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# VARSITY

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## INSIDE: NEW ARTS & FEATURES SECTION



## FASHION

Getting up close  
at the Rodin  
exhibition

»PAGE 15



## MUSIC

What's on  
*Varsity's* C60?

»PAGE 19



# CUSUents loses £17k

» Club Manager slams  
"laissez-faire attitude"  
» Shah denies all  
responsibility

JOE GOSDEN &  
JAMIE MUNK  
Chief News Editors

Serious concerns have been raised about the financial management of CUSUents last year. In a massive blow to the CUSUents budget it has been revealed that £17,000 was lost when Couloir Leisure Ltd, who sub-let the night-club Soul Tree, was forced into administration in March. CUSUents had failed to collect their share of the profits from the joint venture "Urbanite" for almost six months when the firm went bankrupt.

CUSUents' contract with Couloir entitled them to 50 per cent of the door revenue from the weekly "Urbanite" club night last year; Couloir met the cost of the entertainment and DJs. CUSU's share of the profits, according to Couloir Manager Simon Harrow, was due to be released only on presentation of an invoice by CUSUents every Friday after the Thursday event.

Harrow told *Varsity* that "these invoices were not always forthcoming... despite numerous reminders from Couloir managers and directors," and that by March 10 2006, when the administration order was granted by Cambridge County Court,

there "had not been an invoice from CUSUents for a considerable period of time". This was despite the fact that they had been sent "invoices on a near daily basis" by Couloir. He told *Varsity* of the "many excuses" he had been given by Shah for failing to collect the profits.

Shah, however, categorically denies responsibility for the £17,000 loss. The issue, he told *Varsity*, had been "nothing to do with the way that CUSUents was run" although he did concede that "there may have been a more efficient way of running the operation". Instead he lays the blame firmly on the CUSU Finance Department, which lacked a full time employee in the period in question. He claims that while he had sent an invoice, it had not been processed by the time CUSU's temporary Finance Director had left the post.

The CUSU Constitution reveals that the CUSU Services Officer, at the time Jennifer Cooper, "controls the finances and prepares the budget for CUSU council". When contacted by *Varsity* about this Cooper refused to comment, insisting that the issue is a matter for her successor, Ashley Aarons. Aarons told *Varsity* that "in essence the Services Officer deals with the day to day running of CUSU

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## Space: What every student needs?



JOHN WALKER  
Senior Reporter

On September 9 Carl Morland, Henry Hallam and Robert Fryers launched a helium balloon carrying a high-resolution camera into Earth's upper atmosphere from Churchill College, capturing photographs at an altitude of 32km.

Dubbed "Project Nova", the launch "marks the first step in a series of flights to prove our tracking and telemetry systems" explained Morland. The students' eventual aim is to attach a rocket to a similar balloon, enabling a greater height to be reached. The British Antarctic Survey are reportedly interested in the project.

# Cambridge political parties under attack

NIKKI BURTON  
Senior Reporter

A letter bomb received by the Cambridge Labour Party in early August is the latest in a spate of attacks on political, religious and LGBT groups in the area.

The local Liberal Democrat Party was targeted with packages containing white powder and a razor blade, while a Respect election candidate received a threatening phone call. Cambridge

MP David Howarth described the latest attack as "a very disturbing development".

The homemade bomb was delivered to the CLP Head Quarters on August 2. Emergency services cordoned off the surrounding streets and a bomb disposal team was called. The device was disarmed after six hours.

In response to the attack, Cambridge University Labour Club Chair Luke Pearce emailed his club's list urging members to be vigilant when opening post. He told *Varsity*,

"there is no excuse for putting people's lives in danger, whether in a random attack or as part of a specific political vendetta." Howarth echoed Pearce's warning saying "there must be further vigilance on the part of all those involved in democratic politics".

Police have arrested a 25 year old man living in the area after investigating a shed in Cottenham and a house in Alex Wood Road. The suspect has been released on bail until October 2.

The attack follows an incident in April, when the Cambridge Labour

Party headquarters was torched during an arson attack, but detectives remain reluctant to link the letter bomb to other incidents.

Lib-Dem Councillor Ian Nimmo-Smith told *Varsity*, "things have been building up since the general election... we have received similar anonymous packages to the Labour Party, with a neo-Nazi tone." Respect Party candidate Tom Woodcock reported that in the run up to the local elections he received a phone call in the middle of the night in which an electronically

distorted voice delivered anti-Semitic comments.

Nimmo-Smith said "must have been sent by an individual with a very twisted mentality." A Conservative Party spokesperson, who refused to state whether they had fallen victim to any attacks, said "we have put our own security measures in place and for security reasons we wouldn't want to comment any further". Neither the Green Party nor British National Party have reported similar incidents.



## In Brief

### CCTV for Parker's Piece

Cambridge City Council has decided to install four infra-red cameras on Christ's Pieces and Parker's Piece after continued pressure from local and student groups. The £36,000 project took months to fund from the council's safer city grant, which is only meant to fund projects of £5,000 or less. The parks had become notorious as high crime areas: CCTV cameras in Parker's Piece last July recorded 26 incidents, 12 arrests and 22 cautions.

### Cambridge 2nd in Uni rankings

The University of Cambridge has been ranked second to Harvard University in an international league table of universities compiled by Shanghai Jiao Tong University. The rankings have been criticised by the Times Higher Education Supplement, who also produce a worldwide university league table, as being "based on criteria mainly concerned with scientific excellence".

### Shanghai Jiao Tong Top Ten World Uni's:

- 1 - Harvard University
- 2 - University of Cambridge
- 3 - Stanford University
- 4 - University of California - Berkley
- 5 - Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- 6 - California Institute of Technology
- 7 - Columbia University
- 8 - Princeton University
- 9 - University of Chicago
- 10 - University of Oxford

### Knocking out the mice

The Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, based in Hinxton, near Cambridge, has been awarded £27.4 million by the US National Institute of Health. In the "Knockout Mouse Project" (KOMP), the institute plans a comprehensive study into the mouse genome, to aid research into human disease. The change in emphasis, however, has resulted in the closure of five groups within the organisation, leading to worries that jobs may be at risk.

### Archaeology in St Andrew's Street

Demolition of Bradwell's Court arcade to enable the construction of a new shopping centre has revealed evidence of continuous occupation of the site for at least a millenium. Pottery, metal tools and animal remains have been found. The site, running alongside Christ's Lane and St Andrew's Street, was situated just outside the medieval town.

# NUS Cards confusion

## »CUSU to distribute only its own identity cards

JO TRIGG

Freshers arriving to collect their student cards next week are set to face a bewildering variety of decisions concerning their choice of student ID. While CUSU have taken a strong stance against the new £10 NUS Extra cards, they have yet to produce a clear alternative in time for the start of term.

At NUS Conference this April a decision was taken to introduce a new student ID card; the NUS Extra. It will offer a greater variety of discounts than the old card, and will also double as an International Student Identity Card (ISIC). An NUS spokesperson said the new ID "was developed to offer benefits that are more in tune with modern student life, as well as creating an additional source of income for local students' unions". CUSU will gain £2.50 for every card ordered by post and £4 for every card ordered online.

However, the CUSU delegation opposed the change at the NUS Conference. They argued that "the new system made students pay for what perhaps should be a free service, on top of affiliation fees to the NUS".

Jacob Bard-Rosenberg, CUSU Democracy Officer, told *Varsity* "I cannot agree with unions that want to make money out of students", adding "money for students unions should come from the government". Instead of earning money from the sale of the cards, CUSU wanted to sacrifice this to reduce the price of the card to £6 or £7.50. This proposal was rejected by NUS as it would create problems with students from other universities who were being charged £10.

CUSU have still to decide how to spend the money. Ashley Aarons, CUSU Services Officer, told *Varsity* that he intends to propose spending the money on a business assistant

"whose sole job will be to push for local discounts for the CUSU cards". At present, the CUSU card offers very few discounts and increasing the number on offer is being treated as "an ongoing project throughout the year".

If this proposal fails Aarons plans to divide the money between colleges. As the first CUSU Council of term will not be until mid October, he intends to put forward the former motion at an earlier meeting with the CUSU President and external officers.

At present, as CUSU policy oppos-

es the cards, the NUS Extra application forms are only being distributed to colleges on request; approximately a third of colleges will be receiving them. Ashley Aarons admitted that there were mixed feelings amongst the colleges and CUSU Exec about the cards and that "personally, I could have saved £50 on a computer with one". The NUS are also offering an alternative "Democracy Card" that acts as student identification rather than a discount card. This card offers identification as a member of a union and thus the power to take part in campaigning for positive change, which is where Jacob Bard Rosenberg believes the true value in a student card lies. Yet as Aarons acknowledged, CUSU "haven't really publicised the Democracy card at all". He admitted to *Varsity* "this was an oversight".

With the variety of student cards on offer Aarons told *Varsity* that the situation has become "overly complicated for something that should be simple". He favoured the abolition of CUSU cards to simplify the system,

but this idea was rejected. Instead, it was suggested that the CUSU logo be put on University cards, although this could be a problem for disaffiliated colleges. As CUSU policy supports keeping CUSU cards, they must be kept for this academic year and reviewed for the next.

Rather than making a quick decision, Aarons thinks that "the most important thing right now is for people to know what's happening". Yet cards will be distributed at the beginning of Freshers' Week before any decision has been made, or the situation with the NUS Extra card has been explained to students. Aarons admitted that "even the people handing out the flyers won't know much about them" saying "we haven't really moved on from where we were at the end of last year". Jacob Bard-Rosenberg claimed that as NUS only started working on this since the end of last term, this is something that CUSU "can't really do anything about". Aarons added "I think I'm doing the best I can".



Ashley Aarons, CUSU Services Officer, and the CUSU card

EMILY WRIGHT

## Ferguson resolves "to stop this happening again"

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

...finances," confirming that "although it depends on the situation, at the end of the day it is the responsibility of the Services Officer".

Constitutionally though, the CUSU President, last year Laura Walsh, as the "Principal Financial Officer of the Union", is ultimately responsible for financial issues. The affair has made current President Mark Ferguson very conscious of his role within CUSU. "As a trustee", he told *Varsity*, "I have to be very careful how the Union spends its money". He believes that the division of responsibilities between the President and Services Officer "as it stands is confused". The lack of organisation within the Sabbatical team is something he sees as a major problem. He admitted "There needs to be much better communications within the Sabbatical team". On the financial

side, he plans to instigate monthly meetings "to keep track, to stop this happening again".

Laura Walsh told *Varsity* that she did not wish to comment on her role in the £17,000 loss.

Peter Brizio, current CUSUents manager, admitted to *Varsity* that there was "very little chance of

getting any of it back". As Couloir had rented the venue Soul Tree from Cambridge Night Clubs Ltd., there was little in the way of assets that could be sold by the administrators. Harrow agreed that there was little prospect of CUSUents getting much of a dividend from the sales of the assets. He pointed out that as "Barclays Bank are the largest [creditor] and hold a debenture", CUSU has no priority on the list.

Brizio is keen to salvage a positive result from the budgetary set back. The loss has "prompted us to go out and make good the loss" by way of a "much more aggressive approach", he told *Varsity*. Soul Tree, now being operated by Cambridge Night Clubs Ltd under the management of Harrow, has taken on a CUSU Indie night on Mondays that will compete with the similar 'Fat Poppadaddys' at The Fez Club. CUSU have also taken over the hugely popular

'Sunday Roast' at Club 22 after the departure of its promoter, Steffen Buschbacher, for Harvard. The 'melamondo' night has, however, been dropped from the line up, having been described by Brizio as having been "a bad deal anyway". The Ents Manager assured *Varsity* that the problems with CUSUents' working practices under Shah have been identified and that "new systems have been put in place" with "much better safeguards". CUSU were also keen to reassure that they hold reserves substantial enough to cover the loss for the coming financial year.

Both CUSU and Harrow were keen to emphasise that they continue to "enjoy a beneficial working relationship", and hope to avoid any similar problems happening in the future. Shah is currently involved in promoting a night, to be held at Soul Tree, with the radio station Xfm.



Nikhil Shah

MALIKA WORRALL



Corpus Medicine DoS faked qualifications in CV but praised for abilities

# Fraudulent Fellow suspended from practice

TOM PARRY-JONES News Editor

A trainee surgeon who lied his way into a string of positions at Corpus Christi College and a clinical post at Addenbrooke's has had his right to practice revoked by the General Medical Council (GMC) for 12 months. Dr Matthew Williams-Gray had been unanimously elected to a college fellowship in October 2004, following two years as acting Director of Studies for Medicine and as Preceptor in Anatomy.

In front of the GMC's Fitness to Practice panel last month, the 29 year-old admitted that his applications for these posts had contained a string of fabrications. These included lies about academic achievements, surgical experience, publications in medical journals, and even a claim that he had been Captain of the University College Tennis Team whilst at Oxford. The falsifications were revealed in December 2004, when he was presented with evidence by the college and subsequently resigned.

## Dr Matthew Williams-Gray The Lies

- In his fellowship application Williams-Gray falsely claimed, amongst other lies:**
- To have been a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons (MRCS).
  - To have been awarded the Nuffield Prize in Surgery by the University of Oxford.
  - To be preparing for a doctorate at the University of Cambridge.

- To have a Diploma in critical intensive care of surgical patients from the Royal College of Surgeons and Cambridge Department of Anaesthesia.
- Joint authorship of two published medical papers, and two further papers that had been accepted for publication.
- That he was the JCR President (1996/1997) at University College, Oxford.



Old Court at Corpus Christi; where Williams-Gray taught

EMILY WRIGHT

In issuing its sanction, the GMC took into consideration Williams-Gray's account of the stress he was under from work at the time of his application, as well as the "strain" his dishonesty had placed upon his marriage. The independent panel told him that "no criticism has been made of your clinical competence", even

harmful". Nevertheless, the GMC decided that his "dishonest" and "inappropriate" behaviour was "liable to bring the medical profession into disrepute". A suspension was deemed appropriate to send a "sufficiently strong message" to Williams-Gray.

A similar picture emerged from within Corpus Christi. Senior Tutor Dr Paul Schofield said there had "never been any doubts over the quality of Williams-Gray's teaching". Schofield told *Varsity* that Williams-Gray was well regarded from previous teaching experience at Oxford, where he trained as a doctor, and that Anatomy at the college had not been adversely affected under his tenure. Yet Schofield called his lies a "serious mistake;" the isolated, but unacceptable, fabrications of a man under "considerable stress".

The GMC did not consider that Dr Williams-Gray posed "a real risk of repeating [his] misconduct". Whilst he begins the Council's recommended "process of rehabilitating ... both professionally and socially", the College are taking measures to prevent a recurrence of this situation, offering assurances that far more meticulous vetting of applications is already in place.

## Never any doubts about the quality of Williams-Gray's teaching

though he had obtained his position as a Senior House Officer at Addenbrooke's with an unrepresentative resume. The investigation heard that Williams-Gray is "a talented, reliable and hard-working doctor, who provides excellent care for his patients", and that "patients were not

# Robinson ban drinking societies

GABRIEL BYNG

ROBINSON College have banned two drinking societies and fined three students after an investigation into reports that members pushed three young children into the Cam during drunken Mayweek celebrations. Both the men's and women's drinking societies, the Robinson Rentals and the Girl Fridays, have been forbidden by the college, but the clubs' Facebook pages include a list of fixtures for this term. When asked about the ban, Sam Steer, a Robinson Rental, said, "that's the first I've heard about it".

But Senior Tutor Dr Liz Guild insisted, "the Rentals and Girl Fridays have been informed of the ban", adding that "the college deplores that any of its students should have behaved in such a way."

Last term *Varsity* reported how over 40 students, identified as Rentals by their yellow ties, capsize a canoe carrying three children, aged 11 and 12. Fiona Bennett, the mother of one of the children, said, "Students swimming in the river pulled my son and his friends into the water, egged on by their mates. It was terrifying. The children were physically unharmed but they were terribly shaken up, they could've drowned."

"When I tried to speak to the students they hurled abuse at us... They were hooligans, like a bunch of animals."

Shortly afterwards the Girl Fridays disassociated themselves from the incident and a Rental emailed the society's e-mail list saying, "did we do anything like that? If we did... perhaps some sort of apologetic gift would be in order (swimming lessons perhaps)." No other Rentals were prepared to comment on record.

# Emmanuel victorious in Tompkins Table

AMY HOGGART

Emmanuel has topped this year's Tompkins Table, which ranks Cambridge colleges based on students' performances in University exams. The results were published in *the Independent* this summer.

Although they came fifth last year, this is Emma's third time at the top since 2003. Following close behind were Gonville & Caius, and the head of last year's table, St Catharine's. St Edmund's and Hughes Hall took the bottom two places.

This year's highest risers were Selwyn and Corpus Christi, Selwyn jumping 12 places from 19th to seventh and Corpus Christi eight places from 16th to eighth. Dr Paul Schofield, Senior Tutor at Corpus Christi told *Varsity* that he was "absolutely delighted" by the college's rise and attributed its success "to the hard work of our

students. They have applied themselves to their studies but not at the expense of the college atmosphere". Fallers included King's, from tenth to 17th, and Robinson from 11th to 18th.

The unofficial table was first compiled by Trinity maths alumnus Peter Tompkins in 1981. Figures

## It's nice to be number one for a season

are calculated by awarding colleges five points for each first-class degree, three for a 2:1, two for a 2:2 and one for a Third. The results are displayed as a percentage of the points that would be scored if all

students gained a First.

In a second system ranking colleges according to the percentage of firsts achieved by their students, Emma was also the most successful with 29.4 per cent, followed by Pembroke (28.7 per cent) and Trinity (27 per cent). The college with fewest firsts was Wolfson with 6.8 per cent.

Peter Tompkins described the table as "rough and ready" and suggested that it was a good way of approximating a college's academic success, particularly those who achieve similar results year on year. However, he also called it a "blunt instrument", which didn't reflect other important factors like the colleges' "wealth and history".

When questioned about the reliability of the table Dr Schofield admitted that "this type of representation can be a bit misleading" and warned that we "should not put an enormous amount of emphasis on league tables". Dr Barnes,

Senior Tutor at Emma, said "it's nice to be number one for a season but nicer still to be part of a

College and a University that values all its students and the contributions that they make".

## The Tompkins Table

1-	Emmanuel (5)*	16-	Trinity Hall (17)
2-	Gonville & Caius (2)	17-	King's (10)
3-	St Catherine's (1)	18-	Robinson (11)
4-	Pembroke (6)	19-	Fitzwilliam (13)
5-	Trinity (3)	20-	Magdalene (20)
6-	Christ's (4)	21-	Peterhouse (22)
7-	Selwyn (19)	22-	Girton (24)
8-	Corpus Christi (16)	23-	Newnham (21)
9-	Sidney Sussex (14)	24-	New Hall (25)
10-	Jesus (7)	25-	Homerton (26)
11-	Downing (15)	26-	Lucy Cavendish (27)
12-	Clare (9)	27-	Wolfson (23)
13-	Churchill (18)	28-	St Edmund's (28)
14-	Queens' (8)	29-	Hughes Hall (29)
15-	St John's (12)		

\*Last year's rankings are shown in brackets



## On Campus

### Educationalist new Master at Corpus

Sir Alan Wilson, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds, will succeed Professor Haroon Ahmed as the Master of Corpus Christi from the beginning of October. A former Mathematics undergraduate at the college, he was most recently appointed the Director General for Higher Education, where he was a key adviser to the Education Secretary. He was knighted in 2001.

### Student car plans on track

A group of Engineering students are launching an entry into the Formula Student competition, an international design and build competition to produce a single-seater racing car. The team are operating under the name "Full Blue Racing" after being refused official society status, which prevents them from using the Cambridge University name in their entry. They are also working without the support of the Engineering Department, and will not be getting any course credits for their work. The idea was conceived by Marko Cosic, head of the team of 20 engineers, whilst on an exchange at MIT last year.

### Fridge-id at Newnham

A hazardous "fridge mountain" which was located two metres from a Newnham-owned property in Michaelmas and Lent terms last year has now been relocated to a purpose built storage area. Students at Eva Smith House were concerned that the pile of over 20 small appliances might contain dangerous carcinogens and mutagens known as PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls). The graduate students concerned have welcomed the decision.

### US CUP creator dies at 100

Ronald Mansbridge, the creator and head of the Cambridge University Press in America for 23 years, died on September 1 aged 100. A Classics and English alumnus of Corpus Christi, he was offered the job of running the publishing company while teaching in New York. During his time at the helm, the CUP grew from modest beginnings into a business with an annual turnover of \$70m. In addition to being a publisher, Mansbridge was also a respected biblical scholar and an expert on William Tyndale, although his only book-length publication was a volume of limericks annotated in a scholarly style.

## Cross Campus

### Grad on the run in France

A 43 year-old Oxford postgraduate went on the run in France following an incident that left a US banker with life-threatening head injuries. History student Tom Washington is alleged to have attacked Colin Hall, whom he met on the day of the incident, July 24, in a St Tropez nightclub. The incident is thought to have arisen as a result of Washington's jealousy when he saw Hall talking to fellow Oxford student Laura Clegg. It is uncertain whether Clegg and Washington were romantically involved. He later claimed that his drink had been spiked.

### Manchester paper row

The team of University of Manchester student newspaper *Student Direct* are allegedly set to walk out by the end of the week in protest over the poor management of the paper. New Editor Sajid Rafiq has been accused of "complete inaction", and is alleged to have had no experience in the *Student Direct* office prior to his election into the sabbatical position. Following attempts to raise the issue with Rafiq, News Reporter Rob Cooper walked out last Friday. There is also apparent dissatisfaction with the newspaper's new emphasis on international issues, particularly its criticism of Israel. Rafiq denied that the team is walking out, dismissing the rumour as "fanciful allegations".

### Oxon student arrested for Harrow stabbing

Oxford student Will Jaggs was arrested last week on suspicion of the murder of neighbour Lucy Braham. Braham, 25, a fashion designer, was found in the kitchen of her parents' home with multiple stab wounds, whilst Jaggs was discovered nearby with self-inflicted knife wounds. Neighbours called police after hearing screams at the house. The pair were living close to Harrow school, where both their parents worked. Jaggs was due to return to Oxford this autumn to continue his English degree. One colleague described him as "quite posh, quite charming, but a little bit odd".



# Facebook warning

CATHERINE HALL

Students at Cambridge are being warned that future employers may be scrutinising their Facebook profiles. Dr Richard Barnes, Senior Tutor at Emmanuel College, sent out a warning to all Senior Tutors after being alerted to the problem by one of his students, Will White, who had seen an article in an American newspaper, *The Daily*.

Dr Barnes warned "Students need to be aware that their profiles can be viewed. There's nothing wrong with a bit of fun, but if someone is going into a career where good judgement is called for, one needs to be careful." He went on to state that Cambridge alumni he knew in the City, who he did not name, "use every source they can, including Google, to ensure that they are employing the right person".

The policy of checking out prospective employers or colleagues even exists within the University. Owen Saxton, Senior Tutor at New Hall, admitted that he has "looked at profiles on Facebook when appointing Fellows or Masters". He said that he had been "curious and surprised at some of the material on there, and how they chose to present themselves". Although he stipulated that this has not influenced his decisions, citing "face to face interaction" as being far more useful, he is aware that "it may influence other employers". Dr Barnes admitted that he had also investigated prospective Fellows on Facebook.

Leading City firms, including Deloitte, declined to comment when asked whether they use Facebook during recruitment. Yet the article in *The Daily* strongly suggested that



Owen Saxton scrutinises a profile on Facebook.

ALEX CONSTANTINIDES

Facebook was yet another resource for employers to find out the information that they would not, or could not, ask at interview. Even Wikipedia warns of the possibility that what may be intended as a joke on Facebook could be used against prospective employees.

Facebook has recently developed more privacy controls, allowing students to limit who views their profiles. Dave Ewings, CUSU Academic

Affairs Officer, suggested that these limits should be enforced, and that students ought to be wary about information they give out about themselves. "You have control of your profile, and it is worth bearing in mind that it can be checked. Limited profile options are available and if you are going for a serious job interview, it doesn't take much to close your Facebook profile. Be a guardian of your own fate."

# Pre-U tests A-level exam

LUCY MCKEON

This year's Freshers come to Cambridge, riding high on a wave of congratulations from family and friends, yet at the same time they bear the inevitable brunt of newspaper headlines and the older generation, that "A-levels are getting easier!"

The University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), part of awarding body Cambridge Assessment Group, hope to silence critics of the abilities of today's undergraduates by superseding the A-level with a new, diploma-style qualification; the Cambridge Pre-U.

In a meeting held at Robinson College on Friday September 22, the draft syllabuses of 15 subjects were presented by development panels to an audience of over 100 Head Teachers from around the country. The CIE believes that the post-16 course will "enable students to hit the ground running" when starting university.

Like the traditional A-level, students of the Pre-U will choose the subjects they wish to study for a two-year duration. This may be where the similarities end, however, as the Pre-U will be assessed by a final exam only, unlike the AS and A2 constituents of the A-level. The courses to be offered

to students also promise to go beyond the "jumping through hoops" of which A-levels have been accused. Panel Chair Katherine Henson said that in Mathematics, for example, the Pre-U hopes to "mark a return to a real depth in the way questions are presented, emphasising the way in which Mathematics can be applied in a wide

### The course will "enable students to hit the ground running" when starting university

range of situations".

The Pre-U hallmark is to emphasise skills that go beyond the regurgitation of facts. In order to gain the qualification, students must complete an extended research essay called a "curriculum extension", as well as a "Global Perspectives Course". This will "build on the outward-looking values of Cambridge Pre-U, helping

them to prepare for issues they will face as global citizens", says CIE Director of International Curriculum Development Dr Kevin Stannard. In order to help university admissions identify the top candidates, the Pre-U's grading system will be marked out of ten, with the top two grades representing skill and knowledge that is above the current grade A at A-level.

Although the Pre-U aims to create a more well-rounded generation of undergraduates, only one of the school representatives at the conference last Friday was from a state school. Many of the top independent schools in Britain, including Harrow, Rugby and Cambridge's Perse School have shown an interest in the Pre-U, and the CIE hopes to begin teaching in such schools in September 2008.

For the Pre-U to become available in state schools the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) must grant it accreditation, which is necessary for funding purposes. As the Pre-U is currently in the first stage of accreditation, the full process of which could take up to three years, it could be some time before the Pre-U becomes universal.



## News Analysis

# Student jobs - a Cambridge stigma?

JAMIE MUNK &  
JOE GOSDEN

Cambridge University policy has traditionally been to "discourage undergraduates from taking paid work during term time". Yet Varsity's survey has revealed that 20 per cent of students now take paid jobs whilst at Cambridge. Many have begun to question an attitude that dictates that it is acceptable for JCR Presidents, boat club captains, and ball committee presidents to devote hundreds of hours a term to their "college approved" activity, while paid work is frequently frowned upon.

The majority of Cambridge colleges impose restrictions on students earning money during term. While some, such as Christ's, Selwyn, and Corpus Christi have blanket bans, others are more flexible. At Churchill and Fitzwilliam, students can at most work for six hours a week outside college. Of all the colleges asked, only Homerton was prepared to allow unlimited paid employment, provided it did not affect academic performance. In contrast, Anglia Ruskin Union estimated that 99 per cent of their students hold term-time jobs.

For many Senior Tutors, the intensity of the short eight-week Cambridge term justifies such restrictions. Mark Wormald, Pembroke Senior Tutor, told Varsity "academic work needs to be a priority", while Owen Saxton at New Hall sees the feasibility of balancing academic study with a job as "largely impossible in practice". Yet whilst Churchill and Selwyn plan to cut down on the hours put in by their Ball Presidents, none of the other colleges surveyed placed any formal restrictions on their team captains and society presidents, provided academic work did not suffer.

There are opportunities on offer at colleges to work in bars and libraries during term. Senior Tutors like Downing's Graham Virgo are happier for students to work in college, where their hours can be "monitored", compared to the "large commitment" demanded by other jobs. But the hours offered by such colleges rarely exceed six hours a week.

When asked about the repercussions of their employment policies, colleges were keen to stress the support offered to students in financial hardship. Virgo told Varsity "We see what help we can give", though admitting, "the college's funds are limited". Trinity Hall's Nick Bampos, uncomfortable at students taking jobs during Christmas and Easter vacations, has on occasions matched potential wages earned, so that students can concentrate on academic study.

The University guarantees "every student who arrives in 2006... who qualifies for Higher Education maintenance grant will also qualify for a Cambridge Bursary". This amounts to roughly one in five Cambridge undergraduates. Dr John Rallison, Director of the Isaac Newton Trust, which manages the bursaries, told Varsity "Students should be able to participate in Cambridge life without the fear monetary concerns". The grant is means tested though, leading to many students, whose parents are less will-

**20%**  
have held term-time paid jobs at Cambridge

**96%**  
said that having a job last year had not affected their studies



A student pours pints in a local Cambridge pub

ALEX CONSTANTINIDES

ing to fund them, without a grant and in need of paid work.

In a survey of Cambridge student work habits, Varsity this week found that while 1 in 5 undergraduates have sought employment in term time, 71 per cent felt the need to take on paid jobs this summer. Over half of these students did so to help fund themselves through University. Only 4 per cent thought that the need to work, either to gain new skills or to earn money, had had any detrimental effect on their academic work.

Many Senior Tutors take the view that not taking paid employment allows for a fuller university experience. Dr Virgo stressed how important it was "that students get the most out of the university package". He clearly differentiated this "package" from paid work, adding "It's a shame if this [activity] is working in a shop".

Sam Rose, CUSU Welfare Officer, emphasised the distinction between paid employment and other term-time activities. Promoting the latter as "positive" activities, he argued that "getting involved in societies makes people feel part of the University." Dave Ewings, CUSU's Academic Affairs Officer believes "The education you get at university isn't just about the academic side of things. Extra-curricular things help to shape you as a person".

But part-time employment did not

figure in this "positive" category of activities for either officer. While Rose saw student jobs as both academically detrimental and a cause of isolation from the University, Ewings told Varsity "You're going to have to work for the rest of your life. It's nice that for three years you can concentrate on whatever you want to do."

Employers contacted by Varsity were less clear in their distinction. Several city firms said that paid work that involved taking on a position of responsibility and dealing with the public would often be looked upon as favourably as a position in a university society. Students confirmed this; one second year Historian described how her term-time Saturday job both broadened her horizons and enhanced her skill-set. A former Snowball Vice-President from Selwyn described how the activity took on the reality of a full-time job in the lead up to the ball, an experience he felt he "benefited from hugely".

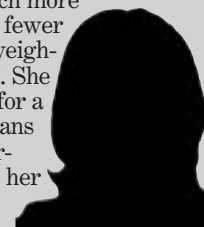
Homerton Senior Tutor Peter Warner argues, "It's a question of being sensible". While he takes the view of "not stepping on students' toes" in what they spend their free time doing, as with Senior Tutors across the University, to him "the priority must be the academic work".



newtontrust.cam.ac.uk

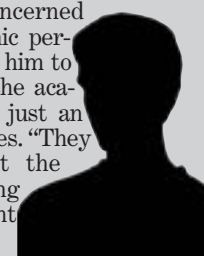
## Hannah\*

Hannah is a second year student at Homerton. Faced with expensive private accommodation this year she has taken on a part-time job. Every Saturday she will work for eight hours in a high street shop. She told Varsity "I'll be able to enjoy myself much more because I'll have fewer money worries weighing down on me". She does not qualify for a grant, as it is means tested on her parents' income, not her own.



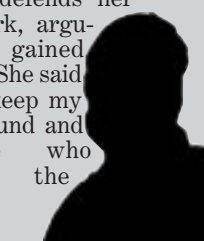
## Peter\*

Peter is a former JCR President. While in office he devotes 15-20 hours a week to the position. "My academic work suffered as a result," he said. "It's one of the reasons I got a 2:2 in my second year". His college, supposedly concerned with his academic performance, urged him to cut back. "But the academic reason is just an excuse", he argues. "They just don't want the hassle of dealing with belligerent students."



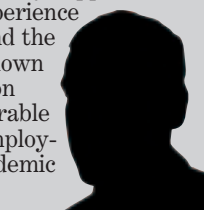
## Katie\*

Katie is a second year student at Downing. She worked eight hours a week at a stationery shop throughout her first year because otherwise she would only have had £100 left after she paid her college bill. Despite missing out on social activities, she defends her decision to work, arguing that she gained valuable skills. She said "it helped me keep my feet on the ground and meet people who weren't at the University".



## Will\*

Will is the Boat Club Captain at his college. He spends 40-50 hours a week training and managing the club's administration. Although the time commitment has led to his academic work suffering, he finds ways of making work fit in. His college has been mostly supportive. In his view, the experience he has gained and the responsibility shown by such a position "are just as desirable to a potential employer as purely academic performance".



\* Names have been changed

## Varsity Asks



How much money will you be blowing this Freshers' Week?

- a) My entire term's student loan
- b) Shouldn't think it'll be more than £300
- c) £100 will do the trick nicely
- d) I won't even break a £20 note

» Poll results on page 25

Vote online at [varsity.co.uk/poll](http://varsity.co.uk/poll)



And so a new year dawns, and with it comes whispers of more unholy goings-on in the backwater of Cambridge. The team at our favourite 'union' may have changed, but behind the scenes bizarre events appear to be carrying on as usual. A certain member, renowned for making phone videos of themselves touching their 'special place', recently ended up a

long way from home after a chance meeting with the local ambulance service. We hear that the hapless officer was on their way back from a evening with friends when they fell over near their house. The passing ambulance stopped to help but the 'tramp-like' clothing on display caught their eye. Despite their best efforts our officer was unable to persuade the crew that they weren't in fact homeless, promptly being taken to shelter at A&E for the evening.

Onto more curious events around the parish. The elitist club that proves

the focus for so much bile from the strongly left wing (King's) students of Cambridge, has been showing its other side by opening its estimable doors up to the town. We were shocked to hear that after an overheard conversation at the bar of Wetherspoons, ladies were 'picked up' at that very venue and escorted away for a night of debauchery.

The Bishop wonders whether this is the start of a new selection policy for the organisation...

Send your confessions to [thebishop@varsity.co.uk](mailto:thebishop@varsity.co.uk)



# Comment

Email: [comment@varsity.co.uk](mailto:comment@varsity.co.uk)

## Ethics Girl



### Green Sex

by Tess Riley

When a good friend of mine, Eugene, came back from Japan last month, I was surprised how much he had changed. Although a lovely guy, he had never been a 'ladies-man'. Bless. Take note future parents: Adonis-like hotties are never called Eugene.

Or so I thought. However, his ten month absence has witnessed the birth of a new man and I had to pinch myself when he turned up at the pub to tell me all about his travels. Not one to give too much away, I prevented myself from the Bridget Jones-type "Oh my God you're beautiful" greeting and opted instead for a restrained "hey, how's it going?" He'd been away for ten months, was one of my best friends, and here was I asking him how it was going? Oh dear, hormones are a bugger.

Luckily I made it safely past the three minute rule (the time during which you sit there wondering if you actually fancy a person or if you're just mates and will stay that way) to decide that Eugene and I had known each other since we were in nappies and were not – ever – going to find ourselves in a similar scantily-clad moment again.

But after an hour, a bit more wine, and many oohs and aahs at the photos of Eugene, I eventually had to ask, "Why the hell are you suddenly such a hunk?" (Note to self – never use the word "hunk"; being drunk is no excuse).

Eugene laughed and, far from recoiling, told me how he had discovered "green sex" while in Japan.

"Ugh, Eugene, what are you saying to me? You've never spoken like this before. What are you talking about?" So, as I sat there sobering up, I was entertained with stories of a singles bar where everything is either recycled – napkins for romantic meals – or able to be recycled – ropes and candles included (do not go there).

Because the place is so eco-friendly, it attracts an eco-crowd, so the green men and women in Tokyo can find their soul mates, explore the life-sized rabbit mannequins made from recycled pillows (really don't go there) and return home to fish-free sushi and bonsai-hugging, all loved-up.

Green sex being kinky? I never thought I'd see the day.

Eugene is now a liberated man, happy with his sexuality and positively radiating sex-God chemicals. I, meanwhile, have discovered a whole new side to eco-friendliness more interesting than my previous passion for compost.

Two days after 'that night' with Eugene, I read an article which exposed the toxicity of sex toys. Seven out of eight of them contained phthalates in concentrations up to 51 percent. These chemical nasties are dangerous in even very small quantities and are hard to get rid of once they're here. Safe alternatives exist so why are governments so slow on the uptake? Considering all the interesting encounters MPs seem to have with one another, it's surely in their best interests to clean-up the sex-toy industry.



Mary Bowers

## I wanna Fresher, I wanna Fresher bad...

Why freshers' week is a game of musical stares

Your parents are out of eyeshot, the last dregs of your mother's coral lipstick are rubbed from your rosy cheeks and the parental staples of fruit, tea bags and enough dried penne to sink a battleship are safely stowed in your kitchen cupboard. What now?

Well, children (I reserve this patronising tone when talking to both freshers and Japanese tourists. One must speak very LOUD-LY and SLOW-LY, since both these groups are charting new terrain that is oh-so-well-worn for us who have experienced all four seasons - and all four nightclubs - in this town more times than one can recall).

Yes, my dears, gather round Auntie Mary, for it is time for the festivities of the rather-inadequately-named Fresher's Week to begin.

The name itself is innocuous because i) it is not a week (or at least not here) and ii) because there is nothing "fresh" about being dragged to your first college bop to be overloaded with a "cocktail" more accurately described as cheap vodka with added essence of E-number, and leered at by second years who, disillusioned with their own era's selection are intent on raiding the next. I'd call it pretty

stale. (I numbered these points so that you don't get too confused. You are, after all, bombarded by far too much information at this point, you poor little mites).

But beware whose advice you take, for what seems like gentle, paternal behaviour on the part of "Fresher" guides and the amateur second-year advice service is actually unnecessary and a little sinister. Because we have, after all, been there ourselves, ended up in the wrong lectures/clubs/room parties/beds with the wrong boys/girls/both.

We all know how to practice safe sex, make pasta à la tomato sauce and stay on the right side of the Head Porter. Therefore we also know you could work it out for yourselves if you haven't already. Why seducing freshers is such a popular game I understand. Why we make an annual event of staring at them from our little-earned high-horses I do not.

Perhaps it is jealousy: perhaps, indeed, I'm as irked as the next girl at not, all of a sudden, being "rich pickings" for the next, more worldly-wise third year. I'm not the focus of attention in the college bar. Perhaps also, I'm disquieted by the snub of not being on any furtive laddish "bedding lists" (I'm informed about the reality of these in strictest confi-

dence, with threats of vaginal mutilation etc etc).

However, maybe this game of passing on the Baton of Patronisation is brought on simply because we are all victim to a constant public assumption of what it is to be a student, let alone a fresher.

Take the latest Weetabix advert for example, in which an intrepid household of 24-hour, all-squatting, all-partying students are asked to be creative with a family pack of the cardboard biscuits. "I eat them with yoghurt when I come in from clubbing!" exclaims one. "Try it with chocolate milk! Ooh, I just can't study on an empty stomach!" cries a young nubile Connie Huq lookalike with a conspiratorial grin.

Perhaps it is unrealistic to analyse such an advertisement from a university whose local Sainsbury's does a roaring trade in quail's eggs, but I can't help but feel slightly offended by an advert that suggests that the average group of students, if stuck in a house for a week with a family box of Weetabix, would really view such banal cereal-based discoveries with this level of smugness and achievement. Are students really so budget-obsessed, so sloppy, so...vacuous?

Apparently yes, in the same way that we all "drink away our student

loans" (hello, Top-Up Fee lobbyists) and hand in one, shoddy, tea-stained essay a year, written for us by some bespoke internet service who have charged us fifty quid for the lazy privilege. No wonder students have such an inferiority complex. We are simply forced into a passive-aggressive game of turning on each other. A spot of fresher-bashing, anyone?

But, first years, stick to your guns! Barricade yourself up in Ballare (or Cindies to us veterans) with enough Reefs to last the (half-) week and stay there. Ignore all strangers: if of the opposite sex they are probably fixing you with an icy stare, and if they're not then they're probably wondering what you look like underneath your pub-crawl pyjamas (by week two, they also will be fixing you with an icy stare).

When you have danced til you're dizzy, run back to your penne, boil it in the manner CUSU's handy guide advises you ("add Dolmio sauce to hot pasta for a quick and easy fix" etc etc) and phone your mum. Phone your mum straight away, do not pass Go, do not forget to collect your student loan and eat at least two pieces of fruit a day. And don't forget, when in any trouble, just Hermes your - ever understanding - Auntie Mary: she's seen it all before.

## VARSLITY

Varsity has been Cambridge's independent student newspaper since 1947, and distributes 10,000 free copies to every Cambridge college and ARU weekly. Varsity is proud to be the holder of numerous student media awards and a vast number of alumni now working in international media. Varsity also publishes BlueSci magazine, The Mays, and an online edition at [www.varsity.co.uk](http://www.varsity.co.uk), and broadcasts weekly on CUR1350.

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## Editorial

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# VARSITY

## Degrees of Working

For many students, going to university for the first time brings with it an independence that can seem burdensome. The introduction of top-up fees this year brings a major new element of uncertainty to the idea of handling one's own finances; parents and students alike don't relish the idea of three thousand pounds of extra debt on top of maintenance costs. Students whose parents are able to support them through university may find themselves pleased to be taking care of their own finances; those struggling on more meagre resources may well feel anxious at the prospect of spending their student loans too quickly, and being left with nothing but overdrafts and mounting debt. At other universities many of these students would take up part-time work in order to make money, and perhaps also to experience another side of their university town; but Cambridge students are strongly discouraged from taking paid work, especially during term-time. Instead, bursary support is provided. This is a policy that clearly has a positive effect; the intensity of a degree at Cambridge usually leaves little time for a part-time job.

*Varsity's* investigation on page 5 raises some troubling issues about the pressures students may feel as a result of Cambridge's policy. Cambridge bursaries are means tested according to one's parental income; while it is welcomed that the University will help with the fees of students from poorer families, it remains clear that even students from families who fall outside the means tested bracket may well struggle financially. It is for this reason that *Varsity* feels that it is important that students feel able to go to their tutors to talk through any concerns; *Varsity* found the vast majority of tutorial responses to each case study impressive, flexible and personal.

Perhaps the most pertinent question that this week's investigation raises is whether Cambridge adequately prepares its students for the working world that faces them after university. Students at Cambridge often attempt to fill their holidays with as many trips to South America, charity projects and short work experience placements as they can muster. The University appears keen to encourage this sort of behaviour; yet often seems to withdraw its support as soon as paid work is mentioned. A student staying at home over the summer to work in order to pay for the coming year's expenses may well receive less from the university than a student travelling to South America for a holiday disguised as a research trip. One could easily see this kind of approach to the management of students' time and experience as rather antiquated, even faintly snobbish. Working for money is not only necessary for some, but also often enriching. Cambridge graduates who haven't tried it can feel lost after leaving, bewildered at the prospect of finding paid work, and disadvantaged in the ever changing job market.

It is a curious fact that the University in general – although this does not apply to all supervisors – has no problem with and even actively encourages extremely time consuming extra curricular activities. Some people manage to spend more hours on these than on their degrees; rowing, theatre, politics and journalism appear the usual culprits. This inconsistency in University and collegiate policy is odd, but also a great opportunity. Cambridge degrees are intensive; extraordinary but almost romantically isolating in their devotion to the ivory tower. Sitting in a turret room for a week reading Henry James could not, however, be further from working for 18 hours a day in an investment bank. Or, more interestingly, at a newspaper. Which smoothly leads me to invite you to play the serious game of student journalism. We need you to write to us and write for us. Roll up, roll up.

# Get out of the car and let them survive UNaided

## Why gap year volunteering is worse than boring



Ashley Elliott

**H**uddling in the college bar this week, in every gaggle of freshmen solidarity, you are guaranteed to find at least one gap-year-bore. "Travel" is an icebreaker, so we compete for stories in an attempt to do away with the "What school? What subject?" monotony we all went through in week one. It's annoying, and this year could be worse.

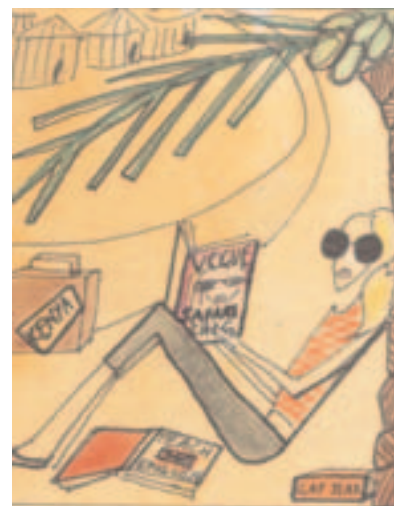
Thailand is a Mecca for teenagers on the lookout for pub stories. This year the lucky ones have landed on their feet. Traversing the Ko Phan Yang they can speak of a real "experience"... a military coup in the heart of gap-year land! It was dangerous and crazy, and they were there.

It has become fashionable to rubbish posh kids with round-the-world tickets. One Lonely Planet, a string of sweaty hostels and a thousand emails deliver "life experience" and a small plastic Buddha. It seems a harmless rite of passage.

Recently, though, the "Volunteer" experience, a vocation for some 250,000 students, has also come under fire. Volunteering is big business. In Nairobi I shared a flat with Mwangi, a Kenyan working as a volunteer coordinator. Each volunteer travelling with the company he works for pays £1300 for the trip. I have seen the breakdown of payments – Mwangi gets peanuts, out of which he has to bribe the Kenya Wildlife Service to put up with a "Big Cat Diary" fanatic for a month. The company HQ takes a thousand pounds. There is no donation, no charity about it.

In July it all went wrong for Mwangi. The British company pulled out. Not enough profit. Four months on they refused to contact him, or pay his salary for 2005. Without an income Kenya is tough: Mwangi can no longer afford the rent or the food that feeds his children. He has heard not a word from the company that invites you to "make a difference... live abroad helping entire communities in less advantaged countries".

The whole concept is flawed. For the impoverished children of Nairobi's slums, an eighteen year old boy cannot be a role model. He is exotic and the kids will love him while he teaches



their class (and the normal teachers have gone, with their canes, to sit in the pub for some well-earned leave). But the young man will return home with his "experience", leaving behind for the children a new understanding of a world with iPods and opportunity that, cruelly, they cannot realise. Not now, not ever.

It's easy to be cynical about this modern incarnation of the white man's burden and the maverick companies meeting the demand. But I would even question the legitimacy of

the grown up "volunteers" – the Ivy League and Russell Group graduates scrambling (I use the word deliberately) for NGO and UN development jobs in the "field" in Africa. It's competitive too – I couldn't get a seat at the "careers in the United Nations" lecture last term.

In Nairobi, young UN staff members gather every night for raucous parties in the posh Karen suburb in the hills to the west of the city. For a young expat with a Landcruiser and a UN pass, Kenya is a playground for latter-day white mischief.

Money leaks from every agency; some are more corrupt and inefficient than others. In my own experience the young idealists do not actively participate in the shams of the national staff and the older generation, but equally they do nothing to address it. Lunchtime at the UN is a daily lament about the stealing and the waste, yet no one is prepared to give-up this tax-free adventure in the heart of Africa.

So what to do? If the Development Industry and the millions of feel-good dollars we throw at the Third World do more harm than good, should we close down the UN and Oxfam and all the rest until we can come up with something better? Lower the salaries and move the UN headquarters to Bangladesh? I wonder how many graduates would apply if this were to happen.

Volunteer Tourism is misguided. We, the paying participants, need to wake up to this just as our grandfathers realised the folly of their civilising adventures. Why not vote with our feet and set aside six months of a gap-year to assist the elderly in Coventry and Hull instead? We could "travel" there on the National Express, work for an NGO called "Save the Elderly International" and head up the M1 in big white Landcruisers. No, it's not as sexy, but it might do more good.

Becky Varley-Winter



# Stalk away the blues

## Surrender your private life and let it all hang out

**L**ike many students on popular networking site facebook.com, I was bewildered on 5th September by the launch of the "News Feed" and "Mini Feed" features.

Introduced as "a personalized list of news stories", "News Feed" summarised the activities of my online friends, while a "Mini Feed" on my profile page regurgitated my own actions, from changes made to my profile to messages written on friends' walls. I was even informed if friends had broken up, complete with a tactless little icon depicting a broken heart.

Over 200 anti-feed groups appeared online before the day was out, condemning the Feed as invasive and unsettling. Yet nothing was on display that had not

been accessible before. Why were we uneasy?

I found the Feed antisocial. Before, much as in life, we had communicated with Facebook friends primarily as individuals, information being available only if they cared to look for it. Now, the Feed made announcements as if through a megaphone at a school assembly. Or as another user put it, "Facebook is forcing me to stalk my friends". By September 8th, the largest protest group had more than 100,000 members. An apology was issued, and privacy controls introduced: we could exempt ourselves from News Feed. Triumph!

Yet supporters of the Feed had a point: perhaps our negative reaction stemmed partly from embarrassed self-consciousness. Why

## Why had we felt the need to tell everyone our favourite film was Antz?

had we felt a need to tell everyone that our favourite film was Antz, or that we were in a relationship? Weren't we already saying "look at me"? And isn't any notion of "privacy" on the internet naïve?

AOL recently published the search logs of 650,000 users, supposedly as an academic resource. When these logs were leaked onto the web, there was fury at private searches becoming public. Although names weren't given, it was possible to trace identities as some of the searches were highly personal. A case in point being log 672378: "abortion clinics charlotte nc". At least Facebook never gave false promises of anonymity.

It is disconcertingly easy to reveal ourselves online, often due to this heady smokescreen of anonymity. On sites postsecret.com and group hug.us, users share their most intimate secrets as a form of therapy. The internet is haunted by wistful cyber-ghosts, inviting the lonely or narcissistic to find an audience.

Online diaries (blogs) can even attract book deals, a recent success being New Yorker Stephanie Klein, whose blog juicily detailing first dates and one-night-stands has spawned a book: *Straight Up and Dirty*. We live in a culture that rewards self-exposure.

So why not embrace the Feed? Let us devour celebrity gossip, watch Big Brother, and gawp at shockumentaries, those TV shows that specialise in mawkish voyeurism disguised as sympathy.

If anything, Facebook isn't revealing enough. I want to know when my friends breathe. I want to know when they eat a sandwich. And I want to achieve all this without any face-to-face interaction. Isn't this just how we communicate nowadays?

Feeeeeeeeed me.



Discuss

Email: letters@varsity.co.uk  
Tel: 01223 353422

Turn to page 25 or lift up Arts and Features for more discussion

»Notes from New York



TANYA FILER

There are many apartments in New York City. Indeed, one man alone, Mr. Donald Trump, owns tens of thousands of them himself. Why then, is it quite so difficult to find just one puny little room inside one? Here, finding an apartment-share is a military operation to be carried out in several carefully executed stages.

Stage one, list-consultancy, is no simple scanning of the classifieds. It requires an incisive level of reading between the proverbial lines to sort the rather limited wheat from the profliferance of urban chaff. "Security patrolled street" is code for dodgy as Hell, come armed or not at all. "Pet-friendly" means we live in denial that one of the world's most polluted cities is not a farm and consequently keep five dogs and two cats in an apartment the size of a shoebox. My favourite is the frequently used "pre-war jaded elegance": the most euphemistic means of stating that the building might not stand to see another day.

Once the apartment-seeker arrives at a shortlist (and believe me, the list bit is by far the more problematic, the short bit is a given), the second, most crucial stage rears its ugly head: the e-mail correspondence. This brief note announcing your interest must tread the fine line between informative and too-much-information, in-search-of and desperate, friendly and I want to rent your room AND have your babies in it.

I recieved one response that informed me I had reached a shortlist of five potential room-mates, whittled down from over one hundred respondents. Feeling rather chuffed, I started spreading the news. As I casually mentioned that it was just a little to the East and ever so slightly above Central Park, a knowing smile spread across the faces of those smug New Yorkers. My beloved future apartment was just off "Murderside" park. Like, how totally awesome.

Stage three is the openhouse, the invitation to the private members' club of apartment hunting. And what is it like at the top of Manhattan's select list of potential roomies? No canapés and cocktails here. Rather, awkward conversation ensues about how sparkling the mildewing kitchen looks. I went to one where I met a cat-dog. This thing was a beast - the largest, most muscular cat imaginable. It (this thing cannot be gendered) wagged its tail like a dog and would doubtless bark like a bulldog if a burglar were to come a step too close. I left homeless, and with nothing on my back but a cat-dog hair covered sweater.

Illusions of swanning à la Carrie down the steps of a delightful brownstone that I can call home risk fading into thin air (and in Manhattan, even air is up for sale in your local oxygen bar). But the thing about this city is, you never know what's around the corner. Your next free opera ticket, date, yoga class, sugar-free iced passionfruit lemonade tea, or even your next roommate. So am I optimistic of reaching stage four, the illusive Move-In? Absofuckinlutely.

»Letter of the week

“Why are bloggers conceived as narcissistic and geeky individuals?”



Dear Sir,

During a long and rather lonely internship in a personal-integrity-gobbling law firm this summer, I decided to counteract the slow disintegration of morals and the pain of isolation by starting my own web blog. “This”, I thought, “will not only

bring me into the world of high speed communication but will also give me the chance to talk to myself without seeming i) insane and ii) self-indulgent.”

Unfortunately, I seem to have been, according to “friends”, the media, and the world at large, wrong about both these suppositions. Why, when the world is so full of interesting people who find it difficult to interact with the world via any other interface but a computer screen, do people ignore web blogs? Worse, why are they so derisive of the people who do so? Is it, after all, less self-indulgent than swapping uninteresting anecdotes in a voice that is raised to a less-than-acceptable number of decibels after a few pints in The Eagle?

Why are bloggers conceived as puffed-up, narcissistic and rather geeky individuals, when in fact we have as much to say as that idiot in the pub and a much more coherent and open way of saying it? It is far better than talking to yourself on the bus and smelling of wee. Blogging is the future, and a public service. So much so that I would be grateful if you could do away with that piece of cyber-shite that is the *Varsity* waste-of-a-website and let me have my own blog in its place.

Bloggers unite! We have been long ground down but our time is at hand!

Yours sincerely,

Joe Blogger, Queens' College

*Tell Varsity what's on your mind! Each week, the best letter will win a bottle of wine from our friends at Cambridge Wine Merchants, King's Parade.*

turn to page 25



»Freshers' Guide to Cambridge Societies

CUSU: Cambridge University Students' Union

“CUSU is a federal organisation made up of College Students' Unions (JCRs/MCRs etc.). It exists to represent Cambridge students' interests at a university level, and to provide central services and support for all students.”

How can I become a member?

“You're already a member! Every student of Cambridge University is automatically a member of CUSU.”

What benefits does CUSU offer?

“Plenty. Support and information from our caseworkers on all issues relating to your welfare and academic performance (from exam appeals to pregnancy, from mental health to sorting out your supervisors). We also provide a range of services for students, and top quality nights out (courtesy of CUSUents, the biggest independent promoter in town).”

www.cusu.cam.ac.uk

The Cambridge Union Society

“The Union is the oldest debating society in the World. The society has always welcomed prominent figures to speak to its student audiences: from Gillian Anderson to Sven Goran Eriksson; Winston Churchill to Jawaharlal Nehru.”

How can I become a member?

“Fill in a membership form at the CUSU societies' fair, or visit the Union on Bridge Street and see the Freshers' Debate at 8pm on 5th October for free.”

Why should I join?

“Only members can listen to speakers and debates, and benefit from the great range of facilities offered by the Union. This term alone, we will be visited by Jeremy Paxman, rock star Billy Bragg, scientist Richard Dawkins, Michael Howard MP, Miss World and many others.”

www.cambridge-union.org

ADC: Amateur Dramatic Club

“The ADC is the biggest and most active drama society in Cambridge, staging around 20 shows every year. To get involved in these shows, you need to be a member of the Society, and your membership will entitle you to such benefits as discounts at Heffers, regular copies of Offstage (the Club newsletter), and discounts on drinks and tickets.”

What is the stereotype of an ADC member, and is it true?

“The image of air-kissing, bitchy thespans and an impenetrable ‘dahling’ clique is very misleading. The ADC is a community of people who are passionate about theatre: actors, directors, techies, designers... and it is open for absolutely anyone to join. Come to ClubNight (Wednesdays 9-11pm in the ADC Bar) to meet the committee and find out how to get involved!”

www.cuadc.org

CUMS: Cambridge University Music Society

“CUMS is one of the largest and most historic Cambridge societies, catering for a diverse group of 400 performing members spread over four ensembles.

CUMS I is Cambridge's flagship symphony orchestra. It attracts leading professional conductors and is one of the finest University symphony orchestras in the country.

CUMS II is run by the University's top student conductors and caters for orchestral musicians in a more relaxed environment.

The CUMS Chorus is directed by Stephen Cleobury, conductor of the BBC Singers and King's College Choir.

The Zephyr Ensemble is the University's symphonic wind band.”

Sign up for an audition at the Societies Fair or at  
www.cums.org.uk

Way Back When: Varsity Archives  
»April 1971: Charles Clarke appointed CSU President



Our first ever ‘Way Back When’ transports us, like a nervously aborted *Back to the Future* plotline, to the prehistoric mists of the early 70s. We see that since its inception in 1971, CUSU has been dogged by controversy revolving around the balance it strikes between fighting for student welfare, and bearing the flag for student politics. We also see a young Charles Clarke preparing to be our second ever CUSU President. Looking like a lovingly electrocuted Bill Oddie, and even then possessing his trademark aversion to razors, Mr. Clarke wades in to support a political role of CUSU as long as it remains constructive, inveighing against the difference

between grants for Homerton and Tech students (£380) and the rest of the University (£420). He went on to claim that this gap only existed to “keep the young gentlemen in caviar”. A surprisingly anti-materialist jab from the man who, as Education Secretary was to argue in that universities merely exist “to enable the British economy.” (2003) He even adds that he is “not opposed to direct action” and that “property is not totally inviolate”. Hurling insults and farm produce at the new gentry is out, gown-burning and sit-ins against inequality are most definitely in. One hopes he wasn't expecting similar fervour in support of ID cards.



# Features & Arts

Friday September 29 2006 | Issue 640

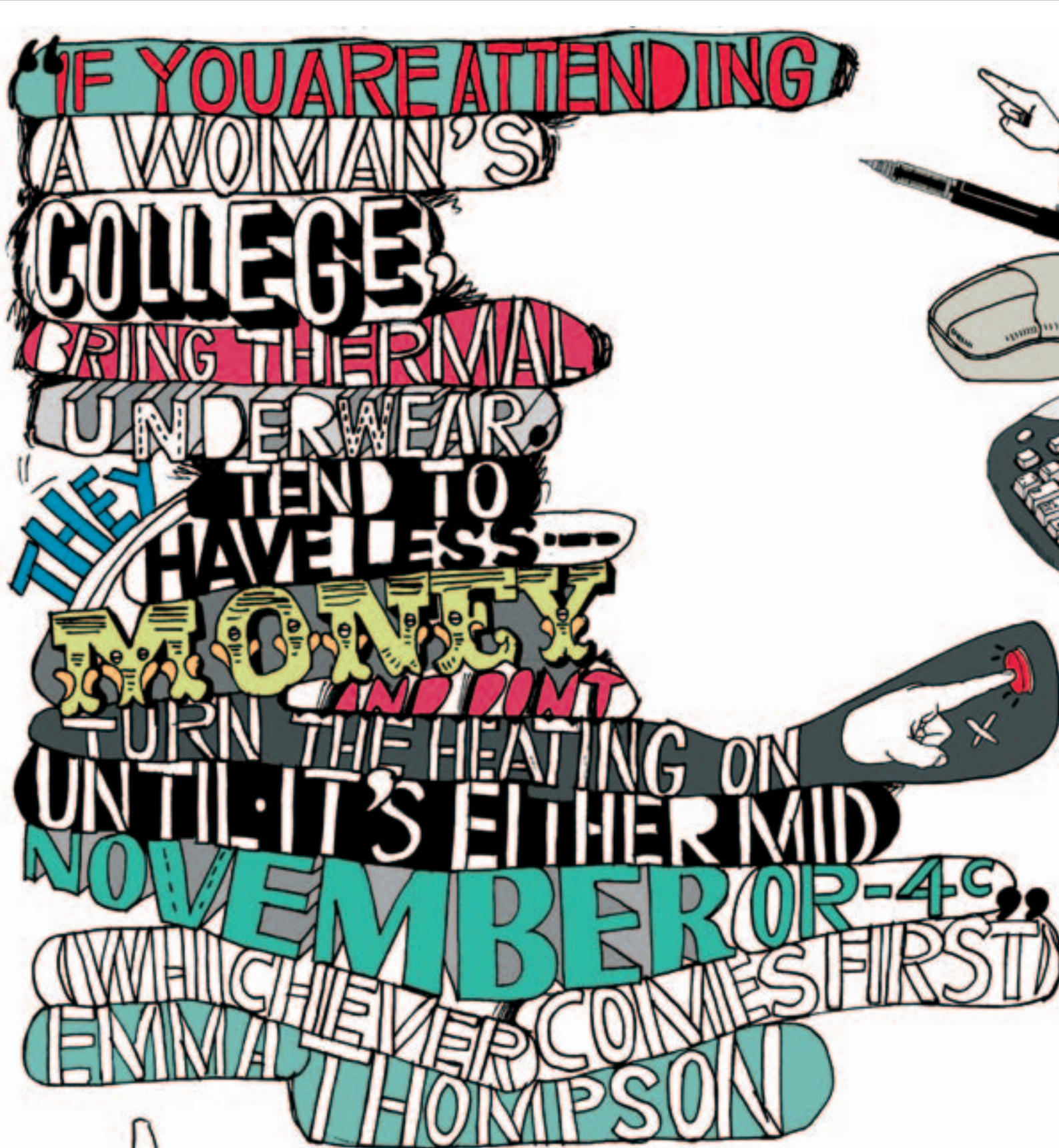


Illustration for  
Freshers by  
**Tim Drake**

[drakegummy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:drakegummy@hotmail.co.uk)



## INTERVIEW P 12

Gautam  
Malkani on  
life and  
Londonstani

## SYMPOSIUM P 11

Lebanon:  
caught in  
the crossfire

## SCIENCE P 11

Superman  
and the  
supersperm

## CLASSICAL P 16

Cutting the  
clap: when  
not to  
applaud



# Over the Bridge



Jeremy Warmsley graduated two years ago. His album, *The Art Of Fiction*, comes out on 9th October. He's touring with King Creosote and "hopefully" the Mystery Jets, before headlining in November. On 19th November he will be playing the Fez Club. *Varsity* had a chat with him about his life since graduation.

## How did you celebrate the end of your degree?

I can't even remember, which suggests it was either very good or very bad. I suspect the latter.

## How did you spend the year after you graduated?

Temping in various terrible jobs (filing, photocopying), living with my parents and being a film extra.

## Have you stayed in contact with many friends from university?

Yeah. I still run a night with Simon Mastrantone and my piano player/collaborator/flat-mate is another ex-Cambridge friend, Tom Rogerson.

## Do you think having a degree from Cambridge has helped/hindered you in any way since your graduation?

Neither really. It makes very little difference in my business to be honest; a cheap way to impress the easily impressed, at best.

## You're coming to play a gig in Cambridge next month. Do you like coming back here to play?

Yes and no; I get very nostalgic but also quite weirded-out. Also it's very strange bumping into my few acquaintances that still live here two years later – some of them don't seem to realise I have left.

## What is your fondest memory of Cambridge?

Probably driving to the Wash with Simon Mastrantone and our girlfriends to look for the sea. It wasn't there.

"People who are total dicks can be a lot of fun"  
- Jeremy Warmsley.

## What is your biggest regret about your time at Cambridge?

Being too worried about exams and such when I was obviously never going to be a contender. I should have concentrated on my music from the outset.

## What was the biggest lesson Cambridge taught you?

People who are total dicks can be a lot of fun.

## Take a Break: Katie Craig goes to Shotokan Karate

My closest flirtation with martial arts had amounted to fending off the puny punches of a younger brother, so it was with some apprehension that I headed off for an evening class with Cambridge Karate Club. Arriving late and slightly harassed, I was met by the daunting vision of the group in the throes of a warm-up. This appeared to entail an extreme form of stretching, vaguely reminiscent of something from a Rocky film. Nevertheless, a warm welcome by instructor Chris Goldsmith soon had me lunging and squatting in tandem with him, even if I failed to follow suit when he lithely threw himself face first into a press-up.

Chris then took me to one side to go over the "Kihon" (key moves) while the rest of the class began to attack each other in an orderly fashion. After a demonstration of the three main actions of Karate, a punch, kick and block, I unleashed my inner Bruce Lee. By the end of the hour's session had managed to perform, albeit clumsily, the 1st "Kata" or sequence. I even got the chance to join in with the guttural chorus of "Kiai", an infinitely satisfying shout expelled at the end of a strike movement. Chris proved to be a patient instructor even when my defence technique proved about as firm as a stunned salmon, and by the end of the class, with my reading list forgotten, I was getting into the martial swing of things.

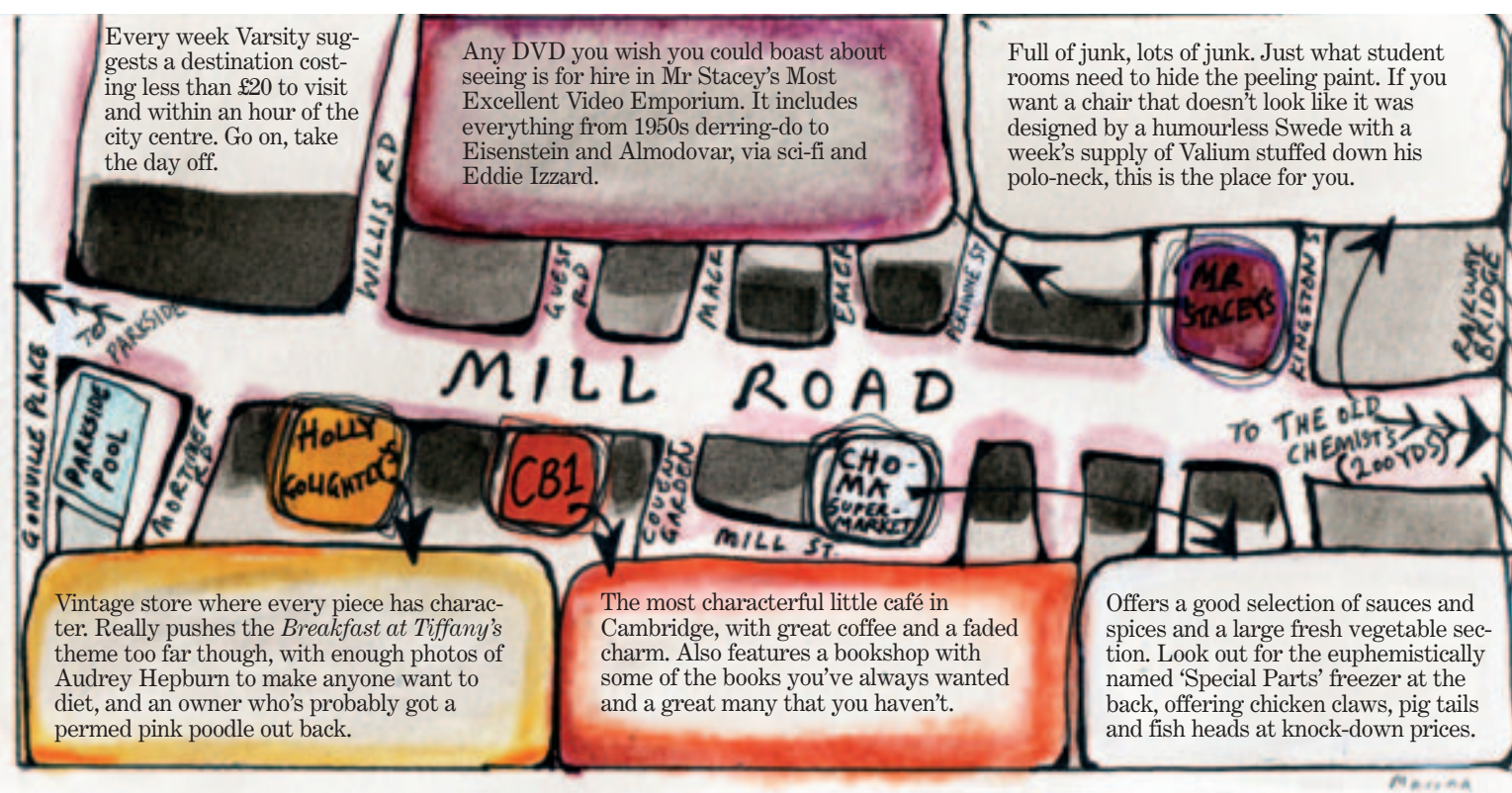
**When:** Mondays, 8.30pm-9.30pm

**Where:** Kelsey Kerridge Centre

**Who for:** Adults, any standard

## Travel: Mill Road

Ed Blain launches a new section on adventuring for the less adventurous





## Symposium

## Lebanon: what now?

» 'I saw my house destroyed live on TV'  
- Amina Al-Yassin, New Hall

» *Varsity* brings together public figures and Cambridge students to discuss the outcome of the July war

## CONTRIBUTORS:

**EDWARD MORTIMER** Kofi Annan's Director of Communications » **GEORGE GALLOWAY** Respect MP for Bethnal Green & Bow » **VANESSA REDGRAVE** Oscar-winning actress and peace campaigner » **AHMED MULLA** Founder, CU Middle Eastern Society » **JACK PREVEZER** Cambridge undergraduate, worked for Britain Israel Communications & Research Centre » **HANANYA DAG-YAIR** Cambridge undergraduate and resident of Northern Israel

» Can the ceasefire hold?

**George Galloway:** The cessation is on a hair-trigger. It can hold only if there are moves towards a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East. The failure of Israel to secure its objectives in Lebanon, its defeat at the hands of the Hezbollah-led resistance, might open up a window of opportunity to negotiate such a settlement.

**Edward Mortimer:** I think it can hold if both parties want it to. The Lebanese Armed Forces, together with the expanded UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon), are deployed throughout the area. Hezbollah have "disappeared" from it as a visibly armed fighting force, though they are still very much present as a social and political movement and are presumed to have weapons not far out of sight.

The ceasefire will be strengthened if there is progress on the Shebaa Farms (land occupied by Israel since 1967 but claimed by Lebanon), release of prisoners, integration of Hezbollah into the Lebanese state and armed forces, and an overall Arab-Israeli peace. Without such progress it will remain precarious.

» How has the war affected Hezbollah's standing in Lebanon and the wider world?

**Ahmed Mulla:** Gauging the mood in the Egyptian streets during the summer, I believe that Hezbollah has gained increased support and sympathy through out the Arab and Muslim world. As for the wider world, I believe the position has not changed much.

**George Galloway:** Hezbollah has emerged immensely stronger from the war. It has galvanised the clear majority of Lebanon behind it. Surveys at the end of the war showed that 89 percent of Sunni Muslims said they supported Hezbollah's defence of Lebanon, 80 percent of Christians did, most Druze did and the figure among Shia was off the scale.

**Hananya Dag-Yair:** Hezbollah is a very media-savvy organisation with a huge propaganda budget from Iran. It prints numerous publications, runs over 50 different websites and has its own radio and international satellite-broadcast television station. The television station alone enjoys a budget higher than the combined budgets for the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Army Spokespersons' Division. So it should come as no surprise that Hezbollah is perceived in a positive light, especially in Lebanon. That said, there are a growing number of Lebanese voices condemning Hezbollah for bringing destruction to Lebanon.

"Half of Lebanon destroyed. Call that a loss?"

- Ehud Olmert

» Can the war be considered on any level a success for Israel?

**Edward Mortimer:** Hardly. Their aims were the return of the two kidnapped soldiers and the neutralization of Hezbollah. So far they have not achieved either. But many players in Lebanon and also European powers who have deployed troops to UNIFIL now have a stake in security and stability on Israel's northern border. To that extent, Israel may be more secure.

**Vanessa Redgrave:** No war can be considered a success for anyone, ever. War always signifies long drawn out failure, and disaster for ordinary people on all sides.

**Jack Prevezer:** I agree. There have, however, been some positive outcomes. The UN Resolution 1701 is now tougher and more enforceable; Hezbollah has been pushed back

from Southern Lebanon, their stockpile of weaponry diminished; a bigger UN force now exists in southern Lebanon and the international community now recognises the importance of preventing Iran and Syria from re-arming Hezbollah.

**George Galloway:** No it can't. What's more, the Israeli general staff don't think so, the Knesset does not think so, and the Israeli public does not think so. When a committee of Knesset MPs argued with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that he had lost in Lebanon he responded: "Half of Lebanon destroyed. Call that a loss?" I think that says it all.

» What impact has the war had on perceptions of Israel elsewhere in the Middle East?

**Ahmed Mulla:** The sad fact is that the war has only fuelled the conspiracy theorists who are promoting ideas about Israel's desire to occupy the rest of the Arab world, from the Euphrates to the Nile. Israel has always been viewed by the Middle Eastern world as a hostile occupying power, and the war against Lebanon has not done anything to change that view.

» Will the war mark a major change in political attitudes surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian question?

**Edward Mortimer:** Mainly it has reinforced the attitudes that were already there. But there is a greater sense of urgency about making progress on the Palestinian problem. Europe and Russia are more actively engaged, and at last week's Quartet meeting in New York the US showed slightly greater flexibility on finding ways for the international community to support and engage with a possible National Unity Government in Palestine which would include Hamas. Some people, notably Bill Clinton, think the US may have to come up with a new peace initiative within the next couple of months.

## Caught in the crossfire

Every Cambridge student spent part of the summer watching the destruction of Lebanon on TV. For some, though, the news couldn't be switched off.

Amina Al-Yassin  
Beirut

I saw my house being destroyed live on TV. It was the first time I had ever seen it; we had bought it new and were still waiting to move in. Our family remained literally glued to the television for the whole month the conflict lasted. During one of these TV sittings we received a call from my aunt in Lebanon. My mother's uncle and cousin had both passed away.

Although they died a few metres away from the family home nobody was able to attend their funeral or perform the funeral rites as it was too dangerous to step out of the house.

A million Lebanese people were displaced - quite a few ended up in our house in London. Thankfully, everyone has now returned to Lebanon and the rebuilding process is in full swing. I just hope that we won't be seeing them again for a long while.

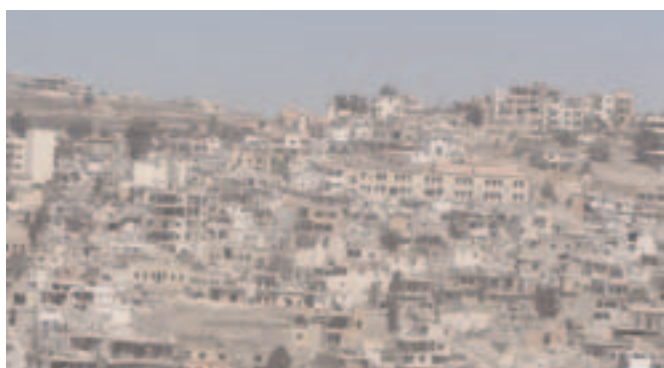
Katherine Haigh  
Jerusalem

I observed the majority of the war from the relative safety of Jerusalem, but a weekend trip to the coast took me closer to the conflict than I expected.

I hoped that trying to commandeer myself a spot on the beach would be the extent of the 'action' but I had not anticipated the continuous drone of helicopters flying overhead and the ominous, regular thud of rockets.

The enormous military presence in Jerusalem was even more obvious than normal. At every set of traffic lights stood people handing out bumper stickers demanding no end to the war until Hezbollah had been defeated.

But in some ways I felt as distanced from conflict in Jerusalem as I had done in London. Israelis have come to accept conflict as part of life and daily routines altered only subtly to accommodate for the war.





## Interview

# Gautam Malkani

RHI ADAM

The txt spk author, Cambridge SPS graduate and self-confessed rude boy talks to **Rhi Adam** about the darker side of Hounslow



**G**autam Malkani is fed up. He is fed up of talking about himself rather than his book, and fed up of being asked whether a 30 year old *Financial Times* journalist can legitimately write a novel about Asian rude boy culture.

It is easy to forget, and many journalists have, that “good boy Gautam” is really just like the characters in his book. *Londonstani* is not about council estate kids. It is, in Gautam’s words, “about kids who come from five bedroom houses in the suburbs who live the ghetto image.”

These are smart kids, who run an ingenious mobile phone unlocking service. As former editor of the *FT*’s Creative Business supplement, Gautam must be proud of both their creativity and their savvy business sense.

Gautam may be the perfect gentleman - he pays for our coffees, hold doors open, and bends over backwards to be compliant and considerate - but he has not forgotten about the need to be cool. He wears his trainers to work and has “Go Motherfucker” emblazoned on his wallet. He also says “D’ya know what I mean” and “innit” more times over our lengthy interview than I care to count.

The point is simply this: he is a good boy from Hounslow who still oozes street cred. He’s not a “bad ass” British Asian boy come “good”, he has always been “good”. Yet, he has written a book about mobile phone gangs.

*Londonstani* is a book about boys who are

essentially just like him. As Gautam reminds me: “It’s not about radical Islam; it’s not about racism; it’s a book about good middle class boys asserting their ethnicity to bolster their masculinity.” The novel was based on his Social and Political Sciences dissertation, submitted - perhaps surprisingly - under the gender relations paper, rather than the race relations one.

Before meeting Gautam, I sought out every review and article on *Londonstani* that I could lay my grubby paws on. There was an abundance. Since publication, the book has sparked a tidal wave of media attention. It appears that it is like Marmite - either loved or loathed.

The journalists do, however, seem to have one thing universally in common - they all completely miss the point. Every piece I read questioned the authenticity of the writer. Many even questioned his motives for writing the novel in the first place, accusing him of pandering to the appetites of publishing houses that were searching feverishly for the next Monica Ali or Zadie Smith.

The bidding war and infamous advance - reports range from £3m to £7m - stumped up by Fourth Estate to secure publishing rights for Gautam’s debut novel often overshadows any commentary on the book itself. This is a shame. On first impressions, *Londonstani* could seem like an Asian *Trainspotting*, written in a mixture of “slang, texting, Panjabi and bastardised gangsta rap”. Instead, the book resembles Jas, Harjit, Ravi, Amrit and Arun, the “young

Rude boy culture is a middle class phenomenon formed by literate Asian boys - it’s not from council estates.

men” that inhabit its pages - whose appearance can be deceiving.

At its core, the book is an intelligent commentary on what it means to come from homes dominated by matriarchal figures, and about how to be tough. It is about the battle British Asian kids go through to escape the image of well behaved pen-pushers; it is about being heard; about seeming “virile”; and above all, about the mechanics of self identity.

The novel examines the products of the “cultural melting pot”, where one’s existing identity no longer suffices. British Asian kids are not simply “Asian”, nor are they only “British”. They also don’t identify with the image created by their parents. They are a modern generation who form a rich part of the cultural framework; an assertive and self-aware subculture. *Londonstani* is what it says on the tin - a novel about being “Londonstani”. It is not as simple as being young, British and Asian, but it does include all those things. It’s about being “Desi”.

Gautam knows that the most common preconception about his novel is that it is political and fuelled by topical discussions of “homegrown terrorists”. The unfortunate parallels drawn between his book and Melanie Phillips’ similarly titled and simultaneously published right wing *Londonistan*, have not helped his case.

Needless to say, the comparison is an unwelcome one. Gautam has been cast as a “race pudit”. “I’ve been forced to comment



# Science



on issues that a year ago I would have had no opinion about,” he says.

*Londonstani* has taken on a new identity. “Misconceptions have fuelled the hype,” he says. “At first I was upset, but then I can’t complain. I never predicted all this; hype is hard to fabricate these days. I don’t know what starts it.”

*Londonstani* is about what he calls an “unsexy” subject. The book also has “unsexy” roots. The Cambridge dissertation that formed its base was written on escape trips to Hounslow. Sadly, these journeys were not always filled with London glamour: Gautam was visiting his sick mother. On the outside, he appeared the rebel, but at heart he was still the “middle class mummy’s boy”.

His dissertation title, *Chocolate Flavoured Coconut Milk*, highlighted the irony of the Desi boy’s predicament – to be “brown on the outside and white on the inside.” This is Gautam’s explanation of what it means to be called “coconut”, and is what rude boy culture fights against.

At the same time, the “desire to do well” appears to be an innate instinct. “The trick, you see, is not to appear coconut,” he says. “Don’t wear drainpipe trousers and white socks with your pocket calculator, watch MTV Base instead. D’yaknowwhatImean?”

His point – and it is a valid one – is that “authentic” rude boys don’t exist, or not as we know them: “Rude boy culture is a middle class phenomenon formed by literate Asian boys – it’s not from council estates.”

So will a book about rude boys date? This has been bugging me, but Gautam seems nonchalant. “I don’t know if it will date... to tell the truth I don’t really know when it was set. It is an amalgamation of the evidence of rude boy culture that I have seen played out over fifteen years. I guess a good date would be 2002 as I wanted to get some of that post 9/11 stuff in there.”

Gautam is already researching the second book that has been promised in his two-book deal. He refuses to sit on his laurels and is refraining from predicting success. “Maybe there is only one book in me,” he says. “I don’t know... I can’t really think of myself as a writer; fuck, it’s been less than a year since *Londonstani* was published.”

Things are going to be different. This time he will have a room of his own to work from and won’t be cramped into a one bedroom flat. Despite his successes, he still has no intention of giving up his day job. As he heads off to buy a kitchen table from B&Q for his new flat, things do look quite sunny, or at least from where I am standing.

A week later, I receive an email from Gautam. He says: “On Saturday I got my phone stolen by one of those mobile phone gangs. I got a whole lecture about mobile phone crime. I didn’t have the balls to tell the policeman that I had written a whole book about mobile phone crime!”

*Londonstani* may not be autobiographical, but, like Gautam, I couldn’t help seeing the irony here. His phone had been 2002’s Nokia 6210.

## Under the Labcoat



What happens when superheroes have sex?  
asks **Mico Tatalovic**

After seeing *Spiderman* I thought that *Superman Returns* couldn’t be all that bad. Indeed, it was rather enjoyable, at least for me, since I’d seen the original *Superman* some fifteen years ago and didn’t remember much of the storyline. In a nutshell, then, Superman has a son with Lois although everyone thinks Lois’ son’s father is her husband, Richard. How is this so?

In one scene Superman, trying to get Lois (whose husband is a pilot, by the way) to fly with him, says, “Let me take you up”. She replies, “Richard takes me up all the time,” only to be persuaded by Superman’s reply: “Not like this.” This perhaps explains the motive Lois might have had to engage in intercourse with Superman: his powers reign in more than one domain. However, if Lois’ husband believed her son was his child he must also have had intercourse with Lois around the same time. And this takes us to the problem I’ll try to tackle here: what is it that determines who fathers the baby if more than one man sleeps with the same woman?

In the case of Superman the answer is quite clear: Supersperm! One can easily envisage Superman’s sperm out-swimming regular guys’ sperm or using infrared rays to burn down any competing sperm on the way. Sperm competition in many animals, including humans, is a well-documented phenomenon; it’s no surprise, then, that it’s Superman’s sperm that won the race.

Research has also shown that men get more aroused by watching a woman having sex with more than one man, which is why internet pornography sites predominantly show images of one woman with more than one man. Apparently, after men have watched such images, in subsequent ejaculations sperm quality and quantity are both

increased. In *Superman Returns*, Superman often comes along in the evenings to observe Lois and her husband through the walls of their house using his X-ray vision. What was it that he saw that would later give him such an edge over Richard I do not know, but one cannot help but imagine.

Once sperm is ejaculated, a woman may

## Women have more orgasms with men with more symmetrical facial features

influence its uptake by orgasms: in simultaneous orgasms the amount of sperm that is taken closer to the egg is larger than in non-simultaneous orgasms or in intercourses that sadly end without orgasm. The physiology of the orgasm, which involves the cervix dipping into the upper part of the vagina, may be an evolved mechanism for retaining preferentially the sperm of the man the woman really wants to father her child. In support of this it was shown that women have more orgasms with men who have more symmetrical facial features and with men they find more attractive: potential indicators of the genetic quality of men. Both men in the film are very attractive. So, what was it that prevailed when it came to fathering Lois’s son: Supersperm or Superorgasm? For better or for worse, some questions are left outside science’s domain.

## BlueSci Science Headlines

In collaboration with *BlueSci*, *Varsity* brings you the latest scientific breakthroughs in Cambridge and the world

### » New Schizophrenia Test Developed

Scientists at the University of Cambridge may have uncovered the first physical trait, or biomarker, for schizophrenia. The finding could have an unprecedented impact on the diagnosis of this debilitating disorder – potentially leading to earlier, and more personalised, treatment.

### » New Route to Nano

An international team of scientists, including Dr Xinping Zhang of the Cavendish Laboratory, has developed a new method of synthesising tungsten nanotubes. The method may prove invaluable in future research and technology.

### » The Epic Tale of a Celibate Tortoise

The tortoise in question is called Lonesome George and, as his name suggests, he is the last surviving member of his kind: a tortoise subspecies unique to the island of Pinta in the Galapagos archipelago. His life has been a slow whirlwind of celebrity, repeated failed matings and a hostage crisis.



MARTHA AND MATHILDA: DRIZZLED WITH OIL

Strada, 17 Trinity Street

★★★★★

Here's a restaurant newly-launched in Cambridge (although a familiar-facade around the country): Strada, which replaces Bar Ha Ha on Trinity Street. Strada trades on the success of the Italian food chain, but a glance at the menu demonstrates its superiority over the Pizza Express/Zizzi standards. We waited for our table at the small but well-stocked central bar; with its upscale seventies-hotel feel, the décor's mix of browns, mirrors and marble make the space seem larger than the café-cum-bistro style of Ha Ha's before it. Each table has an individual haze of privacy - no mean feat in an open-plan restaurant.

There is a good range of appetizers, and we opt for schiacciata aglio (a flat-bread with garlic and rosemary) and a selection of marinated olives at the recommendation of our waitress, both of which are at the less expensive end of the scale but nevertheless quite lovely. The rest of the starters are much larger, and a single dish would definitely serve two - we sampled the antipasto misto (speck, parma ham, salami di Napoli, a perfect buffalo mozzarella sourced directly from Italy, tomatoes, olives and ciabatta), and gamberoni (king prawns in a citrus and

white wine marinade). Both of these dishes were excellent.

Capitalising on the promise of the shrimp, we went for a seafood risotto and salmon with lentils. These dishes were not as well-balanced as our first course, with the risotto having a soupy quality that slightly overpowered the individual shellfish. The pancetta around the salmon was a little overcooked and brittle, which held back the infusion of juices that should have been produced. Having said this, the flesh of the fish was tasty and the lentils were plump and moist. The pizza and pasta dishes were pretty standard: good, if a little pricey. Vegetarians will have to customize as most meals are meat and fish-based. For dessert we had a sumptuous panettone bread and butter pudding, with caramel and ice-cream.

The intimate atmosphere of Strada is complimented by the excellent service. The restaurant itself, whilst catering for more expensive tastes, offers reasonable dishes with nice touches such as complementary bottled water with your meal. Our general verdict was that Strada suits tête-à-têtes but is more appropriate for a meal with visit-

ing famiglia. It is unlikely that you will spend less than £10 if you want to sample the full range of dishes on offer, which we would heartily recommend for a meal that is a cut above your local Italian.

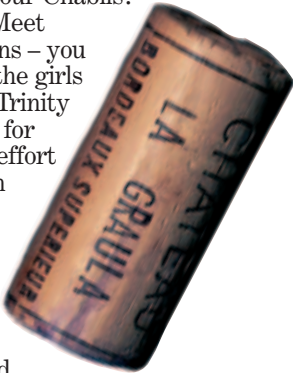
Starters: £2-£6  
Mains: £7-£17  
Dessert: £3-£6

Martha Spurrier & Matilda Imlah



CAMBRIDGE WINE VIRGINS

Baffled by your Beaujolais? Wouldn't know your Chateaufneuf from your Chablis? You're not the only one. Meet *Varsity's* own Wine Virgins - you probably have already - the girls who can't wait to escape Trinity Formal's vintage '27 port for Reefs at Route 66. In an effort to give them an education (and ourselves entertainment), every week we send the *Varsity* Wine Virgins\* to our cheerful chums at Cambridge Wine Merchants, who waste their expertise (and their wine) on our merry maidens. They have but two quests - to seek out something that's flash without the cash, and to find one for formals for under a fiver (though they can't promise to help you avoid the corkage at Downing). They're puckering up, they're poised, and one of them may have taken a shine to the lad behind the counter. It's lucky for you they're taking notes...



This week: Rosé

**Dinner Date:**  
**La Vielle Ferme, Côtes du Ventoux 2005, £5.99**  
Mr CWM: "Bright red fruit. Hint of rose petal. A taste of caramel. Quite butch."  
VWVs: "Oooh, it's quite dry considering it's so pink! And it's organic, so it must be good for you. And it's got a chicken on the front. Winner!"

**Formal hall corker for under a fiver:**  
**Chilean Merlot Rosé 2005, £4.99**  
Mr CWM: "An attractive blend. Raspberries, strawberries and oranges with sweet notes. To be drunk al fresco, with friends."  
VWVs: "But you never have formal hall with friends - only boys who throw up everywhere afterwards at Cindies'. Not as nice as the posher one, but better than Zinfandel at Wetherspoons'. So, say that thing again about sweet-notes?"

All wines are available at Cambridge Wine Merchants

\**Varsity* wishes to stipulate that the word 'virgin' is used here in its loosest sense. Literally.

PUB OF THE WEEK



**Where?** Half way down King's Street, a couple of doors down from Clown's Café.

**What?** Don't be fooled by the net curtains, low doorways and mid-afternoon-old-man drinking clientele: the Champ is perhaps the friendliest pub in Cambridge, and the only chance to escape from the student m  le. No food, just decent ales, the normal wines and a suspiciously large selection of packet-based nibbles. This is granddaddy chic taken to the extreme, and though not for everyone, the impromptu Scrabble nights (students vs the Champ) have been the most fun they've had since the Blitz.

**Why?** Make friends with Lawrence the landlord. Make friends with the punters. Make friends with your friends. Don't come in here and expect to come out without having heard at least one tale of unrequited love across the decades, or indeed to bump into your head porter in happier circumstances.

**How much?** Pint £2.40, G'n'T £2.80, wine £2.80/£4, stiff whisky£3.20

QUICK & EASY RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Andrew Northrop Butchers, 114a Mill Road, Cambridge  
200g Chicken Breast £1.80

### Chicken Curry

200g chicken breast, chopped  
1/2 packet smoked bacon, chopped (optional)  
3 tomatoes, also chopped  
1 onion, likewise  
2 garlic cloves 1tsp mild curry powder  
1tsp paprika  
1tsp turmeric  
1tsp mild chilli powder  
1 tub double cream  
200ml chicken stock  
2 handfuls spinach

(serves 4)

This recipe seems a bit indulgent with the ingredients list, but it should use stuff that can stay in your kitchen all term (the spices, that is, not the chicken). Buy cheap from Mill Road; alternatively steal from third-years' kitchens. The bacon is optional, but makes a big difference, so buy Sainsbury's basics if you must. If you're posh, and spent summer in Tuscany, use pancetta, you lucky ponce.

- Gently fry the onions and garlic in a large pan. Add chicken and cook for 10 minutes. Make sure it's well browned.
- Add bacon, then all the spices, stir for a minute, then add spinach and tomatoes. Cook for a couple of minutes.
- Add chicken stock, and almost the whole tub of cream (or all of it if you're feeling saucy).
- Simmer for 6-8 minutes and serve immediately with rice.
- If it's burnt, head for the Curry King.

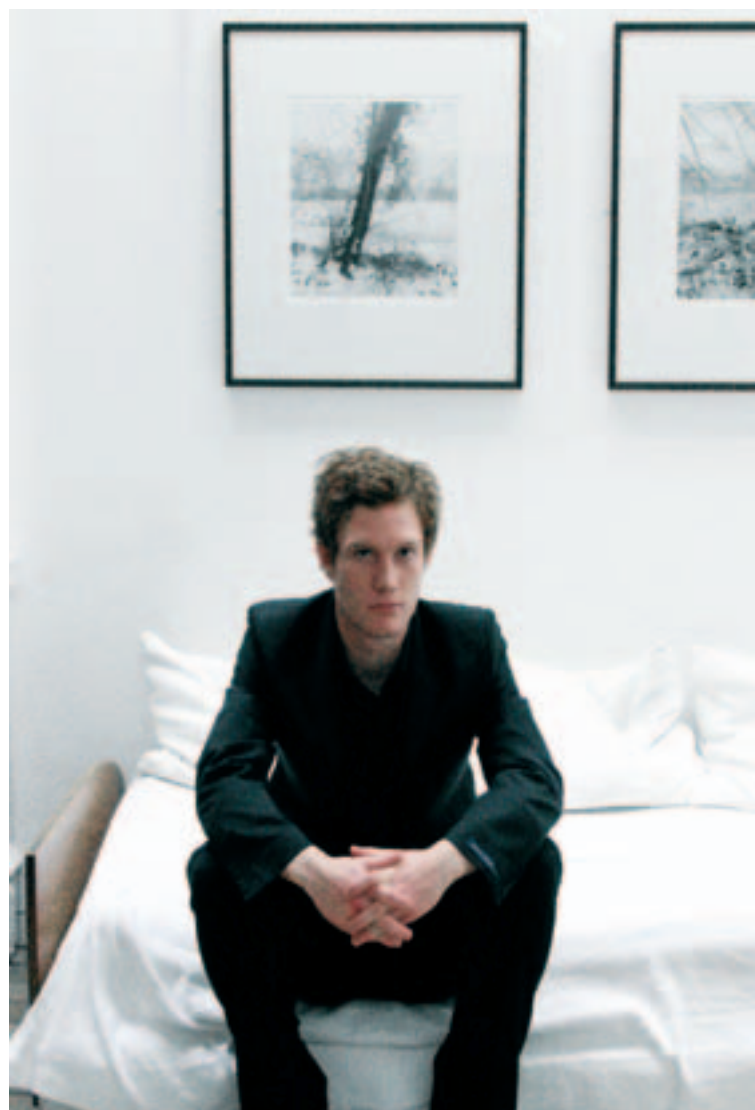




# Ready for their close-up



*Closer*: Holly Morgan, Angus Wight, Lizzie Crarer and Joe Marwood



The cast of *Closer* model their costumes against a backdrop of the Rodin exhibition in Kettle's Yard. Sleek lines and sharp tailoring define the costume style of the production. Classic looks like pinstripe and the Little Black Dress make a welcome change after summer frivolity. Get suited and booted.

*Closer* runs at the ADC from October 10-14.

Photography by Kiera Jamison

## RIP WHAT YOU SEW Identity

by Benj Ohad Seidler

After five years of flirtation with role-playing escapism in the form of party girl bling and ladylike tea dresses, we are once again letting ourselves become abstract. This winter, clothes are challenging our identities - and not just in terms of gender. Androgyny has now become an exceedingly limp shock tactic in fashion. Dior's long-haired bejewelled pretty-boys with bee-stung lips have pouted their way down the catwalk and into Topman on twig-like legs wrapped in impossibly skinny jeans for years. Prada's twilight-hued urban warrior women in khaki parkas have trampled on our preconceptions of feminine beauty, ignoring the phone calls from the local bum incessantly asking if he can please have his wardrobe staples back.

Fashion is questioning the form of the human being at the moment. Instead of creating tableaux of what roles society should emulate - housewife, gigolo, businessman to name but a few - one is presented with an array of shapes with which to morph one's silhouette. One is not expected to pick a role but to distort into a new creature. For so long now we have tried to fit our jagged-edged selves into the neat niches of social stereotypes, and it's time to call it quits and evolve. Everything from technology to warfare to environmental issues has made us different creatures from what we were fifty years ago. We eat more, move less and have different standard body types - let alone thought processes. The rules about gender, day and evening divisions and etiquette are extinct.

Rei Kawakubo's show for Comme Des Garçons explained matters neatly. Frilly dresses seemingly stapled onto thuggish 80s power suits and Jekyll-and-Hyde-type outfits with a vertical split dissecting the body into a frilly showgirl and a smarmy businessman highlighted how these identities just don't fit us any more. Nicolas Ghesquiere's much-lauded show for Balenciaga, on the other hand, made a virtue out of exploring new clean shapes and proportions. Ghesquiere defied social stereotypes, reinvented historical references and created something abstract, urban and modern. Traditional types of clothes may no longer fit the human race (an issue continually raised about the centuries-old hijab) and neither do traditional political preoccupations (the only thing the war in Iraq is tailored for is disaster). This comment does not strive to say that fashion is the embodiment of a profound philosophy but an expression of social preoccupations.

Fresher's week at Cambridge will no doubt make many reassess their identities. What societies we join will inevitably raise questions about our beliefs, convictions, sexuality, and even sanity (trampolining club, anyone?). Man, woman, NatSci - everyone will assume a certain form, at least temporarily, but cookie-cutter shapes are so last season. Raw dough is always the more daring option.



# Shock Tactics

Muscle-bound infants & seven year old surgeons: Olly Riley-Smith enters the world of TV 'shockumentary'



Firecracker Films on location in Cambodia filming

TV's nine pm slot has become the haunt of a whole new clientele these days: serial killers, steroid abusers, fetishists, polygamists, pyromaniacs and porn stars. Long gone are the evenings when you and Gran could sip a cuppa and chortle at *Dad's Army*. Our boxes are increasingly being filled by the bizarre real-life dramas of the "shockumentary". This is our new kind of entertainment; and it seems the more twisted and bloodier it gets the better.

Today's breed of "Shock Docs" are not simply schadenfreude clip shows like *You've Been Framed*. These films are intelligent investigations into the unusual, the grim, and the taboo, handled with grace and shot with a panache Tarantino would be proud of. The raw sewage of documentary clip shows has been treated, transformed into its high brow cousin, the "shockumentary". Firecracker

Films are a London based company who lead the genre. Their productions, *The Man Whose Arms Exploded* and *The Real Life Attack of the 50ft Woman* sound like atrocious b-movies. *The Seven Year Old Surgeon* sounds like a poor *Disney* offering, but the seven year old question is, in fact, a real-life child medical genius, brought from India to England to be grilled by a group of scientific experts. Strange but true.

Suspenseful stories with twists in the tale and brash, stylised cinematography don't make for timid television. Footage can border on the horrific: a steroid-abusing body-builder syringing fluid out of his overgrown bicep; New York teenagers cutting each other in a "blood show". Amongst this celluloid sadism lies a tongue-in-cheek humour that proves how easily the appalling can slip into the amusing. "Mmm," moans one girl in

*Pyromania*, as she sniffs the fumes from a can of petrol, "the smell of burning paraffin reminds me of a night of hard anal sex". You can almost hear Gran choking on her Hobnob.

So why the demand for such outrageous material? At a simple level, "Shock Doc" allows the mention of anal sex to enter the living room under the guise of documentary and not trash. Titters at clips of people falling over at weddings, introduced by Lisa Riley, were long a guilty pleasure for many of us, but that was an age of innocence compared to today's screen output. Pop down to Blockbuster and you can take your pick from a large number of films about torture: *Hostel*, *Saw* and *The Hills Have Eyes* to name but three.

With hundreds of hours of footage in the pipeline, is this "Shock Doc" saturation lead-

## "APPLAUSE IS THE WORST FORM OF POLITENESS"

In the wake of the proms, James Drinkwater considers cutting the clap

On the June 30 1991, Placido Domingo, as Otello in Verdi's opera of that name, received what is credited as the world's longest ovation – eighty minutes of applause, with multiple encores and 101 curtain calls.

The thought of reviving a hero with an encore, after his tragic death, may seem not only distasteful, but also contrary to cathartic, dramatic psychology. How can there be a credible re-enactment of Otello's duet with Desdemona after their respective deaths? But Verdi's *Otello* is not Shakespeare's *Othello*. Whereas in Verdi we look for depth of passion through command of the vocal line, in Shakespeare we are convinced only by the finality of the action; meaning in Verdi it's easier to pick up from where you left off after your tragic death. Which is possible for the tenor/actor in the opera-house. But the concert hall, dedicated as it is to concentrated listening without excessive visual and gestural distraction, is a different matter.

Then again, no audience is going to acknowledge a winning rendition of a Rachmaninov concerto with a deafening silence. Indeed, applause forms part of the performance – a necessarily physical way of relieving and expressing the contained excitement of the auditorium. Many concert pieces end with an immediate audience reaction in mind, and often the precise timing of this reaction is actually notated in the score by the length of rests filling the final bar or bars.

This goes some way to explaining my frustration when I attended two BBC Proms this summer, during which miscalculated and over-hasty applause spoilt the clinching climaxes of firstly an organ recital, and then Ravel's bacchanalian ballet-score, *Daphnis et Chloé*. One gets the feeling that some of the 'prommers' – who, if I may say so, fulfil the stereotype of the older, whiter, anorak-ed male – pretend to know every twist and trick of the piece and try to anticipate, or even



Illustration by Jessica Eden-Green



## SCREEN



*The Seven Year Old Surgeon* and (top left) a still from the programme.

ing TV down the same route as film? And do the TV execs of Channels 4 and Five really think we're going to turn over from informative exposé of political scandal on the BBC in the hope of catching some depraved act in progress? The answer is yes, it seems. "Shock Doc" viewing figures are soaring. *Black Widow*, a recent Firecracker production for *Cutting Edge*, managed to pull in over 6 million viewers. How far will the "shockumentary" limit be pushed? This summer has seen *Dead Body Squad*, about people who clean up human remains, complete with a David Brent-esque main character ("I mean, it may not be your typical 'Oxbridge job'" he quips). After numerous documentaries on death row inmates, will live executions follow? Time will tell.

## CLASSICAL

subvert, the expected motions of the audience, always ensuring that, following the finale, their claps and cries of the correct plural "Bravi, Bravi" are heard first.

This, of course, allows no space for that silent nod of concluding approval which must precede any vocalization – the logical progression of apprehension, assent, applause. In the case of an organ recital, the effects are even more deleterious, robbing that time in which the sound of the final chord fills out the hall, and, replete, rests deep-rooted in the ear.

My ambition is not draconian regulation: I would be the first person to want applause after each and every movement of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* symphony. Rather, a proper consideration of the undoubtedly vital role of spontaneity in concerts would serve to keep it such a thrillingly active experience. "Viva Verdi!"

## SHOCK HISTORY

**1895** - *L'Arrivée d'un Train en Gare de la Ciotat* by the Lumiere Brothers features a train coming straight at the camera. Audience members run from the cinema in fear.

**1942** - The first Academy Award for Best Documentary is awarded to *Battle of Midway*.

**1962** - Gualtiero Jacopetti makes *Mondo Cane*, starting the craze for "Mondo Films", reels of gruesome clips involving cannibalism, torture, and other family faves.

**1978** - The *Faces of Death* series launches in America: illegal mondo videos full of horrific scenes (often faked), bordering on snuff films, especially popular with frat boys.

**1988** - The political shock doc emerges. Errol Morris directs *The Thin Blue Line*, covering a murder trial, and Michael Moore films *Roger and Me*, unveiling the crimes of the head of a motor company.

**1995** - *Alien Autopsy: Fact or Fiction?* airs on Fox, and a slew of similar sensational investigative documentaries follow.

**1999** - "Shockumentary" becomes fully formed. At Sundance, *The Annabel Chong Story* follows one woman sleeping with 251 men in ten hours. *American Pimp* uncovers the world of ho-lovin tomfoolery. TV is saturated with "shock docs".

**2006** - The intelligent shockumentary takes over, with series such as *Bodyshock* on Channel 4 proving hugely popular.

## THE ARTS COLUMN



## Lowri Jenkins on Cambridge Nightlife

It may sound obscene, but going out is my one form of regular exercise. Without at least two prolonged nights of dancing a week, my skinny jeans would have to be banished to the back of the wardrobe. Half the time, alcohol isn't even required: just some harsh tasty beats and enough dancefloor to deliriously shake about on.

Let's face it, in terms of clubbing, Cambridge doesn't exactly possess the midnight magnetism of London, or even my native Cardiff. However, it is home to a growing student-led scene which is finally injecting some hair-swinging, hand-clapping action into the turgid mass of chart R'n'B and rugby team boozeouts that populate the commercial venues.

I may be slightly biased, bitching from the decidedly Electro/Indie camp, but it's those commercial venues like Cindies (Ballare for you freshers) and Life (Again, Club 22 for you freshers... don't worry, you'll learn) which force my dancefloor habit towards cold turkey. You queue for hours unless you get there at nine o'clock (what the fuck? This is when you should be cracking open the second bottle of Sainsbury's own brand gin!), the drinks are expensive and the music only nods to anything outside the Top 40 when, at the same time every week, the balding DJ plays *Living on a Prayer*. The very fact that Life is in a murky sidestreet should set alarm bells ringing. I can still recall, with nausea, the satisfied smile of one of the

bouncers returning from the alley round the corner where two Eastern European girls had taken him for 'a favour'. In Cardiff we usually just call those blow-jobs.

But enough with all that. If you like only dancing ironically / carpeted nightclubs / sweaty drunk people then I salute you: go to Cindies and have the fun I never managed. Instead, I'll be consoling my under-exercised soles at a clubnight at a college cellars, upstairs at Kambar, or at the Union. Cambridge may have taken its time waking up to the fact that electronic music is quite possibly the greatest thing to dance to since Elvis, but thankfully it's caught up pretty

Two Eastern European girls had taken one of the bouncers round the corner for 'a favour'. In Cardiff we usually just call those blow-jobs.

fast. Nights like *This Modern Love* and *Cool Kids Can't Die* reliably throw up a balanced dancing diet of mash-ups, Indie remixes and Hip-Hop.

If it's a Thursday, a quick dose of two-for-one White Russians at The Cow is the perfect warm-up for a long night of cranked up action dancing to *Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This)* at Kambar. Saying that, there is nothing better than some serious gin-in-college action followed by dancing like Madonna in the 80s whilst the lovely kid in the DJ booth plays infectious synth-fuelled beats. I will be donning my jeans-and-peeptoes training gear for *Shut up and Dance!* at the Union this term, which can boast not only killer electro dance action, but sets from the immortal Herbaliser, among others. It's so exciting I might actually wet myself.

## WEB

## SPOETRY

Mary Bowers on the poetic virtues of spam

I have turned off my Hermes junk mail filter. 'Why?' you may well ask. Firstly, it doesn't really work and secondly, I have been enlightened – I am preparing myself, am armed, and ready for action. You see, there is a war going on, and its more than just a war of words, more than just a war of the worlds, it's a war of the World Wide Web words.

And if you think that's a pile of pretentious nonsense you obviously haven't had the dubious pleasure of receiving spam poetry. Let me explain – spam poetry is the few little lines you get below the bit of junk mail blurb that offers you penis patches, love portals, or a Rolex for \$249.99. Sometimes, they're just a random jumble (or "disassociated press algorithms"). But then, an email offering me weight loss pills has also just taught me that Irish hurling was originally invented by their ancestors as a means of preparing warriors for battle. Its not just non-fiction: I've had Bob Marley lyrics with stock offers, *Henry V pt. II* with love pills, *Bleak House* with *Bisexual Beauties* – this, I'm told, even has a name, "Gutenberg" – or taking lines from Classical Literature found on Project Gutenberg, an e-book website. Spamming in

this way even has its own official title – "hipcrime" – which, surely, only tempts new converts to the degenerates' ranks in the hope of earning the epithet of "Hipcriminal"! Besides, one must harbour a certain respect for anyone who begins emails sent to thousands of complete strangers with "hey bro, nice talking to you the other day!" in the hope that some company executive might be fooled into thinking that he has a short memory, or (my favourite) that the single heir to his Nigerian grandfather's millions is desperately searching for a surrogate bank account.

Spam poetry seems to prove that there are some of life's simple pleasures that not only come gratuit, they are all too easy to overlook in the demanding, anything-inexpedient-is-totally-expendible world in which we live. So, start looking at your e-mail in a different light. Counteract that porn spam, retaliate against those replica watches and create your own "spoetry" hashed from the seeming wasteland of e-mail headlines in your inbox. Compose something beautiful. I might even enter my personal efforts for the Mays.



## Arts People

Q&amp;A

## J. G. Ballard

The legendary author of *Empire of the Sun* discusses his latest dystopic novel *Kingdom Come*.  
Hermione Buckland-Hoby listens in



Stills from the film versions of *Crash* and *Empire of the Sun* and Ballard outside his home

Nothing seems to evince gleeful relish from J.G. Ballard quite like a good old dystopia. His latest novel, *Kingdom Come*, continues in the same vein as *Super-Cannes* and *Millennium People*, with cynical predictions for modern times. Yet this author is not the morose man one might expect, as I discovered witnessing him “in conversation” with *The Observer*’s literary editor two weeks ago. As he takes the stage, the author hails and encourages his applause by raising both hands in the air, looking momentarily like a WWF star with a comb-over. His work is frequently hailed as “prophetic” and perhaps this salute signifies “yes here I am, the prophet”. Obliging, Robert McCrum asks whether he considers the novelist to be a “seer-like figure”; this proves far too wishy-washy an analogy for no-nonsense Ballard. He brings it abruptly back to the banal when he declares himself to be more like a weather forecaster. In his affable grumpiness, there does seem to be something of the beleaguered weatherman about him.

As he reads from *Kingdom Come*, which predicts fascism born from consumerism, there are knowing chuckles from the audience. The novel’s register lies uneasily between Betjeman-esque humour fixated on the banality of suburban living, and the far more sinister forecast of a fascist Britain. As such, the over-eager titters of the audience are uncomfortably reminiscent of sycophantic students in a Cambridge lecture hall,

## BALLARD IN BRIEF

**1930** - Born in Shanghai.

**1943** - In the wake of Pearl Harbour, Ballard’s family are interned for two years in the Lunghua Civilian Assembly Centre. The experience forms the basis for *Empire of the Sun*.

**1946** - Ballard comes to England with his mother and sister and attends the Leys School, Cambridge.

**1949** - Begins medical degree at Kings College, Cambridge.

**1951** - *Varsity* becomes the first publication to print Ballard’s work.

**1969** - *The Atrocity Exhibition* marks Ballard’s breakthrough as a literary writer. It also becomes the subject of an obscenity trial.

**1973** - *Crash* is published, and later made into a film by David Cronenberg.

**2006** - The publication of *Kingdom Come* sustains Ballard’s reputation as the master of dystopia.

laughing thoughtlessly at some old duffer’s self-indulgent asides. Witty cynicism is one thing, but the suggestion of Blair’s Britain as being a totalitarian state, and of fascism as the inevitable consequence of consumerism, are claims whose gloomy extravagance calls for something other than titters.

Yet, Ballard is of course, a novelist: socio-political commentary may characterise his work, but he deals, ostensibly at least, with fiction. His works, so self-confessedly moralizing, do much to resist such treatment. Michael Portillo recently lambasted Ballard’s style on Newsnight and the author admits that it isn’t his priority. “I’ve never given much thought to style. The message...is more important”.

As a colonial writer, who first experienced England through books, he speaks of apprehending “private languages” and how “everything is calculated to convey a message”. These class-entrenching subtleties of language and behaviour may seem outmoded (although no doubt their ghosts still haunt certain Cambridge ceremonies) but they reveal the author’s frustration with veiled messages. Which perhaps explains why his messages are not delicately “conveyed”, but rather “bellowed”.

The author reveals that his “first effort to set the world to rights” was a book on the game of bridge, written aged ten and intended to demystify his mother’s favourite pastime. A zeal for demystification seems to

have stayed with him but this commitment to the single, concrete “message” has produced a single-minded didacticism in his works in which one, often unduly simplified viewpoint is drummed home. I am surprised, then, by his assertion in *Crash* that “we live inside an enormous novel” and that “fiction is already there, the writer’s task is to invent reality”. Musings on “reality”, that old chesnut of a notion, were not something I expected from Ballard but he claims his experience of war made him see “life as a stageset...registered forever in my brain”. This philosophising crumbles a little when he reverts to grumpy-old-man mode in his mutterings about middle class London. Having effectively argued that there is no “reality”, the Shepperton resident then claims that “real England” is to be found in “the motorway towns”.

As the “conversation” draws to a close I’m itching to find some genuine joy from this man for whom nothing seems exempt from cheerful gloom. Happily, someone gets there first and asks where the author (who enthuses about the sci-fi fiction of the late 1950s) sees vitality now. Internet culture “does have that terrific vitality” he admits and for a brief moment, there is a silent ripple of appreciation for this little gleam of unsullied hope. A short pause and he adds, “but I fear large corporations will cut off large chunks of it.”

See page 20 for a review of *Kingdom Come*

## PROFILE

## OUR FRIENDS ELECTRIC

Katy Wells profiles the Adaadat Record Label

“I really harboured dreams of getting one of our artists on Top of the Pops...” An odd comment, you might think, from the founder of a record label which describes itself as a purveyor of “chip music, breakcore, plunderphonics, noise, spaz-rock and experimental electronica.” But the founders of London-based Adaadat have every reason to harbour grand ambitions. Started in 2002 by flat-mates Bjorn Hatleskog and Angus Keith, the label has been touted in the press as the most exciting thing since Warp, and was John Peel’s label of the week in 2004. But, according to Bjorn, their success lies in being as unlike Warp as possible: “When we started out there were a lot of labels that

were just producing mini-Apex Twins, and we were just trying to do something different.” Instead the two drew their influences from Japanese label 19-t (many of whose artists they later signed), and from the labels they had listened to growing up like Sub Pop and Touch and Go. The resultant sound is fresh, lo-fi, and more diverse than many of their contemporaries. A forthcoming release by Agaskodo Teliverek is, Angus explains, “almost like a weird hybrid between Squarepusher and Dick Dale. It’s got all these cut-up drums and then surf guitar over the top.”

Adaadat artists have become (in)famous for their madcap shows, which, as with their



Adaadat artists, *Gay Against You* onstage

music, are inspired by the Japanese noise scene. Bjorn sees performance as a crucial part of the creative process. “The music-making becomes more of a collaborative effort, so there are more ideas going into the melting pot.”

Adaadat’s future seems to stretch even further into the obscure. A collaboration between Disinformation and Strange Attractor editor, Mark Pilkington, finds Adaadat artists as ready as ever to embrace the unusual. “We don’t really understand it,” says Angus, “but they’ve got these old medical boxes that were used for electric shock therapy and they’re using them on these cheap old toy keyboards- it short-circuits [the keyboards], which triggers all the sounds randomly.” CD-UK viewers shouldn’t be holding their breath, then.



THEATRE



Jack Gordon-Brown wades through pupils in a Nepali school and James Norton on the road

# ONE OF THE BACKPACK

James Norton on spending his summer touring a “silly” play for kids around the Indian Subcontinent



9:30 am. July 12th. The Backpack theatre company, 6 of us, are huddled around a table outside a tiny Nepali café, sipping on glasses of chai. In the school next door eighty children are waiting for us to put on the first ever production of our touring play. We’ve endured the rehearsals, the devising and the long sweaty journey from Delhi over the Himalaya to Kathmandu to be here – and yet sitting at this café, there’s a definite sense of being drastically under-prepared; totally unaware of what we’re letting ourselves in for. To add to the tension, we all have the shits (apart from Kathryn).

Earlier this year the Backpack company had consisted of two penniless people with only a vague idea of what they wanted to achieve. Over May and June Backpack materialised into six people with a website, some sponsorship, and a planned route through Nepal and North India. The route we mapped out involved flying into Delhi in early July, quickly moving overland to

Kathmandu, and then travelling across the west of Nepal up into the hills in north-west India. From Dehradun we would make our way through Rishikesh, Manali, Leh and finally end the tour spending three blissful days upon an old colonial houseboat on Dal Lake in Kashmir.

Our tour routine was vigorous. Every morning we would emerge at seven, from wherever we were staying – which was usually a friendly guesthouse or on occasion one of the schools – clad in bright yellow T-shirts, brandishing one guitar, three sheets (one green, two blue) and a handful of juggling balls. All six of us would cram into a tiny taxi for the trip to the school; the coda to which short ride would usually be a heated argument about the fare with the taxi driver. It was monsoon season and sometimes the roads were too poor quality to drive on, forcing us to hitch. Six white people all wearing identical yellow clothes hitching at 7.30 in the morning certainly turned a few heads.

The workshop would start with exercises and silly games to warm the kids up - and also to surreptitiously weed out the hecklers - then games, song and smaller performances from the children before we would stage our own piece; a fantastically silly play involving a girl called Lucy, a boat (conjured out of the green and blue sheets), some island adventures and a Backstreet Boys number.

Before the school day began, we’d always try and have our contemplative cup of tea, a tradition established on that first anxious morning. It produced a moment of strange calm as we contemplated the stormy seven hours before us. The relentless pressure to be lively and animated was exhausting and yet the days spent in those schools were some of the most rewarding of my life.

Contact Lizzie @ ec342 to sign up for next year’s tour. Backpack are James Norton, Lizzie Crarer, Sam Sword, Lou Proske, Jack Gordon-Brown and Kathryn Hamilton.



## MIXTAPE

CSS -  
Let's Make Love and  
Listen to Death From Above

What does Lovefoxxx mean when she says "Come and erase me"? Sexy disco about drunken love with a subtext of pop worship and pieces of DFA tracks interweaved into the mesh makes for glorious blissed-out bopping. SB

The Rapture -  
Whoo! Alright...  
Yeah... Uh Huh

The New York foursome's current album presents us with a band stomping away from a holy trinity of punk, funk and a cowbell. On this track, the disco/funk core is deliciously pinballed between electro, post-punk and a little old-school hip-hop. LJ

Agasko2o Televerik -  
Squirrel Staring  
at a Beetle

There's a squirrel, there's a beetle, they each seem to have their own musical theme. It's all a bit Peter and the Wolf- if Prokofiev had had a penchant for complex, spooky-sounding electronica. KW

Justin Timberlake -  
What Goes Around  
Comes Around

SexyBack might have been a heavy-handed, generic slice of Timbaland production, but this track sees Timberlake rediscover his trademark falsetto in the sort of perfect pop ballad we've been waiting for since he turned stalker for *Cry Me a River*. KW

## THE CRITICAL LIST

### The best of the week

#### SCREEN

**The 14th Raindance Film Festival.**  
In London until October 9th.

Raindance spans the full spectrum of the art, craft and business of independent movies - from guerilla style low or no budget productions to big budget indie blockbusters.

[www.raindancefilmfestival.org](http://www.raindancefilmfestival.org)

#### VISUAL ARTS

**Altdorfer: Prints of Allegory and Devotion.**  
Fitzwilliam Museum until 5th November.

Fantastic opportunity to see the work of a little known graphic genius and contemporary of Durer.

#### WEB

[www.sperare.com](http://www.sperare.com)

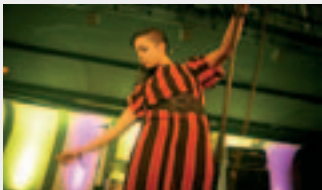
Kristin Thomas' spam poetry website. Using only the subject lines of the hundreds of pieces of spam that he receives Kristin makes the banal sound beautiful.

#### MUSIC

**New Young Pony Club**

Recently signed to Modular (home of Wolfmother and The Yeah Yeah Yeahs, amongst others), NYPC have catchy songs and great outfits. Check out their myspace for the *Ice Cream* video. On tour in October.

[www.myspace.com/newyoungponyclub](http://www.myspace.com/newyoungponyclub)



### And the rest...

#### GOING OUT

**Crowd Control**  
Soul Tree, every Monday.

Last week featured the DJ “talents” of CUSU president Mark Ferguson. Some decent tunes but terrible mixing and no real atmosphere. Go once, because the clientele will make you feel cool by contrast, then never return.



Reviews

SCREEN

Little Miss Sunshine

Dir: Jonathan Dayton



The concept of ‘the beauty pageant’ has provided comedic fodder quite a few times in recent memory – *Miss Congeniality* and the underrated *Drop Dead Gorgeous* both come to mind – but rarely has the world of film focused its withering eye on the phenomenon of the prepubescent pageant. *Little Miss Sunshine* details Olive Hoover’s (Abigail Breslin) journey from her hometown of Albuquerque, New Mexico to California so that she can take a shot at the title. However, it is not until the film’s denouement that the pageant itself is granted much attention. What *Little Miss Sunshine* is really concerned with is the dysfunctional but lovable Hoover family dynamic. After being thrown together on a bright yellow Volkswagen bus for the road trip, the

Hoovers are made to deal not only with the obstacles of the road, but also each other. Nietzsche-obsessed brother Dwayne (Paul Dano) has not spoken for nine months; gay scholar uncle Frank (Steve Carell) is suicidal; motivational speaker dad (Greg Kinnear) and sweet-natured mum (Toni Collette) are constantly bickering, while foul-mouthed grandpa (Alan Arkin) snorts heroin and teaches Olive dance moves no seven year-old should know. This quirky indie comedy was a hit at Sundance and rightly so; Michael Arndt’s script is sharp yet touching and we are presented with characters that we grow to really care about. Abigail Breslin completely wins the audience over as determined Olive and her performance is strong without ever turning precocious (Dakota Fanning please take note). Steve Carrell, best known for the cutely-naïve parts he has played in *Anchorman* and *The 40 Year Old Virgin*, demonstrates what an exceptional actor he can be when given a more serious role while Paul Dano provides us with some genuinely poignant moments as tormented Dwayne. Be warned – the pageant scene itself will make you plant your hands over your eyes and stare through your fingers at the horrifically cringe-worthy sight in front of you – but it is damn near impossible not to come away from *Little Miss Sunshine* feeling that little bit happier about the world.

Amy Buchanan

Stray Dogs

Dir: Marziyeh Meshkin



Although the premise may not sound too thrilling at first - hijinks involving two cute kids and a rescued pooch called Twiggy (bless!) - *Stray Dogs* is far from your average kids’ film. A brother and sister scavenge the ruined streets of post-Taliban Kabul after their mother is jailed for remarrying, five years after their father – a member of the Taliban – disappeared. The children sneak into prison to stay with their mother at night, but when they are discovered and thrown out, they become desperate to commit a crime in order to be permanently reunited with her. Lassie it most definitely ain’t. Much of the film is bitterly bleak, as the children wander around the war zone, exchanging kindling for bread and dreaming up ways to get thrown

into the freezing prison, where a death sentence hangs over their mother. The Iranian director – Marziyeh Meshkini – avoids polemic by forcing us to reflect on how these vulnerable children are suffering in the aftermath of a war which had nothing to do with them. The non-professional cast give compelling, unforced performances, enhanced by the visually arresting cinematography; Meshkini makes the most of the harshly beautiful Afghan scenery and the dwarfed forms of the children set against it. *Stray Dogs* provides a mesmerising and timely insight into Kabul’s crumbling streets after years of the repressive Taliban regime, foreign occupation and civil strife. On occasions, however, the film jars a little. You can’t help thinking that Twiggy is slightly irrelevant, at worst leading the film towards saccharine sentimentality with scenes such as the one in which the young girl shares her food with the fluffy mutt, which is particularly overdone. For the most part, however, Meshkini avoids clumsy attempts at wrenching the heart-strings; there are even touches of humour as she tells the story of the children’s desperation without spelling everything out for the audience. The result is a moving, beautiful and topical film, shot through with humanity and definitely worth seeing.

Sarah Ramsey

LITERATURE

J. G. Ballard

Kingdom Come

The people of England grow dissatisfied with the new religion of consumerism and give in to racist violence. This is the premise and the promise of J. G. Ballard’s new novel. To which the reader replies, “well, maybe”. I agree with Ballard that England in 2006 is a dark place to be; but whether it will result in the melodrama that is *Kingdom Come* I don’t know, and neither does he. The promise of emotional engagement

offered in the opening pages is swiftly handed over to unconvincing dialogues concerning the state of the nation. We are told of one character that “the careful exposition of his fears had been more than a public health warning”: methinks the author doth protest too much, for the novel at times feels like a pageant of public health warnings. Geoffrey Hill has recently averred “that in the half dark of commodity most offers are

impositions”. Here it is Ballard who is doing the imposing. The analogy between consumerism and religion is made with wearying regularity, yet never responsibly explained. It might have helped if at least one of Ballard’s characters felt religiously about shopping. Similarly, we are told of “a racism tempered by loyalty cards and PIN numbers”, yet all we have seen is a car burned outside a mosque. For all Ballard’s earnest dismay with the truncated language of the media, he spends little time examining his own. While the writing is often elegant and precise – he has a good eye and ear for the phoney solicitude of retail life – the insid-

ious diction of the tabloids creeps into the writing again and again: “deep malaise”, “deranged gunman”. This can partly be explained by the narrator’s previous job as an advertising executive, but reads like lazy writing after two hundred and eighty pages. One of Ballard’s predecessors in this genre is Orwell, and the ending of 1984 is echoed at one point. “Think of the future as a cable TV programme going on for ever”. Yet Ballard’s real debt to Orwell is his use of heavy-handed scare tactics at the expense of convincing characterisation. Those who think social critique is a dish best served cold may enjoy *Kingdom Come*.

Andrew Souter

VISUAL ARTS

Rodin: All About Eve

Kettle’s Yard, September 23rd - November 19th

Was Rodin the last Old Master or the first modern artist? His promethean output, Bohemian biography and vociferous detractors have led to a powerful Rodin mythology. *Rodin: All About Eve* in no way attempts to address this, the “All” in the title is optimistic, indeed, little “About” Eve is actually explored, but the inclusion of contemporary photographs by Bulloz, Druet, Haweis and Henry Coles reveal Rodin as an astonishing creative personality. Everyone’s heard of *The Kiss* and *The Thinker*, less famous but almost more important is *Eve*. She drips with allusions to Michelangelo, neatly illustrated in the exhibition by a display case showing the Expulsion from the Sistine Chapel and some photographs of the Captured Slave. Although conceived in 1880, *Eve* wasn’t shown until the Salon of 1899 where she caused scandal by being exhibited without the traditional academic plinth. This exhibition isn’t really art historical; it’s a show about responses. Labels and infor-



KIERA JAMISON

mation are minimal to the point where the lack of context or commentary making the show bewildering at times. The exhibition is worth visiting just to see the early photography, Rodin was obsessed with the presentation of his sculptures, the new medium enabled scenarios to be envisaged that treated the works as dramatic protagonists in their own dramas. *Eve* is shown in all her tense sorrow to her most dramatic effect through the 19th century lens. The newly commissioned work of Iraidia Icaza and Nicholas Sinclair are disappointing. Icaza’s image of the Southampton Eve wrapped in plastic, looks like an illustration from a *Momart* manual, whilst Sinclair’s bland close ups fail to communicate the plasticity of Rodin’s modeling. They may be conservative, but the raw power of *Eve*, confirms Rodin as perpetually Avant-Garde.

Jonny Yarker

The Varsity Elect Pass Judgement with Hermione Buckland-Hoby

This week, the Gods assume not their myopic peering from the ADC stalls but a broader gazing, as they cast their vision mostly back, and slightly forwards (veritably Janus-like, and never mind that it’s October). to theatre across the border (Scottish) and across the pond (Atlantic). CAST complete their US tour of *Twelfth Night* with final performances tonight and tomorrow at the ADC, where the gods trust “Dr Theatre” will see to the jet-lag. CAST and its cast were of course not the only theatrical travellers this summer. Every year, Edinburgh patiently undergoes colonisation by a swathe of performers and the Cambridge contingent in this battalion is always unfailingly hearty. Walking down the Royal Mile in August, in the full throes of the fringe festival, is a lot like walking down the Kings Parade in term time; they’re both-



## CONCERT

## The Pipettes

The Junction, Sept 23rd

The Pipettes plan to go on a tour of schools next year: reaching out to the “tweenage” market is the next step in their quest for pretty-girl pop conquest. If this gig is anything to go by, they’ve already captured the hearts and wallets of the middle-aged demographic, who appeared en masse at the Junction, perhaps yearning for the Spector-produced girl-groups of their youth. And so The Pipettes’ shimmering, bouncy, joyous set, was slightly marred by a lacklustre audience, most of whom were immune to Gwen’s repeated exhortations to dance to the songs, because “that’s what they’re written for.”

However, the girls more than made up for their fans’ reticence with co-ordinated routines to every song. This was no small feat, given their lengthy set list. They carried off their three-part harmonies with ease creating a gorgeous live sound that made their recordings sound tinny and dead.

The Pipettes’ contrived and cutesy image and their seeming inability to make anything

other than breezy two and a half minute power pop can lead to criticisms that they’re no better than a slightly more credible, much less successful Girls Aloud; a triumph of twee style over substance.

Yet to say so is to ignore everything that makes The Pipettes so refreshing and lovable. Their lyrics run the gamut of relationships from love to lust. Don’t know how to gently let down a one-night stand? They have the words to express it (and some dismissive dance-moves to accompany them). “ABC” seems to have been written with the typical male Cambridge undergraduate in mind - “He cares about ABC123XYZ, (but he don’t about XTC).” They finished with the sublime “School Uniform,” which surely invoked sweet nostalgia in the, ahem, older crowd, and embarrassing memories for those of us whose days of blazer-wearing boys thinking us girls were “sexually incontinent”, aren’t too far behind.

Sarah Pope



## MUSIC

## Justin Timberlake

FutureSex/LoveSounds



His claim that “I’m bringing sexy back” has generated almost as much controversy as Iran’s nuclear enrichment programme, but unlike his critics Justin Timberlake at least understands that

whatever ‘sexy’ is, it’s not a matter for academic debate. The truth is that Justin is as qualified to lecture us on ‘sexy’ as Jeffrey Archer is to lecture us on being a lying scumbag - he’s been there, done that, and torn off the t-shirt to reveal the rippling muscles that every girl secretly loves no matter how hard she pretends to like skinny indie boys.

His ‘sexy’ defines the records he makes. It’s there in the husky vocals of the title track, on which he positively purrs the refrain “just tell me which way you like that”; it’s there in tracks like *Damn Girl* and *SexyBack* which were made for grinding hips on sweaty dancefloors; it’s there in *LoveStoned/I Think She Knows*, which moves from disco beats to melancholy strings with ambition and flare.

But the album falters when “JT” abandons ‘sexy’ in favour of third-rate ‘soulful’ numbers such as *Until The End Of Time*. Like Timberlake himself, this record struggles to strike the right balance between the sublime and the ridiculous, but it’s almost always fun - which is where the “sexy” lies.

Liz Bradshaw

## Erase Errata

Nightlife



Scrambling from the bombed hulk of the ill-fated dancepunk genre, Erase Errata will be regarded not as returning heroes, but as the weird trench-dribblers who narrowly avoided being shot for deser-

tion. Which is a shame, because this San Francisco avant-rock four piece were never facile dancepunks, but worthy successors to their ‘No Wave’ forebears. Just as the ‘No Wave’ of the early 80s unequivocally rejected the pop sensibilities and corporate decadence of ‘New Wave’, Erase Errata continue to fight the good fight against vapid bollocks

peddled by marketised automatons in natty blazers.

*Nightlife* is rabidly abrasive. Damaged guitars stutter elastically; Bianca Sparta’s drums pound bones to dust and Ellie Erickson’s thudding bass is now meatier than a thousand steaks. Virtually every song slashes at American politics or society, from corrupt government on *Tax Dollar* to the subversion of rock gender clichés on girl-on-girl squall *Take You*.

All the ingredients are there –instruments like daisycutters pummelling bunkers; Hoyston’s vocals like acid burn. Erase Errata could perhaps do with less shrapnel and more play, but *Nightlife* leaves no doubt in their menacing potency.

Was Yaqoob

## VIEW FROM THE GODS



routes which are impossible to navigate without bumping into someone you know. This is doubly dangerous in Edinburgh, since Cambridge thespians are not known for being socially retiring, although, (pandering to stereotypes here, as a godly view ordains) we might exempt those poor techies. Last term, one friend of mine revealed that the ennui of unavoidable chiming ‘hihowareyous’

on the Kings Parade meant that he had devised a crafty network of cyclable back-routes so that he could pass unnoticed on his way to the English faculty. Whilst the Kings Parade may seem a bit busy at times it is nothing on the teeming circus of (mainly) students that is the Royal Mile in August. I was one of them, as I have just recalled with creeping horror since this is an environment in which heedless promotion of the play meant not thinking twice about scrambling on to a bollard to blast out an aria before wearily being told to get down by some official.

The festival has grown year on year and, accordingly, the number of Cambridge shows seems greater each summer. *A Letter that Never Reached Russia*, *The Trial*, *Bat Boy* and *Niceties*, to name a few enjoyed great success at the fest and their casts and crew are to be commended for their commitment and endurance needed in this physically and financially exhausting world. Despite their madnasses, the Edinburgh fringe and the Cambridge theatre scene are both to be celebrated. At home and abroad we should always make the most of environments in which innovation and inclusivity are allowed to triumph over conservatism and constraint.

## THEATRE

## The Cabaret Of Menace

C Too Venue, Edinburgh

It takes bravery to try to harness the volcano of charm and maladresse that is the Cambridge actor Frank Paul, but Directors Osh Jones and Luke Roberts are brave, and throughout their ‘sleazy and menacing post-modern cabaret’ they use Frank as a linking device. He bursts onstage, brandishing his balalaika, contributing to the hilarity and terror of this tongue-in-cheek show.

Also daring is the juxtaposition of material written by Roberts with fragments by Harold Pinter and T.S. Eliot. The show opens with the cast of eight downstage, lit from below. These gorgeous grotesques start an Eliot chorus, warning of the dangers of being “alone in the middle of the night.” As the stage whispers descend into exaggerated “hoo ha ha hoo ha has”, the mood of post-modern pretension is knowingly undercut by silliness.

We continue into a Pinter sketch, where a hapless taxi driver (Owen Holland) renders demented his controller (Raph Shirley). Next, Betsy Vriend confronts fellow poten-

tial bus passengers with accusations of assault until she really is attacked by Balalaika Man. The first of Roberts’ sketches does not compare unfavourably to any of the Pinter. The former is more closely concerned with relationships and, in particular, the combination of sex and power.

The finale is Eliot’s *Sweeney Agonistes*. Its couplet-calypto rhythms demand anything but realism and the between-the-wars evening dress of the cast now fits into place. It is a great pleasure to hear Eliot spoken with such style.

I am not one to judge whether these sketches are pretentious: I once dreamt that I was *The Waste Land*. Nevertheless, the ensemble act like they’re the ‘next big thing’ – they’re probably right. Roberts and Jones have found a uniformly strong cast, with Shirley, John Reicher and Vriend particularly impressive. It’s only Frank I worry about, mainly when I’m alone in the middle of the night. “Hoo ha ha hoo ha ha...”

Jeff James





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*Tuesday 10th October 2006  
6:30pm - 8.30pm  
Mong Hall, Sidney Sussex College*

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All events will be hosted at the Mong Hall, Sidney Sussex College from 6.30pm to 8.30pm unless otherwise stated. For more details about each event visit our new website or consult the Cambridge Futures Termcard in your pigeon hole.

- OCT 17<sup>th</sup> UBS - NETWORKING WITH RECENT GRADUATES** (UNIVERSITY ARMS HOTEL - 12.30PM)
- OCT 17<sup>th</sup> ROLLS ROYCE - KETTLES & CAREERS**
- OCT 19<sup>th</sup> GOLDMAN SACHS - DEMYSTIFYING THE INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT DIVISION**
- OCT 24<sup>th</sup> ALLEN AND OVERY - LAW FOR NON-LAWYERS**
- OCT 26<sup>th</sup> BARCLAYS CAPITAL - TRADE TO WIN**
- OCT 31<sup>st</sup> DELOITTE - THIRSTQUENCH - AUDIT BUSINESS GAME**
- NOV 7<sup>th</sup> PRICE WATERHOUSE COOPER - MERGER ROLE PLAY**
- NOV 14<sup>th</sup> DEUTSCHE BANK - GLOBAL BANKING CASE-STUDY**
- NOV 16<sup>th</sup> ACCENTURE - WHAT DO RECRUITERS LOOK FOR?**
- NOV 21<sup>st</sup> NETWORKING SOCIAL** (TA BOUCHE - 7PM UNTILLATE)
- NOV 23<sup>rd</sup> HSBC - APPLICATION AND INTERVIEW TIPS**

*This announcement was brought to you in association with:*

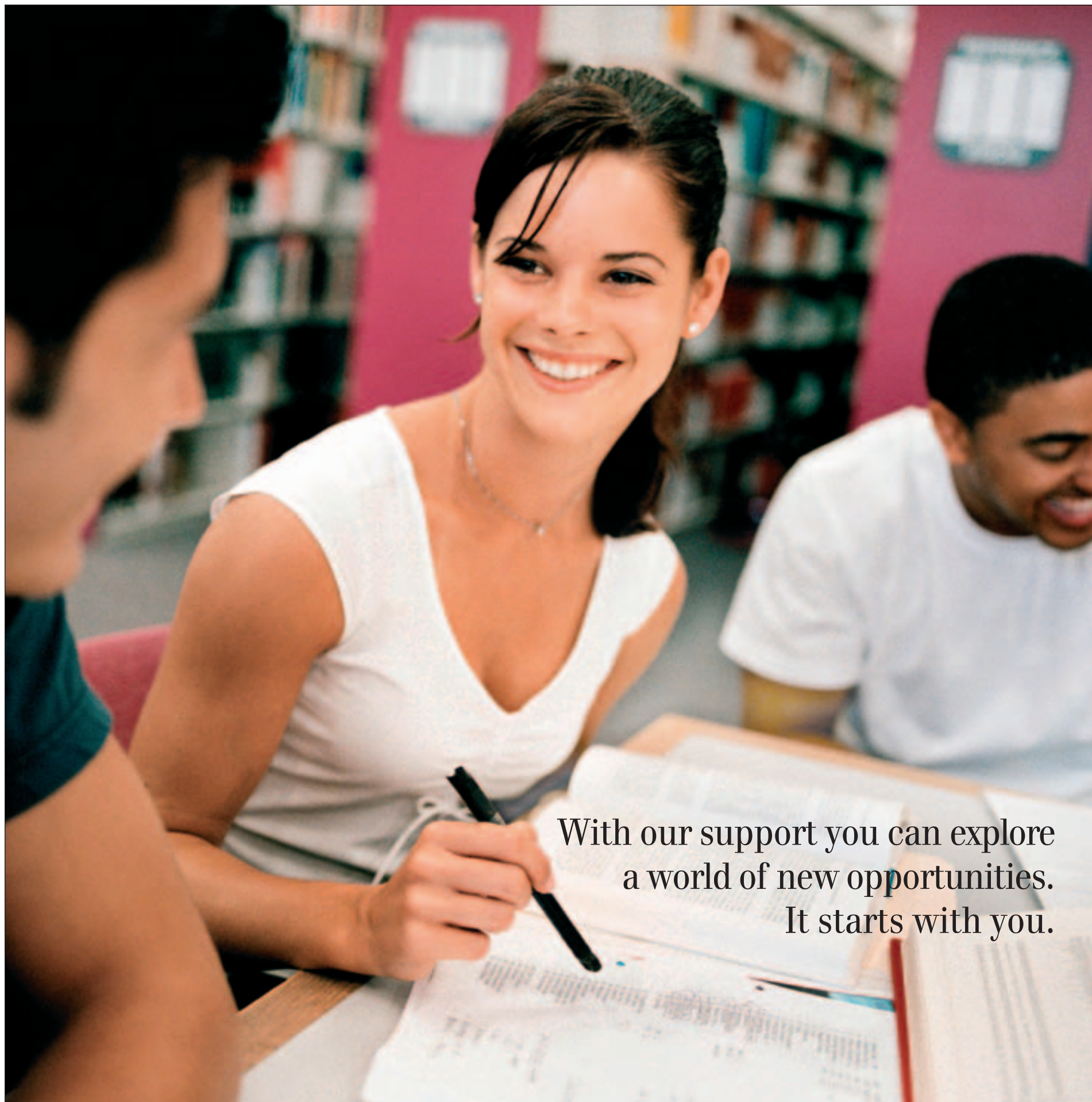


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# Listings

## ARTS PICTUREHOUSE

**An Inconvenient Truth**  
Friday, Saturday, Sunday: 1400, 1610, 1820, 2030  
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 1220, 1430, 1640, 1850, 2100

**Echo Park L.A.**  
Friday, Saturday: 1500, 1900, 2110  
Sunday: 1300, 1910, 2110  
Monday, Tuesday: 1300, 1500, 1920, 2120  
Wednesday: 1100, 1300, 1500, 1920, 2120  
Thursday: 1700, 1900, 2110

**Future Shorts September 2006 Programme**  
Friday: 2300

**Grease**  
Friday, Saturday: 2310  
Sunday: 1100

**The Last Mitterand**  
Tuesday: 1330

**Little Miss Sunshine**  
Friday: 1200, 1430, 1830  
Saturday, Sunday: 1430, 1830  
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday: 1500, 1900  
Tuesday: 1520, 1910

**Stray Dogs**  
Friday, Saturday: 1700  
Sunday: 1720

**Volver**  
Friday, Saturday: 1230  
Sunday: 1500  
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: 1700

**The Wicker Man**  
Friday: 2310  
Saturday: 2300  
Sunday: 1200

**Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory**  
Saturday: 1100

**Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait**  
Friday, Saturday, Sunday: 1230, 1630, 2045  
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday: 1300, 1700, 2115  
Tuesday: 1715, 2115

## COLLEGE FILMS

Gonville and Caius, Bateman Auditorium  
**Primer**  
Tuesday: 2030

## POP & ROCK CONCERTS

The Junction  
**Hazel O'Connor & Lu Cozma**  
Wednesday: 1900

**The Stranglers**  
Thursday: 1900

**Yasmin Levy**  
Thursday: 1900

The Corn Exchange  
**Sparks**  
Wednesday: 1930

The Soul Tree  
**The Black Seeds, Instinct**  
Saturday

The Portland Arms  
**Johnny Panic**  
Monday: 1930

The Loft @ The Graduate  
**Seafood**  
Thursday: 2000

## THEATRE

ADC  
**Twelfth Night**  
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 1945

**Footlights presents Niceties**  
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 1100

Sidney Sussex College  
**A Masked Ball: Figaro Opera**  
Saturday: 2000

## GOING OUT

Monday  
**Fat Poppadaddy's @ Fez**  
Eclectic mix of everything from Indie to D'n'B

Tuesday  
**Ebonics @ Fez**  
R'n'B, Hip-Hop, Ragga, Dancehall

Wednesday  
**Melamondo @ Fez**  
International Night

**Rumboogie @ Ballare**  
Cheese

Thursday  
**Urbanite @ Soul Tree**  
R'n'B, Hip-Hop, Urban

Friday  
**The Get Down @ Soul Tree**  
Funk, Soul, Rare Groove and Hip-Hop

Saturday  
**Cool @ Ballare**  
Cheese

Sunday  
**The Sunday Service @ Club 22**  
Dance

## BOOK NOW

# CLOSER

## ADC, October 10th - 14th

Sarah Brocklehurst's flagship production at the ADC this term is definitely worth the ticket price. And yes, the actors are all quite fit.





# Cambridge Crisis: answers to your problems

»‘I’m terrified of my family finding out I’m gay’



Dear Sir,

Let me introduce myself briefly. My name is Harry, and I’m coming to Cambridge from an all-boys public school (I’m well aware of the fact that I haven’t elicited much sympathy from you so far). I have a huge dilemma. I’m gay, and have come to terms with that fact, but I haven’t told anyone. My family are fairly strict Catholics, and so I won’t be able to tell them anything while I’m still living at home. I’m terrified of them finding out, which makes me really reluctant to tell anyone here at Cambridge. I want to be able to enjoy my time at Cambridge without feeling restricted, but at the same time, there are so many people who mustn’t find out about my sexuality, that I don’t know if I should risk telling my friends at Cambridge. I feel quite paranoid that somehow information about me will get back to people I’d rather it didn’t. Mine isn’t exactly a unique problem, but if I can’t solve it, I can see myself leading a miserable life at university.

Sincerely yours,  
**Harry**

Dear Harry,

I sympathise with the difficult situation you are in and I admire your courage in asking for advice and support. People cope with this kind of problem in different ways, but my feeling would be to keep your own counsel over this for the first week or two of term because you will have quite enough to organize and get used to without combining new friends, environment and work with an emotional dilemma of this kind. When you feel you have settled into Cambridge and into your college, and met a few people you like, I think you may have to take a big breath and come out. Can you put your finger on exactly what it is about telling your family you’re gay that terrifies you? In my experience, parents love their children no matter what, and while it may be a shock to them, I’m sure they will come to terms with it and love you just the same. There should be no need nowadays to feel you cannot express your real identity. Sooner or later you will have to do so, otherwise, as you say, your life will be miserable. We are all individual and everyone is valuable and has a right to be their true selves, and I feel sure that once you feel comfortable with your life at Cambridge, amid friends who support you, you will find the right moment to speak openly the special person you are.

Yours sincerely,  
**Dr Liz Drayson**  
Personal Tutor, New Hall

Dear Harry,

The Christian gospel is ‘good news’, and if it is authentically understood it is good news for everyone, gay people included. Being brought up in a religious family you will probably remember the stories from the gospels of Jesus’ encounters with people such as tax-collectors or lepers, who were marginalised or ignored by the society of the time. These encounters are characterised by acceptance and liberation, even if Jesus was also stern about wrongdoing. The churches are currently tying themselves in knots over the gay issue and I have to say, in most of their official pronouncements, making a fair hash of it, giving the impression that they are unsympathetic to gay people. This is a tragic irony since gay people form a significant proportion (probably a larger proportion than in the population generally) of the Christian community. My guess is that once you are here you will find enough like-minded people who have similar experiences to support you in what is (for everyone) a time of change and transition. You could do worse than starting by having a discreet word with your college chaplain and/or contacting university groups that address issues of sexuality (go to [www.cusu-lbgt.com](http://www.cusu-lbgt.com)). You talk about people ‘who mustn’t find out’ about your sexuality. If you are going to find wholeness in your relationships with your parents and friends, you should think in terms of managing the process of telling them rather than trying to keep parts of your life in sealed compartments.

With best wishes,  
**Rev. Jeremy Caddick, Emmanuel**

Dear Harry,

First, I want to remind you of how different school is from University. At Cambridge, you will meet a wide selection of people from all walks of life. You will encounter a lot of like-minded people who are also finding themselves, as this is a time of great change where everyone is growing up. Cambridge has that effect on you; at sixty I’m still growing up! I think the most important thing to remember is to be honest with yourself. There is no point hiding anything, it does no good to anyone. The root of your problem appears to be that you don’t seem happy with yourself, or confident in your sexual orientation. This is something that counselling might help with. At Kings we have our own gay society, as do many other colleges. They might be able to help. There is also Beeline who are fantastic, students helping students. The counsellors from Beeline come to get the key off me; they are very chatty, lovely people and their number is 01223 333179. Finally, I would like to advise you not to worry about your parents. If your parents have loved you for the last seventeen or eighteen years, they’re not going to stop now. I personally think that if one of my children were gay it wouldn’t worry me in the least. As long as they understand what love is, it is immaterial which way they are sexually orientated. Yours sincerely,  
**James Smith, Porter at King’s College**

If you are interested in being a designer, writer, sub-editor, illustrator, production assistant or a member of our newly relaunched online team, please email [business@varsity.co.uk](mailto:business@varsity.co.uk), or come to our squash to meet us.

**The Varsity Squash**  
ta bouche  
10-15 Market Passage  
Sidney Street  
Tuesday 10th  
October, 8pm  
Cocktails half price

## Games



### Clues: Across

- 1. Emit beginnings of a noise, taken aback after one cup turns out to be traditional starter (4,4,1,4)
- 9. Nocturnal and diurnal, for starters, strangely flow (7)
- 10. Anguish -- it's true about following half of Tories (7)
- 12. It's a long muddled memory (9)
- 15. Teacher once trod the boards (6)
- 18. Displayed in nation's howler (2,4)
- 19. Half of stampede back after contest -- soft landings (8)
- 22. Overblown, out of tune, you heard when to abstain? (9)
- 24. Glue nothing round his Homer (5)
- 25. Trick grotto is hollow (7)
- 26. Fifty out of millions become a painter in France (7)
- 27. No lemon, no lime -- the mysterious way to go? (7,1,5)

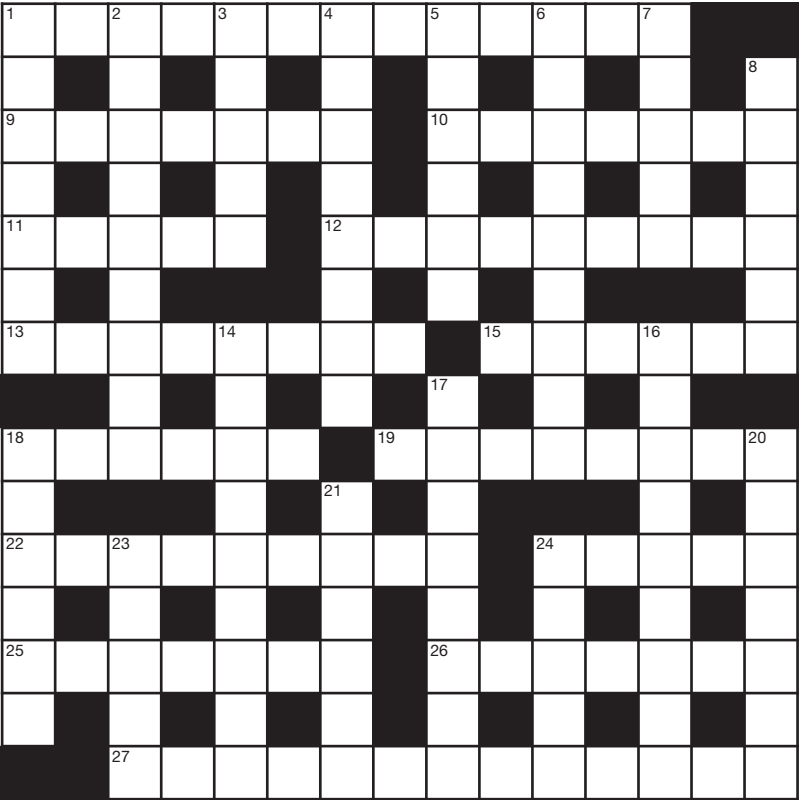
### Clues: Down

- 1. Contrive a closure without energy -- kissy kissy? (7)

- 2. Stone chap destroyed empty tombs... (9)
- 3. ... in impromptu surprise overthrow (5)
- 4. It's on to a revelation, again and again (8)
- 5. It's tar work for architect (6)
- 6. Not virtual, actually (2,7)
- 7. Cummings played with ungallant openers for Provencal verse (5)
- 8. Firstly, next artist in tent pays the rent (6)
- 11. Lease rising to slacken (3,2)
- 13. Additional photos for second impressions (8)
- 14. Can lout in struggle get vaccine? (9)
- 16. Painless state gain as ale turnover (9)
- 17. Panel to allow component of blood (7)
- 18. Workplace not on the rocks? (6)
- 20. Polish, that is, offensive to Jews (7)
- 21. Excited other energy on this matter (6)
- 23. Excellent condition, like novel (2,3)
- 24. Reduce verge (5)

**Do you want to write our crossword next week?**  
Write to [discuss@varsity.co.uk](mailto:discuss@varsity.co.uk)

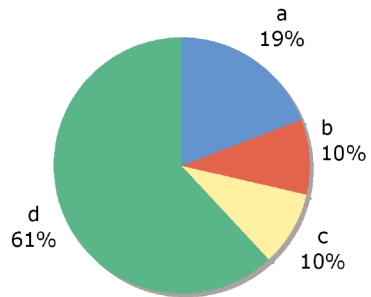
## Varsity crossword no. 453



## Varsity Asks

### Poll Results

**We asked:** How often do you use your NUS card?  
a) Lots and lots, I never go anywhere without it.  
b) Infrequently, maybe about once a month.  
c) I've got one but I've never used it.  
d) I've never even bothered getting one.



**Vote online today:**  
[varsity.co.uk/poll](http://varsity.co.uk/poll)



CUSU ENTs presents

## GET FRESH:06

Freshers week is the one time of the year where you can guarantee you'll meet new people and have a great time, so make sure you attend every event. Here's what's on offer this year

### Crowd Control

Mon 2/10 @ Soul Tree  
Indie dance madness with guest dj Backstage Sluts and residents DNA Deficient and Tripswitch

### Kinki

Tues 3/10 @ Ballare  
Win a Terms Rent\* and much more with the best mid week cheese event around

### Urbanite

Thurs 5/10 @ Soul Tree  
Live PA from MOBO winner AKALA

### Sunday Service

Sun 8/10 @ Club 22  
Vicars and Tarts launch party so make sure you dress up. Free drink upon arrival

\*T & C APPLY. EMAIL ENTs-MANAGER@CUSU.  
CAM.AC.UK FOR DETAILS

Cambridge University's Fresher Week 02/10 - 08/10 2006



# Get Fresh:06

[www.cusuent.com](http://www.cusuent.com) - sign up to the mailing list 4 the chance to win free entry for a year to all CUSU events

**CROWD CONTROL**  
Mon 02/10/06

**kinki**  
Tues 03/10/06

**urbanite**  
Thurs 05/10/06

**THE SUNDAY SERVICE**  
Sun 08/10/06

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**HEAD TO TA BOUCHE FOR THE OFFICIAL CUSU ENTs PRE-CLUB-BAR AND GET 25% OFF ALL DRINKS**



## Representation Services Support Campaigns - Your Union

Welcome (back) to Cambridge!

On behalf of CUSU (Cambridge University Students Union) I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome you all to Cambridge - or for those of you returning, back to Cambridge. This year promises to be a very interesting and busy one in the life of your students union, with a new building, an expansion of CUSUents, alongside brand new campaigns making sure your voices are heard.

For those of you just starting out in Cambridge, this can be a daunting time. Your JCR's and MCR's are there to help you out if you need anything, but if you need help, support, or advice, we're here to help too, just go to [www.cusu.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cusu.cam.ac.uk) for more information.

On behalf of everyone at CUSU, we wish you all the best of luck for the next year.

Mark Ferguson CUSU President 2006/7  
[president@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:president@cusu.cam.ac.uk)

### What's happening in CUSU?

#### SOCIETIES FAIR

KELSEY KERRIDGE  
3RD-4TH OCTOBER  
300+ Societies  
10,000 students

Don't miss out!

COMING SOON

#### CUSU CAMPAIGNS LAUNCH

TRINITY HALL LECTURE THEATRE/  
JCR 10th October, 7-9pm  
Want to know what CUSU is?  
Wonder what we do?  
Want to find out more?  
Come along!

**The 31 college Tour**  
At colleges everywhere -  
October





# *Celebrating 10 years of* **VARSITY** *online*



*Varsity Online turns 10 this October, and to celebrate we've totally redeveloped it. The beta of our new site launches this week. Not only can you find every week's edition of Varsity reproduced online, but we're inviting you to comment on articles, submit your own thoughts and photos, listen to our brand new podcasts and vote in our polls. But this is only the beginning. If you have any ideas about how we can develop our online services, or if you would like to become part of the online team, email [online-editor@varsity.co.uk](mailto:online-editor@varsity.co.uk). **[www.varsity.co.uk](http://www.varsity.co.uk)***



## FANCY VOLUNTEER WORK ON A FARM IN AFRICA?



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Tutors needed to work with our 16 yr old son who suffers from autism. The persons willing to work should be reliable, committed and motivated to help a child learn based on behavioural intervention techniques. Suitable for young and enthusiastic persons. Starting pay—8/hr. Further details contact: Dr or Mrs.Rao on 01223 411 575/ramakrs@hotmail.com

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The Cambridge Student

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Student Reviewer

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COME SEE WHAT  
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BEEN MISSING...

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BOOKSHOP

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# βluesci

Michaelmas 2006

Cambridge's Science Magazine

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- String Theory • Schizophrenia • Antarctica •
- Science and Film • Teleportation • Systems Biology •



*Varsity* publishes THE MAYS, a collection of prose, poetry and non-fiction writing from students in Cambridge and Oxford.

Past Guest Editors include Stephen Fry, Philip Pullman, Ted Hughes, Andrew Motion and Zadie Smith. Applications are now open to edit and design THE MAYS 15.

Email [business@varsity.co.uk](mailto:business@varsity.co.uk) for details.



## Sports Books

Fell running, a long-distance sport that involves struggling up mountains and down vertiginous drops has some seriously robust characters. There's Bill Teasdale, who'd think nothing of running miles over the fells just to get to the start line of a mountain marathon. Another runner, Josh Naylor, celebrated his 60th birthday by running non-stop in the Lakeland fells for a week. Countless tough guys have finished races with both ankles broken, or feet cut through to the tendon; runners who think nothing of falling down wells, careering into walls and pushing their bodies for hours or days in foul weather.

The name of Richard Askwith can now be added to that list of die-hards. A thirteen stone Londoner with no knowledge of the hills, Askwith recounts his fell-running journeys in his new book *Feet in the Clouds*. The book signifies a journey far greater than any one race; Askwith realises exactly how much the freedom of running in the mountains means to those who love it. Fresh from a city lifestyle of traffic jams and deadlines, he revels in the tests the hills offer. As a fell runner myself, I'm used to incredulous looks from walkers and spectators; used to being branded stark raving mad. But whilst the appeal of limping through these steep, dangerous races might seem slight, Askwith captures the real beauty of the sport: In his words, it is 'The joy of being totally absorbed, as our ancestors were, in wild environments; the joy of throwing off the straightjackets of caution and civilisation; the joy of finding and pushing back limits; and, occasionally, the joy of doing things that one had thought impossible.'

He's well-versed in those tales of the impossible. Askwith writes of Helene Diamantides, the fell champion who defeated some of the world's fittest men, including three teams of paratroopers, in winning the huge 'Dragon's Back' race in Wales. Such stories make *Feet in the Clouds* a must-read for anyone who's ever wondered about human strength of character and the feats we are capable of. I defy you not to be inspired.

*Feet in the Clouds* by Richard Askwith is out now from Aurum Press.

# Cambridge Maintain Winning Streak in Historic Relays



CAMBRIDGE'S WINNING TEAM: RICHARD WARD, PETE LEEK, WILL GEORGE, LEE HARPER, MATT ARMSTRONG AND ULRICH PAQUET.

## OWAIN BRISTOW

AT the fifteenth staging of the annual Chariots of Fire Relays, inspired by the achievements of Harold Abrahams et al. at the 1924 Olympics, runners from Cambridge University Hare and Hounds continued to dominate the event. Over four hundred teams took part, with each of their six members completing a 2.7km tour of the centre of

Cambridge. Among the competitors were numerous college teams and even an Oxford "Oldies" sextet that included former Athletics Blue Jeffrey Archer and Adrian Metcalfe, a 4x400m silver medallist at the Tokyo Summer Games of 1964.

Varsity Mile Champion Richard Ward put Cambridge in front, running 8:01, the fastest time of the day to open up a substantial lead over the opposition. However, Michael Scott Associates, last year's runners up,

were tracking the university team. The GB International middle distance runner, Neil Speaight, making a comeback after a virus-hit summer, narrowed the gap to around fifteen seconds. Cambridge's strength showed over the remainder of the legs however and Men's Captain Will George sealed victory with a comfortable 8:05 run. The winning time was 50:18, some forty-five seconds slower than the course record. Michael Scott

Associates came in over three minutes down to take second place again.

In the intercollegiate competition Caius MCR came out on top in 58:35 from the St. John's A-team with the fellows of St. Catherine's in third.

Meanwhile, a new-look Cambridge women's outfit ran exceptionally well to finish just outside the top ten overall. Club Captain Claire Day ran the team's fastest time of 10:04 on Leg Five knocking a total of two minutes off last year's time.

# Cambridge swimmers conquer channel

## VARSIY SPORTS REPORTER

The visibility is less than a foot. There's no black line on the bottom to guide you. Creatures lurk unseen beneath you. The water is choppy and cold. Flotsam and jetsam clutter your path. Cross-channel ferries steam noisily by...

On 8th July, a team of 6 Cambridge swimmers took all this in their stride to battle and eventually beat Oxford in the biennial cross-channel relay Varsity match, despite encountering the worst conditions in the 8 year history of the race.

"The weather's looking good at the moment; it may get worse later though"... Such were the prophetic

words of the Cambridge pilot, Reg Brickell, who earlier that week had piloted David Walliams across the Channel in his swim for Sport Relief. The race began at 9am with Ben Yeoh racing his Oxford counterpart down Dover beach and into the Channel. Each team consists of 3 men and 3 women, with each person swimming for an hour (alternating men - women), until after 6 hours the first person swims again, and so on until France is reached. If the teams finish within 2 minutes of each other, the race is declared a draw.

On board assisting the Cambridge team were Euan Spence, a veteran of the winning 2004 team, and David Skidmore, president of the Howard Beale club for Swimming and Water

Polo alumni. After the first hour Cambridge had taken the lead, and next up was distance swimmer specialist Vanessa Beary. She immediately extended the lead, and after the race even the Oxford team commented on her speedy start!

In the 3rd hour of the race weather conditions began to deteriorate, with Brett McLean having to contend with 3 foot waves. The weather was also taking its toll on the occupants of the boat, and most of the team had to take regular visits to the back of the boat, suffering from seasickness. Claire Fishpool swam a determined leg to maintain the Cambridge lead; but with the Oxford boat far out to the side behind the Cambridge boat and the landing point in France uncertain,

it was difficult to be sure exactly how far ahead Cambridge were.

Previous crossings had taken around 9-9.5 hours, but as the 6 hour mark approached, and the weather continued to deteriorate, it became clear that this year would be different. Having been told to expect to swim only once, Vanessa Yeo re-entered the water, having been unable to eat or drink anything in the 5 hours since her previous swim due to sea-sickness! Despite some nasty encounters with seaweed she swam well; and as sheep became visible in the fields of the French coast, she handed over to Haukur Heimisson. After swimming for 20 minutes Haukur reached the French beach to win the race for Cambridge 10 hours 22 minutes after

the start in Dover. Oxford finished half an hour later in 10 hours 49 minutes.

This year's Cambridge victory means that both Oxford and Cambridge have won two swims each: the 1998 race was a draw, Oxford won in 2000 and 2002 and Cambridge in 2004 and 2006. Although the 10 year anniversary of the event is approaching, the future of this unique competition is uncertain. The cost of crossing the channel is £3000, the money being used to pay for the hire of the boat and pilot, and to cover administration fees. Hopefully a sponsor can be found for 2008 so that the Light and Dark Blues can do battle once more in the murky waters between England and France.



Have your sports team covered in these pages

Tel: 01223 353 422  
Email: sport@varsity.co.uk

# No rest for boaties

»Even in the off season, Cambridge oarsmen lead the way



Cambridge Oarsmen Sebastian Schulte and Thorsten Englemann test the metal of their World Championship Gold

RUSS GLENN

At the Rowing World Championships this summer, three National Teams were stroked by current or ex-Cambridge rowers. First at the podium was the German crew, with Bernd Heidecker at stroke, and current oarsmen Sebastian Schulte and Thorsten Englemann backing him up. They won a gutsy, charging victory by establishing an early lead in

the 2km race and never let the opposition gain a foothold. Seb and Thorsten will be racing with the CUBC again this year.

Great Britain's 8+ also contained three Cantabrigians. Tom Stallard laid down the rhythm at stroke, with Kieran West and Josh West providing the muscle behind. GB raced to a hard-fought fifth place at Dorney. The Canadian 8+ was led by a touch of light-blue as well – Kip McDaniel, stroke of the Cambridge 2006 Boat Race crew,

also sat in the driving seat and pushed the Maple Leafs to a ninth place finish after a close race kept them out of the final. In addition to the big boats, a number of Cambridge rowers competed in the smaller shells as well. Most notably, this year's CUBC President Tom James represented Great Britain in the pair without coxswain. Teaming up with Oxford rower Colin Smith, the two raced to a sixth place finish in an extremely competitive grand final. Tom James and the Germans

in the eight had placed second and first, respectively, in their events at the Lucerne World Cup.

A number of Cambridge blue unisuits were to be seen amongst the many coloured blazers at the Henley Royal Regatta in early July. Charlie Palmer competed in the prestigious Diamond Sculls singles event, where he lost to New Zealand's World Champion Mahe Drysdale in the final. Charlie went to serve as the spare oarsman for the British 8+ at the World Championships. Goldie '06 rowers Don Wyper and Sam Pearson competed in the Silver Goblets pairs race, making it to the semi-finals before being beaten by the Serbians. Not to be left out of the action, the CUBC's development squad competed at Henley in the creatively named Prince Albert Challenge Cup. Steered by Jo Jones, rowers David Billings, Tobias Garnett, Richard Stutt and Alastair Mcleod made it to the semi-finals on Saturday before making their exit.

Pete Champion took on international competition at the World Student Games in Lithuania. Competing in the four, Pete finished in a well-raced fourth place.

In addition to the various international-level exploits, Cambridge crews were invited to come race the locals at many exotic locations over the summer. The highlight was New Zealand's "Great Race" – a Boat-Race style duel against Waikato University over 5km on the torturous Waikato River in Hamilton, on the North island. Unfortunately, a blazing start for the home team left Cambridge on the back foot for most of the race. Despite a hard-charging finish, Waikato held on for the victory.

Eager to avenge last year's loss, Cambridge oarsmen have not been idle over the summer months. Trialing for the 2007 season started in late September, and the men and women of the Cambridge Boat Club are already training on the river daily, laying the foundation for a 2007 Boat Race victory against Oxford on April 7th.

## Top Five: Sporting Venues

Here are our tips for the best places to get good and sweaty in Cambridge:

1. Fenner's Gym, Gresham Road – A year's membership at the university gym costs just £30 for students and there's even a punch bag to take out your stress when lectures start. It's a bit cramped but for the price it's still the best bargain in Cambridge. And of course, the large numbers of students and small space means you can get really sweaty.

2. Kelsey Kerridge Sports Centre – Just off Parker's Piece, it has a large pool and facilities for everything from dance to archery. It's also hosting the Fresher's fair on October 3 and 4 where you can meet and find out much more about all the sports (and a few other) societies.

3. Wilberforce Road Track – If you fancy getting off the treadmill and into the fresh air, then there's a running track located just off Grange Road which would suit you perfectly. Just keep an eye out for the weather - it can get a little wet in the winter...

4. The Glassworks – This luxurious gymnasium has every piece of gym equipment you can think of and the coup de grace is a spa that looks out onto the Cam. However, before you get too excited, you had better have a big sports budget as even the special offers for students are expensive. The gym itself is a little small, but it's never overcrowded and so if you can afford it, it's a lovely place to work out and relax.

5. Christ's Pieces Tennis Courts – While the weather's still mild you can play tennis for free on the courts just behind Emmanuel Street bus station. These hard courts aren't too badly kept for public tennis courts and with the grass court season not starting until summer, it may not be a bad idea to hit these courts on a (dry) winter's day.

## Water Polo: Debunking the Myths

Water polo is a sport that most people have heard of, but not many actually know anything about - and even fewer have tried playing. To debunk some of the more bizarre myths about water polo that I've come across, let me assure you that it is not played on sea-horses, normal horses, ponies or any other animal. Neither is it a game exclusively played by close relatives of the Queen (though William did play for St Andrews). Finally, it's not horrifically violent. Indeed, it's actually very hard to get injured in water polo - its low impact nature, and the fact that it's played in water means that any contact that might happen is slowed and softened by the playing environment.

So what does water polo involve?

It's a team sport, so it relies on communication, trust in your teammates and cooperation. You're throwing a ball around and trying to score goals, like football or hockey, but in a warm swimming pool, whilst everyone else is outside trying to kill each other in the mud and rain.

It's also competitive – we play for fun, and winning is much more fun than losing, so we play to win with neither team likely to concede or slack off until the final whistle has gone. As an example, the annual Varsity Match attracts crowds of a couple of hundred spectators – which sounds very impressive in an enclosed space like a swimming pool. In terms of the practical aspects of the game, it is played in

teams of seven - six outfield and one goalie - with an buoyant, inflatable ball about the size of a football. The aim is to score more goals than the opposition in four eight-minute quarters of game time. No standing on the bottom is allowed, the ball can only be touched with one hand at a time, and there is no contact allowed against players not holding the ball - though what the ref doesn't see under the water often goes unpunished...

Cambridge University have a very successful water polo club – we have two men's teams whose recent honours include a BUSA Shield win and Cup semi-finals place, and a vibrant ladies team who expect to be in a position to win their BUSA league this year.







CAPTAIN'S CORNER

VANESSA WAITE

Vanessa Waite was captain of university women's basketball for two years and heavily involved with coaching the women's squad. She spoke to Helen Mort about the future for the team and her love of sport, Wales and winning.

- How did you get into basketball?**  
The summer before I went to uni, I was in New York and I just started playing street ball with my friends. I tried out in Cambridge and made the basketball team in 2002. I used to play rugby for Wales but gave it up for basketball.
- What's the main goal for the women's basketball team this year?** I'd like to see the team get promoted into the premier league.
- What's been your greatest sporting moment?**  
Winning that BUSA trophy in Sheffield and getting player of the match.
- And what's the sporting moment that's meant most to you outside basketball?**  
When Wales won the Six Nations of course!
- Who's your sporting idol?**  
The first sport I played was athletics; when I was younger I used to watch people like Colin Jackson. But the driving force for my interest in sport is my older sister Alexis. She's an amazing athlete.
- What song motivates you?**  
Eminem, "Lose Yourself"
- What do you think about the status of women in university basketball?**  
We're very undervalued. We only have half blue status, despite winning BUSA.

»Cambridge battle against Oxford and the elements in cross channel win

»see page 30 for story...

The Week In Weather

FRI

SAT

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THUR

Sudoku

The object is to insert the numbers in the boxes to satisfy only one condition: each row, column and 3x3 box must contain the digits 1 through 9 exactly once.

Kakuro

Fill the grid so that each run of squares adds up to the total in the box above or to the left. Use only numbers 1-9, and never use a number more than once per run (a number may reoccur in the same row in a separate run).

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

				8	21			
			15					
		21						
	9	19					20	6
14				11				
			24					
16				12				
				9				
		16						
		15						

rotations

Competition

Win a pair of tickets to the Arts Picturehouse. Tickets available to use Mon to Thursday at any point in the Michaelmas term.

Re-arrange the letters by rotating the discs to create six separate six-letter words leading in to the centre. Email your answer to: competitions@varsity.co.uk