan would rearrange his wedding for a match. Why else are there so many summer (post season) weddings? The weather can't quite explain it). And the poor standard of football played by Cambridge United when compared to Chelsea and Arsenal makes little difference to Macclesfield Town and Kidderminster Harriers fans.

It seems to me that there are three types of football fans. I can accept that there will inevitably be plenty of fair-weather fans at Cambridge, just as there will be at every university; the sort of people that overhear you talking about football and say, "that Thierry Henry scores a lot doesn't he!" At the other end of the spectrum, I know there are many football fans with season tickets back at home, whether it be at Highbury, Stamford Bridge or Prenton Park.

Finally you get your average fan, going to matches whenever he can but constrained financially or by the distance he lives away from the ground. The fan that watches his team religiously on the television, either in live games or division highlights and follows everything in the papers.

Now it's pretty clear why the first of the three types doesn't go to watch Cambridge United every week. If they even knew that Cambridge had a team in the football league, they would probably feign to look down on it as 'lower league football' and they wouldn't dream of going to a ground anyway. Too many people and all that swearing. They haven't been to Highbury

or Old Trafford before so why on earth would they go to the Abbey Stadium?

At the other end of the scale I can just about reason why some of the season ticket holding fans will stay away from supporting the likes of Histon and Cambridge City. If they can't quite make it to Carlisle for an away game, they'd still like to hear the commentary of the game over the internet or even just watch minute by minute updates than go to watch another team. It would almost be treachery to go to another ground and sit with the home crowd.

But the majority of 'average' fans love the game, not just their home team, and can really have very few excuses not to go to the Abbey Stadium or the GlassWorld Stadium.

I believe that the problem is rooted in the distinctly separate worlds that are the university and the town. In Cambridge, this phenomenon is often referred to as 'Town vs Gown' and it goes some way towards explaining this rather curious problem. I can certainly appreciate that in terms of a night out, students have more in common with other students than the members of



Courtesy of Histon FC

Very few students attend Histon's home games; are they too busy, or are they just extremely lazy?

Cambridge's public, but when it comes to a Saturday at 3pm, I for one have a lot more in common with any other football fan than a fellow student with no interest in the beautiful game.

It isn't all doom and gloom though. The Blues earned a creditable draw with Cambridge United this week in a game that can only help relations between the two sides of Cambridge. The only shame is that so few students knew the about the game.

Histon FC are now actively trying to recruit 'temporary' fans, offering one pound entry

for students for this Saturday's charity game against Gloucester City. PR manager for Histon, Graham Eales added, "It's such a shame that the students don't adopt a local team when away from home. Teams are crying out for support and the atmosphere is always great at every football ground".

With initiatives to educate the university students about their local teams, Histon FC have set a very good example which other local teams should follow. There is a large pool of football crazy students, many of whom don't

know who the local sides are or where the ground is and thus miss out on the excitement of live football while gate receipts at Cambridge United, Cambridge City and Histon all suffer.

While the clubs start to drive for more students to watch the games, students too really ought to take more of an active interest in their local sides. The university is cut off from the town as it is. I call upon the real football fans at Cambridge to go to the Abbey Stadium, the Glassworld Stadium and the City Ground and stop being so lazy.

Karen Forte

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Falcons get their wings burned

Varsity Football

FALCONS	0
CENTAURS	1

Morgan French

FOR THOSE who feel the Abbey Stadium is too far to travel the Falcons provided a match that had everything at the slightly less distant location of Grange Road. A large crowd had braved the wintry conditions and they were rewarded by a compelling display of football.

Much has been written about the Falcons' excellent season thus far and as such they were understandably confident going into the game. Wearing their green and yellow kit, they started the match in fine form and were undeserving of the comparisons with Norwich City that were levelled by the travelling support. The opening ten minutes of the match were a midfield war of attrition in the main part won by the home side, Oxford's only real chance coming when striker Tom Brown attempted a speculative 25 yard volley which went out for a throw-in.

As the weather grew colder the heat of the match increased markedly. Veteran left back and Oxford cult hero Roger "Dodgy" Milburn committed what looked like a professional foul in the box, the referee however disagreed and awarded a free kick



Andy Sims/TCS

Close but no cigar: the falcons could find a way past the Oxford 'keeper, missing a penalty as well

and no card. The events that followed can only be described as incredible. The Oxford goalkeeper fantastically saved the free kick but the ball fell to a Cambridge player whose header was handballed off the line by an Oxford defender. This time the referee did not capitulate and the red card was shown, Cambridge however were left ruing their bad luck when the resulting penalty was saved by a clearly inform goalkeeper.

The entertainment wasn't over. The arrival of an obscure, unidentified bulldog mascot at

the ground who neither set of fans appeared to claim, coupled with Cambridge no.10 Brendan Threlfall's showboating gave the crowd plenty to cheer about whilst Oxford continued to test the referee's resolve when their keeper was marginally adjudged not to have handled outside of the box. Consistent Cambridge pressure continued until half time and the Centaurs must have been relieved to go in with the scores level at 0-0.

If the first half was fast and furious the second half was slower but no less tense. A painful

looking clash of heads between Matt Ellis and the Oxford no.11 led to a five minute stoppage for what might be described as over-zealous medical treatment. Subsequently, an innocuous looking free kick was poorly dealt with by the Cambridge defence and allowed substitute Tom Gibson to score a looping header, and put Oxford 1-0 in front. Cambridge's resolve was tested but never in doubt. The pure genius of Mike Danks' 65th minute pass to Brendan Threlfall was not matched by the finish, which was hit straight at

the goalkeeper. The introduction of James Lockwood on 70 minutes looked like it could change the game, the midfielder making an instant impact hitting the bar with a stunning dipping shot leaving the so far untouchable Oxford keeper beaten. Maybe Lockwood could blame the square crossbar, but perhaps more accurately it was another example of the poor luck being experienced by the Falcons.

As full time approached Cambridge turned the screw. Oxford's only real chance came when their lone striker out-paced star fullback James Vernon but shot wide of the goal. Cambridge's dominance was starting to take hold yet shot after shot failed to find the back of the net, whilst all Oxford could offer was the ridiculous flair of Rob Invermec. A scramble in the Oxford goalmouth was sufficient to prevent fans from leaving to avoid the Grange Road traffic. The Oxford keeper fumbled in the last minute of time added-on but still the home side could not score. Whilst the final whistle signaled a disappointing 1-0 result, Cambridge could be proud of an excellent performance and the fact that they had given the crowd a thrilling 90 minutes of football. If the blues' Varsity Match on Friday is even half as entertaining as this then it is well worth the trek.

Sport In Brief

POOL

Cambridge University first pool team progressed to the Championship final at the end of March, finishing third of eight teams in the BUSA 8-ball qualifiers in Derby. Victory against Nottingham and a draw against UEA were both notable results. Andy Aspden took the plaudits with an impressive 6 wins in 8 frames.

RIDING

Cambridge University riding team have qualified for the BUSA regional Championship on 22 March in Loughborough. Captain Natalie McGoldrick won the league individually, with Helen Jamieson, Lucy Grieve and Sam Cutts completing the qualifying team.

FENCING

The womens' blues are bound for Birmingham where they will be hoping to go one better than last year in the BUSA cup semi-finals. They defeated Bristol 134-82 at Fenners' on Wednesday in the previous round. The mens' team triumphed in the annual town and gown friendly, beating the city club in the last minute of play.

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	71	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

www.crazyaboutsport.com

Results: No League matches this weekend.

Men's College Football League

Division I

Place	Team	Pl	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Fitzwilliam	8	8	0	0	37	8	29	24
2	Trinity	7	6	0	1	17	11	6	18
3	Jesus	7	4	2	1	16	8	8	14
4	St. John's	7	3	1	3	12	9	3	10
5	Churchill	6	3	1	2	8	10	-2	10
6	Darwin	8	2	3	3	12	14	-2	9
7	Caius	9	2	2	5	11	20	-9	8
8	St. Catharine's	7	2	1	4	7	13	-6	7
9	Girton	9	2	0	7	15	30	-15	6
10	Downing	8	1	0	7	12	24	-12	3

Results: Girton 3 - 7 Fitzwilliam, Trinity 3 - 2 Caius

Men take Varsity Lacrosse

Varsity Lacrosse

OXFORD	4
CAMBRIDGE	7

Henry Bowen

As the oldest lacrosse fixture in the country, the men's Varsity match is renowned as a tensely fought contest, but before I arrived at Parker's Piece on Saturday afternoon I had no idea how fierce it could become. The Oxford side has dominated for the last 12 years, making use of imported American experience to strengthen their squad. In comparison, the Cambridge team has relied primarily on homegrown talent, players who only picked up a lacrosse stick after coming to Cambridge. After an 18-3 thrashing in 2003 and a 16-8 defeat last year, the Light Blue team had been training as often as 4 times a week to make up for what they lack in individual flair with teamwork, set plays and sheer aggression.

In a sport where you can only get sent off for a maximum of one minute, the players weren't reserved in expressing their fierce rivalry with some massive crunching tackles. Even Oxford players who had played for Cambridge in previous years weren't spared from the punishment, with one player commenting that "it makes us want to hurt them more for being traitors". The violence involved with the game requires that the players protect themselves with helmets and padding, but this wasn't enough to prevent injury. Soon after the opening the scoring, Cambridge were reduced to 12 men after a brutal tackle took out a player's knee.



Colin Hoare

Cambridge hold firm in the face of the fierce Oxford defence

The first half was closely fought as both sides managed to respond quickly to each goal. Members of the crowd who had come out to brave the cold and rain were sent scattering as Mustill creamed former team-mate Pagett right off the edge of the pitch. With the pressure building, Oxford captain Robert Gallagher failed to keep his cool and was sent off for ungentlemanly conduct. After some evenly matched play, Cambridge managed to assert a narrow lead of 4-3 by half time.

A number of time-outs after half-time confused the spectators into thinking that the end of the third quarter was actually the end of the match. Slightly bemused by their sudden lack of support, the Cambridge side were relieved to see the crowds reappear as they realised their mistake

after the start of the final quarter. The Cambridge team extended their advantage at the front while some exceptional saves from goalkeeper Hacquoil shored up their lead. With no let up in the relentless marking from the Cambridge defense, the visiting side were unable to claw back enough ground to deny the Cambridge an historic victory.

The epic victory was made even sweeter by the fact that Oxford now face relegation from their league division, while the Cambridge team are hoping to win promotion. The hard work they have put into training combined with the sheer determination to defeat their ancient enemy paid off for the Blues squad as the stunned Oxford team were sent home wondering what went wrong.

Cambridge buck Oxford's Lacrosse dominance

The Blues men achieve their first Varsity win since 1992 - page 27



Bumps away

James Marson

Fate always seems to line up some especially cold weather for the Lent Bumps, and this year was no exception. But the freezing temperatures and snow showers were not enough to put hundreds of hardy boaties off charging down the river, giving their boatmen nightmares by trying to do what normal navigational laws prohibit – crash into each other.

For the second year running, the top three boats in the men's 1st division rowed over every day. Caius' headship was never threatened. In fact, they pulled away from First and Third comfortably on all four days. Behind Downing in third, Trinity Hall were in freefall, never making it past First Post Corner, while LMBC and Jesus made solid gains of two places. Emma, tipped for the headship after their victory in Pembroke Regatta, ended down one, proving once more the old maxim that pre-bumps form means nothing when the cannon goes.

Lower down Catz, Robinson and Christ's all had weeks to forget, while Clare, Queens' and Selwyn made significant gains. King's celebrated a long-awaited return to first division rowing, ending Caius II's run as the only second boat in the top division. The second and third divisions were full of their usual thrills and spills with overbumps, crabs and crashes galore. Darwin, Trinity Hall II, Caius III and Queens' III all won their oars.

The fight for the womens' headship was a much more tense affair. Downing held off the challenge of a quick Clare crew on the Saturday evening to deny them the blades headship that many had predicted. Caius completed a miserable week for Emma on the final day, consigning them to fourth place, while Jesus held on to fifth having been hit by Clare on the Wednesday. The outstanding performance of the week, though, came from First and Third, who finished up six places including an overbump, almost unprecedented in first division rowing. Pembroke had a successful week, while Trinity Hall women fared no better than their men.

In the second division Fitzwilliam, LMBC II and Caius II won blades. The focus of Cambridge rowing now turns to the women's boat race at Henley on Saturday 26th of March.



Jet Photographic

First and Third produced the most impressive performance of Lent Bumps, gaining six places in the womens' first division, including an overbump

Coach: "Blues will win"

Dave Robertson

THE PREPARATION for this years 121st Varsity match started way back in September 2004 when a handful of hopefuls arrived at Fenners Training Ground to be met by our illustrious Captain John Darby for a trials week to select this years blues squad. On Friday 11th March at 7.30pm the fruits of our labour will be on show for all to see in our quest to regain the challenge trophy that is currently held by the old foe at Oxford.

Throughout life all men strive for greatness, and with the sixteen highly tuned athletes that I have had the pleasure to work alongside this season our quest is merely a heart beat away. This season's blues Varsity fixture will have all the excitement, energy and tenacity of any premiership fixture.

In my coaching career which has spanned over 12 years now, I can honestly say that it is my belief that this squad has the attributes to achieve their number one goal for the season, and this will be the clinical and methodical destruction of the Oxford select eleven this Friday.

This season has seen the players take part in an intensive coaching regime that has been devised to best prepare the squad

for the pinnacle of the season. It has been strategically planned with military precision to encompass aspects of technical and tactical awareness, togetherness and team building, sports psychology and the belief in each others ability, but above all this years squad has the competitive ability to win football matches. We like to take a walk on the wild side and laugh in the face of adversity from time to time. A number of our opponents have learnt that to their cost this season.

If I were to summarise this season in a single sentence I would have to say 'the more we have trained, the luckier we seem to have become,' and that luck has certainly been hard earned.



Coach Dave Robertson

It has come as no surprise to me and the players that following our infamous trip to Bramley Lakes in January, where we were schooled by members of the Parachute Regiment and European boxing champion Jonny Thaxton, we have scored no fewer than 24 goals and conceded on only 6 occasions. Statistics show that we have not lost a traditional fixture this season, since I took post as the coach, and we are undefeated in Cambridge this season in all fixtures. With this years traditional varsity game being played at Cambridge United's Abbey Stadium you sense the optimism that we have for a successful year.

This season will become a success for the squad when we complete what we set out to complete back in September. It is my firm belief that the history books will have the words, '2005, 3-1 Cambridge' etched in them next week, which will be a testament to the squad of players that have worked tirelessly in their strive for perfection from the first training session of the season.

Cometh the hour, cometh the man, and we have sixteen men in our squad that are more than ready to stand up and be counted when the whistle blows at 7.30pm on Friday night. Oxford best be prepared.

Blues players to watch



Duncan
Heath
Goalkeeper

Light Blue confidence will take a massive boost from the man between the sticks tonight. Heath has been ever present this season, and his quality has shone through regularly whenever he has been called upon. Duncan is aerially dependable, with excellent distribution and the ability to make top quality saves in situations when goals would be more likely.



Matt
Clamp
Centre Back

The Blues season looked to have taken a distinct downturn with the injury to Captain Jon Darby but though Darby has been missed, thanks to Clamp, the defence has continued to look solid. Matt has stepped up, taking the role of boss at the back, and will lead a strong defence tonight that is both capable of smothering anything Oxford attempt, and building attacking play from the back. The man plays with his heart, and that is a quality that wins Varsity matches.



Stevie
Smith
Midfield

One half of a massively powerful Blues engine room, Smith is the player who links the defensive solidity with the attacking verve of the Blues front four. He will dominate the physical battle alongside Devine, but is at his best in possession, when his range of passing and dynamic running can open defences.



Mike
Adams
Striker

Oxford will have noted his impressive strike record this season, but there will be little they can do about this man. Adams has formed a partnership with Rich Payne that few teams have been able to get close to, let alone stop. He is simply too quick, an accurate finisher who has acquired a taste for spectacular goals. Adams is one of a number in the Blues side capable of providing something special when required, and a trademark early goal could see the beginning of a famous demolition of the Dark Blue.