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VARSIITY podcast

The Nation State Debate, featuring Sir Christopher Meyer



Recorded live at the Cambridge Union.

Outrage as Portuguese is pulled

»Diplomats weigh in to Tripos suspension row

ELLIOT ROSS & LIZZIE MITCHELL

The University's decision to suspend the Portuguese Tripos from next year onwards has provoked indignation on an international scale. Diplomatic discussions with the University will begin today, Portuguese Ambassador Antonio Santana Carlos told *Varsity*.

The Brazilian Embassy expressed "surprise and disappointment" and is set for talks with other Lusophone nations to discuss a co-ordinated response. CUSU President Mark Ferguson said "the University is at risk of becoming involved in a diplomatic incident". The President of the Instituto Camões, which funds one of the two University Lectureships in Portuguese with a £20,000 grant on behalf of the Portuguese Government, was joined by MML staff and students from across the University in condemning the manner in which the decision was made.

Concerns have been raised both at the secretive nature of departmental negotiations and the increasing vulnerability of smaller language courses at Cambridge. Yesterday morning staff and students of the Spanish and Portuguese Department received an email from Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education Melveena McKendrick informing them of the decision to "suspend Portuguese as a full Tripos language with effect from October 2008" in order "to ensure that the very best use is made of resources". They had previously received assurances from faculty staff that no such move was imminent.

Fourth year Portuguese students have issued a collective statement attacking the "senseless decision". "We as students believe [the Pro-Vice-Chancellor's] statement to be false. This is not re-organisation but phasing out of the world's fifth lan-

guage from one of its leading language institutions, without consultation". The students described the suspension of the Portuguese Tripos as "thoroughly myopic" and promised "not to let it disappear from the University". Portuguese lecturer Dr Maria Manuel Lisboa is understood to be very upset, and has set up an online petition against the closure which she will submit to Vice-Chancellor Alison Richard. The University expressed a hope in its statement that funding from the Instituto Camões would continue after the suspension. President of the Institute Simonetta Luz Alfonso refused to comment, furiously claiming that the University had made no contact whatsoever on the matter.

The manner in which the decision has been executed has raised alarm among the other small MML departments: Catalan, Dutch, Modern Greek and Neo-Latin. Professor of Modern Greek David Holton said "all four languages are vulnerable", but was "anxious to do everything possible to ensure the future of his subject". He called yesterday's development "very regrettable" and felt that the rationale behind it was "not a matter of student demand but of teaching resources". He said the restoration of Portuguese to full Tripos status was unlikely.

CUSU President Mark Ferguson was not informed prior to the announcement and criticised this lack of communication as "very disappointing". A motion will be brought at the first CUSU Council of term to resist the closure and fragmentation of small subjects "at all costs". Ferguson said the University's "rationalisation process seems more like Balkanisation". CUSU Education Officer Jacob Head expressed dismay that despite his status as a member of the General Board of the University he had been entirely unaware of any proposals,

Up in flames: National Student Survey



DYLAN SPENCER-DAVIDSON

A National Student Survey t-shirt catches light as CUSU sabbatical officers burn clothing, posters and promotional literature in protest at the "waste of government money".

FULL STORY - PAGE 3

fearing that "the General Board and its Education Committee will be asked to approve the actions of the Department and Faculty as a *fait accompli* and not be able to discuss and debate them in full".

These concerns come two days after questions were raised at the Senate House over proposals to transform Chairmen of Schools into Head of Schools in a move away from committee-based governance. Under these proposals decision making powers would be devolved to individuals. Dr Stephen Cowley warned of "the greater centralisation of something, certainly influence and possi-

bly power". Later in the meeting, accusations were made of secrecy over departmental restructuring. A senior member of the Oriental Studies Faculty complained of lack of contact between faculty and Advisory Group over proposals to relocate four posts to the Archaeology Department and two to the History Faculty, and to phase out teaching in South Asian Languages. He said "the papers I saw indicate that a lot of very key decisions, supremely the scrapping of South Asian Studies at Tripos level, were indeed taken secretly and without proper authority".

In Brief

Doomsday clock moves forward

The Board of Directors of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists has moved forward the "Doomsday Clock" by two minutes. The clock, designed to reflect the danger posed by the nuclear programmes of countries across the globe, was changed on Wednesday as a result of events in north Korea and Pakistan. Stephen Hawking, fellow of Caius and a sponsor of the clock has expressed concern at the present threat. **Tom Barker**

Power cut means lectures cancelled

Many students were turned away from their lectures on Wednesday when a power cut put much of the Downing and New Museums sites out of action. Apparently caused by building work, the failure led to the cancellation of all SPS lectures on the New Museums site, with the Department of Experimental Psychology also adversely affected. Lights were restored to normal on Wednesday evening. **Tom Parry-Jones**

Cigarettes refused by Muslim worker

A woman was refused the sale of cigarettes last week when a Muslim shop assistant at WHSmith in Market Square claimed that it was against her religion to sell tobacco. The customer asked for 20 cigarettes and was shocked enough by the lecture she received on the dangers of smoking to contact a local newspaper with the story. A WHSmith spokesperson has maintained that the assistant was well within her rights to refuse the sale on religious grounds. **Kanika Saigal**

Fears that tuition fees could double

»Vice-chancellors say current charges are failing to meet costs

ELLIOT ROSS

A survey of England's university vice-chancellors has revealed that undergraduate tuition fees must rise to £6,000 or more if teaching costs are to be met.

Fees are currently fixed at £3,000 per year but an independent review will be held in 2009 and a study by the Guardian suggests that it will find a considerable funding gap. Expensive science courses and law and medicine degrees at Oxford and Cambridge could command annual fees approaching £10,000 when the current charges are re-assessed in 2010.

"Undergraduate education at Cambridge remains under-funded"

The old flat rate tuition fee of £1,100 raised £800 million annually towards the cost of funding students' degrees. It is expected that last year's rise will see this figure increase to £1.35 billion, but that this will still be inadequate. Per capita spending on students continues to trail the United States, where universities receive £11,500 per year to teach each undergraduate.

In England the figure is £7,300. The student loans system seems unsustainable. Since 1991 the government have lent UK students £22 billion, of which they have recouped only £5 billion.

The survey included member institutions of the prestigious Russell group, but the University of Cambridge declined to participate to avoid "pre-judging" the review. Speaking on behalf of Vice-Chancellor Alison Richard, Matthew Moss told *Varsity* that "undergraduate education at Cambridge remains under-funded", but insisted that "the University has not been lobbying for a further rise in undergraduate fees". One of Richard's main initiatives during her term at Cambridge has been a major fundraising drive to raise one billion pounds for core expenditure at the university. CUSU President Mark Ferguson urged the University to "come out against higher fees, as it can be a major player in the debate".

Moss emphasised the University's unusual position as committed to "key strengths", such as individual tuition, small-group supervisions and the collegiate system, which are "by their nature expensive to maintain". But he remains confident that the "generous bursaries" on offer mean that "no prospective UK student should be deterred from applying to Cambridge for financial reasons".

It seems that if Cambridge's position as an internationally renowned university is to be sustained, the university will have to improve its fundraising efforts. Harvard receives annual donations of £310 million. Together Oxford and Cambridge raised £185 million in 2004-05.

National admissions fell by 3.6 per cent in 2006 on the introduction of top-up fees, but have nevertheless increased by 13,000 since 2004. It is unclear whether last year's decline was caused by the greater cost of attending university, or if students intending to take a gap year in 2005 chose not to defer their entry in order to avoid paying fees.

History fellow Professor Gillian Evans warned against fee increases as "a dangerous road to travel down", suggesting that "many Oxbridge academics who came from working class backgrounds like me would not have got so far in the present system" if a similar scheme had been in place. Her concerns were shared by MML professor Philip Ford who called higher charges "inevitable" but stressed that "this should only happen if colleges can provide sufficient

bursaries so that coming to Cambridge is truly based on talent and ability, and not on wealth". He insisted that "as it is the UK economy that benefits from a well educated population... I would strongly favour the Scottish approach [of full government funding]".

Mark Ferguson summarised the quandary of higher education financing. "The system as it currently exists is, of course, unsustainable - but so are continued fee hikes."



Cambridge Students make themselves heard

NUS

Drop in Mature Student applications

PARISA RAZAZ

The number of mature students applying to Cambridge has dropped in the wake of a recent government strategy to focus the adult learning budget on 16 to 19 year-olds.

Applications to Lucy Cavendish have dropped by 20 per cent over the past year, with applicant numbers falling from 182 to 146. At St Edmund's applications have fallen even further, with a 24 per cent

"Cambridge University expressed concern at the findings"

drop from 162 to 123. At all four graduate colleges and across the rest of the university as a whole there have been reductions in application numbers.

These figures represent an exaggeration of a trend noticeable across the east of England. This comes in the context of a national reduction in applications of 16.9 per cent, with

nearly 600,000 fewer adults on Further Education courses.

In a statement, Cambridge University expressed concern at the findings. The statement claimed that "the four Cambridge colleges which admit exclusively mature students (those over 21) work hard to encourage, advise and support those who have delayed their entry to higher education or are returning to education after pursuing a career or taking a break". An anxious Darwin mature student admitted to *Varsity*, "I am worried that decreasing adult applications will lead to a reduced presence of mature students in the University community".

The University is providing open afternoons that offer advice to prospective mature students. Lucy Cavendish College's Admissions Tutor Jane McLarty described them as "a new initiative which

will, we hope, help people explore their options in terms of the routes into higher education, their choice of degree courses and general opportunities".

A possible solution has been proposed in New Year start dates to courses. These are more popular amongst adult students and the Anglia Ruskin University will this year offer undergraduate, postgraduate and professional qualification courses with an academic year starting

in February.

Graduate Studies Prospectus for 2007-2008

www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk

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CUSU attacks Student Survey

»CUSU calls National Student Survey a waste of money
»Finalists encouraged to opt out as soon as possible

TOM WOOLFORD

CUSU is urging all final year students to opt out of the National Student Survey for the third year in a row.

CUSU has attacked the National Student Survey (NSS), describing it as “a huge waste of government money”, “irrelevant to the Cambridge experience”, and “harmful to current internal feedback mechanisms”. CUSU has also expressed concern at the “aggressive” marketing used, which they claim “will harass students during a very busy time of the academic year”. A full-scale campaign is being launched to promote their anti-NSS policy: posters are being distributed around colleges, and a facebook group “Opting Out of the NSS” is attracting an increasing number of members. JCRs are also being encouraged to oppose the NSS, and to mark promotional NSS t-shirts with “Opt Out” or to recycle them. CUSU are currently working on anti-NSS t-shirts.

According to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) who run the annual survey, the aim of the NSS is to “gather feedback on the quality of students’ courses” at HE institutions, and to aid prospective applicants in their selection of a university and course.

But CUSU has criticised the survey, calling the questions “over-simplistic to the point of meaninglessness”. CUSU President Mark Ferguson told *Varsity* that “the results of the NSS may be useful to some prospective students, but not those wishing to apply to Cambridge”. He argues that the questions do not accurately reflect the Cambridge student experience. Ferguson added that it is impossible to rate all HE institutions and their students according to a “one size fits all” model, and “neither should any survey which wishes to be a useful indicator of university performance”.

Louisa Baker, speaking on behalf of HEFCE, defended the NSS, arguing that its value can be seen in the “significant changes” universities are already making “as a direct result of feedback given”. In response to CUSU’s criticism, Baker pointed to the introduction of a section in which institutions can



CUSU Executive members burning National Student Survey promotional material

DYLAN SPENCER-DAVIDSON

add further questions of their own. She also highlighted the dangers of opting out, saying, “If you put yourself in the position of a sixth former looking at the NSS results... you might wonder whether Cambridge has something to hide if its results do not appear.”

CUSU is also concerned that the marketing methods and publicity strategies used by IPSOS-Mori, the company contracted to carry out the survey, are “aggressive” and “intrusive”. Several stages are involved in the process of contacting students. Initially student data is collected from HE institutions and a promotional campaign is launched in early January to advertise the NSS to students. Those who do not either complete the five-minute survey or opt out are then contacted by email; non-respondents are sent a postal letter, and IPSOS-Mori will then attempt to contact remaining students via telephone up

to eight times until a response is received. Sami Benyahia, NSS Project Manager at IPSOS-Mori, admitted, “Yes, it is a multi-method attempt to achieve correspondence,

“you might wonder whether Cambridge has something to hide”

but we do not bombard students.” When asked if he considered their method to constitute a harassing manner, Benyahia said, “If you saw eight missed calls on your phone I would

agree, you might wonder who it is and why they kept calling; but these calls are not made all at the same time.” He added that “70 per cent of people are reached within three to four attempts” by telephone.

The NSS only publishes results of institutions that have at least a 60 per cent response rate, and over the two years that the survey has been running, Cambridge’s response has fallen below this target. CUSU are hoping that this trend will continue in 2007. Students can opt out of the survey on the NSS website, by telephone or by returning the postal survey incomplete.

This year’s Cambridge finalists will be contacted by IPSOS-Mori this term as the University has passed on finalists’ details. A Cambridge University spokesperson acknowledged CUSU’s position and said the University “will be contacting all final year students shortly”.

Sino Tap fans drown sorrows

CHRISSY COLLINS

The Sino Tap on Pound Hill is set to become a “gastropub” after a move passed at a council licensing hearing on Monday.

The pub was originally intended to close on 3 December last year in a move reported by *Varsity* at the end of last term, but following prolonged protest a further council licensing hearing was held and the decision was postponed until 22 January, 3 days ago.

The brewery that currently operates the pub, Punch Taverns Ltd, plans to turn the popular local into a restaurant venue called “The Punter” with between 70 and 100 seats. The news has come as a blow to campaigners who hoped to save

the Sino Tap; over 800 students and locals had signed a petition against the change. Professor Badger, Master of Clare College, wrote a letter in support of the campaign.

But representatives of Punch Taverns Ltd reminded the council that “sympathetic as one may be at the loss of a popular venue, it is not relevant to licensing”.

The licensing hours of the restaurant will remain the same as those of the Sino Tap; alcohol will be served until 12:00am from Monday to Saturday, and until 11:30pm on Sundays. A license to play recorded music was applied for, although the brewery stressed that “The Punter” would not be a “disco venue”. The proposal was passed after almost an hour’s deliberation.

JJ Waters, the creator of the

Facebook group “Save the Sino Tap”, told *Varsity* that it would be great shame to lose “the one pub [in Cambridge] with an informal atmosphere without the binge culture”.

An undergraduate from Churchill College has argued that “the last thing Cambridge needs is another gastropub”. This sentiment was shared by Cambridge residents at the hearing who also expressed concern at the extra noise and traffic which may be generated by the venture.

Although the license has now been granted, a planning application for structural changes still needs to be passed. Waters hopes to “continue campaigning until the end”. Punch Taverns declined to comment to *Varsity* on the outcome of the hearing.



Sino Tap, Pound Hill

EMILY WRIGHT



New Museums

Jesuans find new drunken perch

Not satisfied with the challenge of mounting their own infamous bronze steed, two inebriated Jesuans found themselves perched in a rather stickier situation late last Saturday night. Having scaled the giddy heights of the Zoology faculty building after a college “Burberry and Bling” bop, they found themselves left drunk, alone and cold, with only a large whale skeleton and a group of rather angry security guards to keep them company. At that point, the horse might have seemed a better idea after all.

Market Passage

Touchy feely in the cocktail mix

Taking refuge in a classy cocktail bar, a group of revellers thought they would be safe from the usual groping that constitutes an average Wednesday on the Cambridge club scene. But numerous spies of both sexes have reported the terror (and pleasure) of being indiscriminately pinned, fondled and touched in all kinds of places by one rather overenthusiastic Johnian. Is nowhere safe these days?

St John’s

Choirboy not such a ‘gent’ after all

One Gent of St John’s found himself in disgrace at formal this week and not just for missing a note at grace after meals. The Counter Tenor took the olive branch proffered by one rival Trinity soprano a little too eagerly, and decided that the best way to better relations would be a cheeky breast groping. The patrolling porters obviously thought otherwise, unceremoniously booting the Casanova out of hall faster than he could pipe his protests.

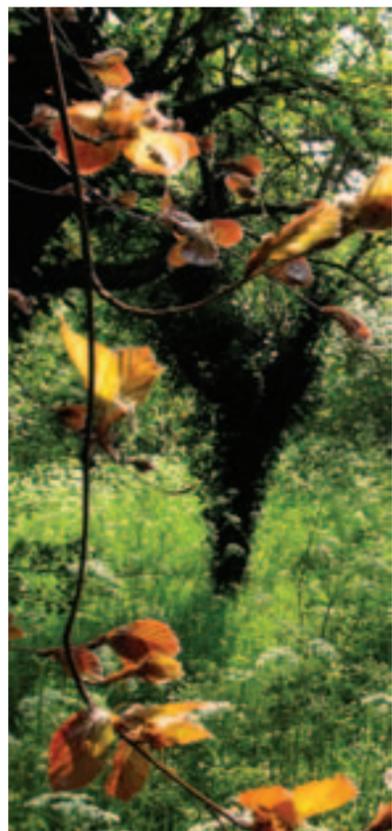
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New Hall goes to Chelsea

»New Hall garden submitted to renowned flower show



New Hall Gardens KATE GADSBY

KAT HANNA

New Hall College is set to make horticultural history this May by becoming the first Cambridge College to submit a garden to the prestigious Chelsea Flower Show. The garden, entitled "The Transit of Venus", will be designed and created by alumnae from the college.

Sue Goss, who is designing the garden, drew inspiration from the College's buildings and collections. It will celebrate the achievements of New Hall members, especially in the field of scientific enquiry. The garden pays homage to the work of the College's history of astronomers and the theme makes reference to the passing of Venus between the Sun and the Earth.

Features of the garden will include curved walls and mirrored panels which will represent the elliptical path of Venus' orbit, with a globe at the front signifying the planet itself. The symbolic juxtaposition of two planets, one green and another barren, is intended to demonstrate environmental awareness.

Under the direction of Head Gardener Jo Cobb, the garden's diverse range of flowers is designed

to reflect the variety of the College's broad collection of contemporary art by female artists. Cobb said "the project really seems to have captured the imagination of both the college and community. We've had a lot of support from University departments and sponsors. All sections of the Cambridge community have been incredibly generous."

Other contributors to the garden include the award-winning gardening journalist Ursula Buchan and Cambridge-based architect Anne Cooper. The project has been funded with the help of the profits from a calendar of images of the New Hall garden made by garden photographer Kate Gadsby.

New Hall President Anne Lonsdale expressed her support for the proposals. "Over recent years the gardens at New Hall have gained a reputation for being some of the most colourful and lively in the University. This, combined with the outstanding expertise of our alumnae, makes this an exciting but attainable project for the college," she said.

The 155th RHS Chelsea Flower Show will take place between the 22 and the 27 May this year.



Arts students studying in Starbucks

DYLAN SPENCER-DAVIDSON

Unemployable arts

TOM WOOLFORD

An Oxbridge degree is no longer a guarantee of a lucrative job. There have been radical changes in recruitment procedures in recent years and arts students in particular are facing increasing competition in the job market.

Claims from all quarters suggest that the traditional advantage of the Oxbridge degree has lost its edge. Employers have begun to value skills that are more commercially relevant than punting and in spreading their recruitment net wider over the last few years, are finding these abilities in graduates from other universities. The result of this is that Oxbridge graduates, particularly those with arts degrees, are finding it harder to secure employment.

Over the past few years this trend has become more and more marked. In the Oxford and Cambridge Careers Handbook of 2005, Glen Owen of the Mail on Sunday claimed that "whatever they say in their publicity material, many of the blue chips will not look far beyond the two old universities for their top recruits". Asked whether he still considers this to be the case, he said "I think it still carries a cachet with certain employers, but, if you are talking in crude monetary terms, a physics degree from Sheffield can be of more scarcity value than English from Cambridge in terms of the salary you will command".

Big firms now emphasise their indifference to the provenance of their graduate applicants. Even Charles Macleod, UK Resourcing Leader of the old Cambridge mainstay in the City,

PricewaterhouseCoopers, said his firm is "interested in the skills the students bring rather than simply the university they have attended". Rosalyn Hillard, from the graduate recruitment team at Goldman Sachs, admits that times have changed. "I think the old-fashioned milkround was more Oxbridge based," she said, "but ours is an increasingly global workforce. We now recruit from the rest of the UK, from France, India and elsewhere." Kate Lear from Oxbridgelife.com agreed that an Oxbridge degree is now only an advantage "if it is backed up by good interpersonal skills, career focus and relevant work experience".

The Cambridge Careers service confirms that the job market is more competitive than ever before. Gordon Chesterman, director at Stuart House, said that there is a "trend for employers to target many more universities than in the 'pre-web' days" and that the "blunderbuss" approach of job seeking by sending a letter and a CV is gone forever.

The problem is more marked for arts graduates. Those with arts degrees are less sought-after in the job market and are often looking for jobs in more competitive fields with less clear progression from degree to workplace. While a Cambridge degree will nearly always get students through the application stage, students often fail at interview due to "lack of prior research, poor evidence of enthusiasm and commitment to the job and sometimes arrogance". This certainly seems to be the case for many Cambridge arts graduates. History graduate James Kinman agreed that a Cambridge degree "gets you to interview" but lamented the fact that "from then on you need a personality".

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Week one and Ely is already exhausted by the heavy workload of a modern clergyman (student?). The centre of ignominy seems to be shifting away from the colleges and towards the modernist-but-strangely-phallic blot on the landscape that is the University Library.

Many know the UL as a place of scholarship, pedantry, and high-2:1 level achievement for the uninspired. However, rumours are spreading that a clandestine system has sprung up offering hardcore time-servers a bit of mutual relief from dissertation fatigue.

For prospective users, this is how it works: 1) Walk into, and then out of, the Tea Room during lunch while visibly holding a copy of Nietzsche's "Untimely Meditations". 2) Other users who know what this means and

would like to bid for the offer will then go to the Reading Room precisely thirty minutes later, and stand in the South-West corner with a copy of Raymond Geuss' "Morality, Culture and History" for about a minute, while the first party observes them. This prevents there being more than two prospectives, and allows both parties to check each other's screwability/weight/perfectly straightened hair without actually having to meet. 3) Both parties then meet a further thirty minutes later in the South Wing at classmark 180.c.90.47 (or don't bother if the other didn't meet requirements), and then proceed to another secluded spot in the building where the whole elaborate, neurotic dance reaches its end point.

We are informed that the rules of the system change every few days to prevent UL police discovering it, and are posted by socially-minded UL-pimps on a beta site cryptically referred to by users as valorisemy-discourseplease.com.

Anyway, if you see a student walking around with the Geuss book, you now know to alert the authorities immediately.

Email your confessions to the bishop at bishop@varsity.co.uk

Colleges fail to pay living wage

» Campaign launched by University Labour Club for better employee pay

CAT MOSS &
TOM PARRY JONES

Cambridge colleges have come under attack for failing to pay domestic and catering staff a "living wage".

The Labour Party parliamentary candidate for Cambridge, Daniel Zeichner, expressed concern at the current state of wages, saying that he "strongly supports" the "Living Wage Campaign" currently being launched by the University Labour Club (CULC). This demands that colleges pay their staff at least £6.50 an hour, a figure CULC claim represents the cost of living in Cambridge, where house prices are 47% above the national average.

Information obtained through the Freedom of Information Act and passed on to *Varsity*, suggests that colleges are falling considerably short of this figure. It was revealed that twenty-four colleges pay workers a sum below the "living wage" amount. Of particular note were

"clear need for change in way National minimum wage is being calculated"

Downing, St. John's, and Churchill, each of whom employ over 90 staff at below £6.50. Lucy Cavendish



Daniel Zeichner, Labour candidate for Cambridge CAMBRIDGE LABOUR PARTY

employs 7 people at "statutory training rate and statutory Minimum Wage", meaning that their wages are as low as £4.45 per hour.

Speaking anonymously to *Varsity*, many bedders expressed worries about housing costs as well as their ability to provide adequate clothes and food for their children. Some even spoke of their reliance on a second job, and the pressures they faced meeting loan payments.

Zeichner argued that as Cambridge is a world-class institution, it would be "really good to have modern employment practices". But whilst the University itself operates a single transparent pay-scale for all staff, colleges are private charitable institutions and are thus not required to use the University system.

While the annual wages for cleaning and domestic staff on the University scale are clearly stated as being between £11,575-17,461, the majority of colleges contacted by *Varsity* refused to comment on the structure of their pay scales, or suggested that they would like to talk to other colleges before responding. Those that did reply were keen to stress the added benefits of working for a college.

Selwyn stated that they pay domestic staff a minimum of £6.50 an hour, and £6.37 for catering staff, but noted that staff also receive a bonus of £0.25 an hour, and are entitled to free or subsidised meals.

Downing revealed that they pay domestic assistants £6 an hour, but stressed that this included free food

and parking, as well as subsidised medical and dental care and a final salary pension scheme. But none of the colleges use the University's pay

"underpaying employers are allowed to get away with it"

scheme, instead choosing to use their own plans.

Support for the "living wage" model also came from the public workers' union, UNISON. Talking to *Varsity*, a spokesperson expressed support for the Cambridge programme, and argued that there was a clear need for "change to the way the [National] minimum wage is being calculated", as it "consistently falls behind" what workers need. They also criticised "underpaying employers" who are allowed to "get away with it" due to low wages being topped up by in-work benefits.

The "Living Wage" campaign has already seen success in other British universities. In April 2006, Queen Mary, University of London introduced a package deal in which each employee receives at least £6.70 an hour, as well as at least 28 days of holiday and ten days of sick pay. And a spokesperson for the London School of Economics confirmed that they were engaging in dialogue with "living wage" advocates. This included a "positive meeting" between campaigners and the director of the institution.

Cross campus

Oxford

Swapping the galaxy for the gown

Patrick Stewart of X-Men and Star Trek fame is set to become a professor at Oxford University. The actor, who played Professor Xavier in X-Men and Captain Jean-Luc Picard in Star Trek, will take up the position of "Cameron Mackintosh, visiting professor of contemporary theatre". Presently performing with the Royal Shakespeare Company in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Stewart is due to start at St Catherine's College in April. He said of the appointment, "I am honoured, delighted, thrilled to bits and tickled pink."

Leeds

A spoonful of sugar makes it all better

Leeds scientists have discovered how a spoonful of sugar really can make the medicine work: they have adapted a bacterium present in the human gut to produce a treatment for Inflammatory Bowel Disease, and this process is activated by the consumption of a type of sugar, called xylan, found in tree bark. To end the treatment the patient simply stops eating the sugar. This allows treatment to be controlled accurately and dispenses with the bitter pills used up until now.

Nottingham

New service to test for DNA in food

Nottingham Trent University is offering a new service to local companies: DNA testing of food. The sophisticated technology allows the content and source of food to be checked accurately. Mike Dixon, project manager, told press, "Typically, we might be asked to identify what meat is in an imported product, or to identify if expensive Basmati rice is contaminated with a cheaper, non Basmati, rice." They have already discovered that lamb casing has been used on pork sausages without notifying consumers. The University expect the service will be useful for trading standard officers.

Dundee

GMTV presenter quits job as rector

Lorraine Kelly, best known for presenting *GMTV* and *This Morning*, will not apply for a second term as rector of Dundee University. The Glasgow-born television presenter has held the position for three years, and will be replaced in April although it is not yet known who will step up to the office. She notably chose to celebrate her inauguration with a pub crawl of the local area in 2004. Kelly said that holding the position at Dundee University had been "an honour and a privilege".

Churchill sculpture



"Beast Alerted I"

JAMES KEELING

A new sculpture entitled "Beast Alerted I" by Lynn Chadwick is on display outside Churchill College. The 7ft aluminium work can be seen from Storeys Way. Dr. Colin Fraser of Churchill College spoke of his delight at "such a striking work". **Jessica King**

Windy spires

KAT HANNA

Cambridgeshire Police received more than 700 emergency calls last Thursday in connection with winds which reached a peak of 57mph. 80 of these calls were classed at a Grade A level of seriousness.

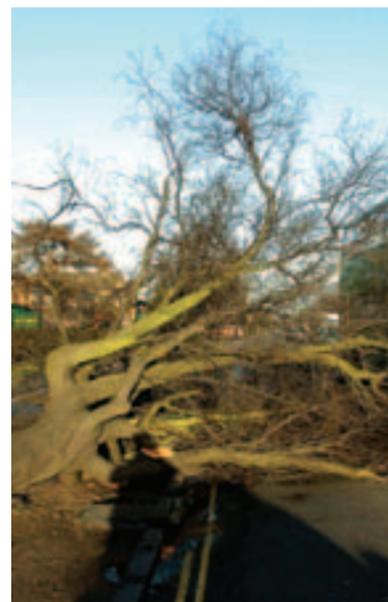
A long stretch of the M11 was closed following an accident and an Ely-Cambridge Stagecoach bus was blown into a ditch. Eyewitness PC Stephanie Corletto said, "I saw the top of the bus suddenly go down. It was jerked to one side. The wind just literally took the bus off the road." Four passengers, including a heavily pregnant lady, were treated for minor injuries.

A former Councillor at the South Cambridgeshire District Council died in Meldreth after being blown over. Almost 5,000 houses were left without power in Cambridgeshire and all One West Anglia trains were suspended. Cambridge resident Mrs. Aretakis commented that "it is absolutely amazing that the wind could do such a thing".

Funnelled by Cambridge's narrow passages, the wind caused a tree to fall between the back entrance of King's College and King's Bridge, blocking off of the back path and cutting off direct access to Queen's Road. Pupils at

many local schools were sent home early, including those at Bottisham Village College, where significant damage was sustained to the school's roof.

On a national scale, Britain experienced the worst storms in 17 years last Thursday, with multiple deaths and thousands of pounds worth of damage caused to buildings and infrastructure.



Fallen tree in Milton Road

CEN

Binge drinking endemic in student culture

»Students use alcohol to deal with pressure of Cambridge life
 »Interviewees admit to drinking between 50 and 120 units a week
 »Addenbrooke's consultant warns of risks of excessive consumption

REBECCA LESTER
Investigations Editor

The average Cambridge student consumes 28.4 alcohol units a week, a CUSU/*Varsity* survey revealed last week. This equates to nine units a night, far exceeding the recommended daily allowance of two units a day for women and four for men. The survey also revealed that over half of Cambridge students have had to miss academic commitments as a consequence of excessive drinking. In response to these survey results, and last week's CUSU Drinking Awareness Campaign, *Varsity* launched an investigation to ascertain whether or not a culture of binge drinking is endemic in Cambridge.

Several students admitted to drinking 50-60 units a week. One rugby player even claimed that in an average Cambridge week he consumed 120 units. One member of a prominent college drinking society calculated that he would get through twelve to fifteen pints on his society's two weekly outings, in addition to going to the bar for a "relaxing pint" on three or four other occasions each week. A former Blues sportsman admitted that "on a rugby initiation we had 360 pints for 30 people and it wasn't enough".

Addenbrooke's Consultant Emergency Physician Dr Boyle expressed serious concern when shown the results, explaining that admittances from alcohol-related incidents increase "significantly" during university term-time. "The main problem with binge drinking is the increased risk of injuries" he said, before adding that hazards for drunken students included "falling off bikes, falling into the Cam and having unprotected sex". The *Varsity* survey found that in this year alone a third of students had injured themselves while drinking.

The British Medical Association underlined the potential long-term impact of such excessive drinking. A spokesperson said, "The over-consumption of alcohol causes serious health problems and is responsible for numerous health care costs including the treatment of alcohol dependence." Boyle suggested that student binge drinking "sets the ground for alcoholism in the future".

The survey results confirmed suspicions of a serious and widespread binge drinking culture within the University. *Varsity* research uncovered a number of different explanations for such patterns of alcohol consumption. The "need to escape the enormous academic pressure put on all students" and "a desire to keep up with older peers" were fre-

quent answers. One classicist commented, "when you're particularly stressed out, that's when you find yourself drinking more". An English student admitted to *Varsity* that "there are times when I've felt like drinking until unconscious to escape university pressures". Downing College Senior Tutor Graham Virgo identified the tradition of drinking societies as a major cause of the

**Former Blue:
"on a rugby initiation we had 360 pints for 30 people and it wasn't enough"**

that "we normally go on two swaps a week". Another drinking society member explained that "most members take one, or even two, bottles of wine with them on a swap" and that "the first bottle is often gone before the starter has even arrived". A member of the Marguerites, the Christ's College male sporting society, complained that "we would have more [outings], but massively debilitating hangovers prevent it".

The efforts made to keep up with the "elite" drinking societies by naïve freshers have been seen by some as one of the most dangerous parts of the Cambridge binge drinking culture. Almost half of all students surveyed claimed to have been a member of a drinking society at some point during their time at Cambridge, highlighting the prevalence of this tradition at the University.

During the course of the investigation *Varsity* was made aware of a number of incidents where copy-cat "freshers' drinking societies" had made potentially fatal errors in their efforts to mimic their older peers. An incident at Peterhouse in October allegedly saw a fresher placed in hospital with suspected brain damage during a bungled initiation. At a leading sporting college, members of such a copy-cat society were called before the Senior Tutor in a bid to "head off a

binge drinking culture, explaining that "there are undoubtedly a number of reasons for excessive drinking, but it is certainly exacerbated by a drinking culture focused on drinking societies".

Rosie May, President of the Magdalene Belladonnas, told *Varsity*

Martini	Tequila	Beer	Red wine
			
1 unit 130 calories	1.4 units 50 calories	2.3 units 182 calories	2 units 119 calories

COLLEGE JESUS INVITES YOU...

JUNE 18TH MON



LOOKING THROUGH THE GLASS



CUSU/Varsity's survey revealed that over half of Cambridge students miss academic commitments due to binge drinking

DEBBIE SCANLAN

Sam Rose

CUSU Welfare Officer on drinking responsibly



"Responsible drinking? Oh Sam, stop it." Perhaps my favourite of the responses I got last week while on our tour of college bars, surveying students and handing out information on responsible drinking. After talking to people a little, the range of reactions was itself fascinating; some looked terrified on realising how much they really drank, while others just laughed and threw the leaflets away, occasionally swearing at me a bit for good measure. Particularly fun were the drinking society and rugby team responses, two groups that at once were most willing to take part, and quickest to turn my leaflets into a drinking game.

The drinking culture in Cambridge has always fascinated me. My counterpart in Oxford talks of a "work hard play hard" culture in the two universities, and this seems to manifest itself in drinking centred around the extra-curricular activities students do. Just this week "Editorial drinks" were held for this newspaper, while late nights at the ADC bar are a regular for thespians, and who could fail to notice miscellaneous sports "socials" that go on. Then there are the drinking societies, purveyors of "organised banter" as my friend sourly called them until joining one last year.

The point is the visibility of these things, and how easy it is to single out their organised nights as worrying. It is rather too easy to point the finger at drinking societies or a "Cambridge culture". Anyone who thinks Cambridge students have an unusually big problem should witness the carnage of a Saturday night Cindies, or perhaps just sit down for a few episodes of Booze Britain.

This is not to deny that students should be aware of what they are doing to themselves, but drinking education in England is not poor, and Cambridge students are certainly not stupid; people know that alcohol causes liver damage, reduces sexual performance, contains huge numbers of calories and limits academic achievement. It is a simple fact that telling students to stop drinking just doesn't work, and that is why CUSU tries to emphasise the importance of responsible drinking.

Some received our survey with jokes, but I like to think a few friends looked after each other at the end of those nights, making sure they went home together, or looking after someone being sick. Even if few students put down their glasses, its important that people are talking about these issues.

repeat" of a previously undisclosed "disaster in 1992".

But the copy-cat societies are not the only culprits, with some of the more established "elite" societies proudly parading the results of their binge drinking excesses. A former president of University-wide drinking society The Ferrets told *Varsity* that during initiations "people have fractured their necks and been impaled". A former Wyvern boasted to *Vice* magazine in October that "some potential members have been hospitalised" during initiation procedures.

Despite this, the majority of drinking society presidents told *Varsity* that their priority was to ensure the wellbeing of members during initiations or when on nights out. Stephen Montgomery, President of the Marguerites, told *Varsity* that "the welfare of members is always of the utmost importance at all club events. There is a high level of trust amongst the members and any member who has drunk too much is always looked after by more senior or sober members. If one gets too inebriated, another will take him home, if one is being naughty, another will tell them he is a bad man."

Although it is clear that the Cambridge drinking culture is in some respects unique, the pattern of extreme binge drinking is "ingrained amongst the wider stu-

177
bottles of vodka drunk by the average student over course of Cambridge career

31%
of students have injured themselves while drunk

dent body". Jamie Frew, Welfare Officer of the Oxford University Student Union, said that binge drinking was also a problem in Oxford, attributing it to the "extreme pressure" of the Oxbridge academic environment. He commented, "Oxford and Cambridge work you harder, so you have to play harder".

Veronica King, Vice President for Welfare at the National Union of Students, acknowledged an escalation of binge drinking at many other universities, saying that "Alcohol is embedded into the student culture". King expanded on this by saying that the tendency to drink excessively is a "British cultural issue". She said, "I do not think it's necessarily just students that binge drink. On a Saturday night out you cannot tell the difference between students and other young people. In addition to this, international students are often shocked and appalled by the amount and way in which British people as a whole drink."

Despite the apparent ease of identifying the binge drinking problem, finding a solution was acknowledged by all sources to be far more problematic. King highlighted the difficulty of dealing with the issue, saying that "of all the student campaigns I work on, getting the message of responsible drinking across is the hardest". Frew stated that simply putting together campaigns

and raising awareness of the risks of excessive drinking can never be enough. "Students do not realise that there are often potentially disastrous consequences to what they see as an innocent past time. Very rarely do people stop and listen, it often takes something shocking for

Former Wyvern: "people have fractured their necks and been impaled"

them to realise that this behaviour is dangerous."

The survey results revealed that 39 per cent of students had "done something that they later regretted whilst drunk". But all the available medical evidence would in fact indicate that even more than the odd embarrassing escapade, the very process of getting drunk, be it to seek escape, to compete or simply to keep up, may in itself become the single greatest regret of many future MA Cantabs.

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THROUGH THE
LOOKING GLASS



MON
18TH
JUNE



Opportunities for all

Higher education should be available to all students, not just the rich



CARLY HILTS

A person's opportunities in life should not be determined by the random economic situation into which he or she is born. Few would contend that a person was less deserving of the vote or hospital care or a job just because their parents are poor. So why should higher education be any different? Surely a system which effectively withholds opportunities from the poor is unjustifiable. Tinkering with bursaries and means-testing is not enough. We need a radical solution: free education for everyone.

Means-testing assumes that we can rely on our parents for financial support. But some 30 per cent of students receive less than the government's recommended parental contribution towards their education and 17 per cent receive nothing at all.

Whole sections of society are disadvantaged by this system. Women will be in debt longer after graduation because they earn 15 per cent less on average than men. Black and Asian workers earn on average £97 less per week than white workers and are twice as likely to be unemployed.

Currently, if your household's income is above £22,000, you are not entitled to a full grant. However, as the mean UK income is over £20,000, this effectively excludes the majority of students living in a household with two working parents. If your parents have to work 40-hour weeks on minimum wage,



ILLUSTRATION BY PIPPA CORNELL

you would only barely qualify.

If the cap on top-up fees is removed and universities are allowed to set prices (£10,000 per year has been suggested) we will see a massive fall in applications, particularly from students with lower household

"a system which effectively withholds opportunities from the poor is unjustifiable"

incomes.

Student debt has already risen by 13 per cent every year for the last three years in England and Wales. Applications have fallen by 3.7 per cent or some 15,000 students; the equivalent of Coventry University

has disappeared. If this is the result of introducing £3,000 fees, imagine what variable fees will do, with prospective students facing over £30,000 in debts. And that is only for a three-year degree. How many medics and vets would be here if it cost £70,000?

The Cambridge powers-that-be have expressed an interest in charging the maximum once the cap is lifted. This will be disastrous in terms of attracting lower-income students. State-educated students make up barely 50 per cent of the undergraduate body here, despite comprising 90 per cent of the UK secondary school population.

Most people from my old comprehensive did not apply to Oxbridge because they thought it was more expensive than other universities. How many fewer will apply when it genuinely is? A rise in fees will simply perpetuate the myth that this is somewhere to which state-educated students should not aspire.

The only answer is universal free education. The government claims

there is not enough money without cuts in vital public services or a rise in general taxation. But in reality, the UK has a relatively low top rate of income tax, and our corporation tax is one of the lowest in the OECD. A slight increase in taxation of business and individuals earning over £100,000 a year could create enough funds.

Why should the state pay for universal free education when wealthier students can clearly afford to pay their own way? Because everyone is entitled to a free education, no matter what their parents earn. Affluent students will not get a "free ride". Nor will they necessarily pay any more than under the current scheme. Their families will simply substitute increased taxes for university fees.

And why should the childless pay to educate other people's children? Ultimately, a better educated populace benefits society as a whole. A well-educated workforce, increased numbers of highly qualified professionals and a thriving research sector would be of enormous social and economic benefit to everyone. It is only fair that everyone, with or without children at present, contributes.

Universities are receiving an increasingly small fraction of the country's GDP. Currently it is only 1.1 per cent. Compare that with 2.1 per cent for defence. Only Germany, Japan, Belgium and Italy spend less on higher education.

A degree is not a commodity to be bought or sold. Education is a right that should not be exclusive to the privileged. Opportunities should not be auctioned off to the highest bidder. Without drastic changes, the current system will only ensure that the rich stay rich and the poor are denied the opportunity to improve their circumstances.

Carly Hilts is a member of Education Not for Sale

Outside of Cambridge – in what is, ostensibly, the real world – people are getting quite worked up about reality TV. If you're too engrossed in your textbooks to brush up on your tabloid press, you won't know that returning heroine of the *BB* saga, Jade Goody, has slipped up with an ill-advised "poppadom" comment about fellow contestant Shilpa Shetty. C4 got into trouble again the week after one *Shipwrecked* contestant produced her damning report that black people are "very bad". People have let racist comments slip out on national TV before, but they've been hoiked off the air faster than you can say Ron Atkinson. However, in the *Big Brother* house you are innocent until proven guilty,

"They're media puppets rather than community leaders"

and the offending parties have been subject to the proper processes of trial by TV audience. So, do you want to see the working-class-girl-dun-good make a stand against political correctness gone mad? Or should she be subjected to the "boos" of the *Big Brother* audience when she gets voted out for being a racist bitch? The sort of the casual "poppadom" name slinging of Goody *et al*, isn't the hate-driven manifesto of the extreme right, it's more reminiscent of playground bullying, being not as harmful as it could be, but a lot more pervasive than we would like to admit. If Jade garnered just a little more respect from the populous then maybe, yes, I could imagine some people being negatively influenced by her comments, but Jade Goody isn't the kind of catalysing figure who's going to indoctrinate a nation, she's just some average, annoying girl, built up by the media to be inevitably knocked down. We love her because she's trash, so what were we expecting from her? And who are these people clasping their hands over their mouths in horror at such racial slurs being broadcast on television? Do they not actually know what people are like? In reality, people think that Muslim fundamentalists are trying to ban Christmas. In reality, racism, xenophobia and homophobia form the latent residue of hate for many young people who grew up in families where "darkies" and "puffs" were the common subjects of family jokes. Let's not pretend that the *Big Brother* contestants are going to affect any social change; they're media puppets rather than community leaders. We're not witnessing a propaganda strike; these are just average people relying on familiar racist tendencies to work through their fear. In fact, *Big Brother* probably is the ideal situation in which to concretise national ideas of unacceptable behaviour. Or even better, Celebrity Racist Detox Camp: Ron Atkinson among others get flown to the Middle East to receive a daily enema until they feel less prejudiced.

A political activist? Get out of here



BOBBY FRIEDMAN

I was writing a political piece for *Varsity* when writer's block struck. I took this to mean one of two things – either I'm not much of a writer – which may be true, read on and judge for yourself, or else that student life in Cambridge isn't very political. Of course there are pockets of us who get worked up about the odd thing here and there, like a few King's students wanting to erect a monument to Brezhnev or something, but in general life is pretty placid. When people in Cambridge get things off their chests they talk about their internships or their supervision work. Interesting as it is, it's hardly 21st century "I have a Dream" stuff. It's all a little bit *Sunday Times Magazine* rather

than *Iskra*. We can all wax lyrical about Iraq, but that's hardly very different to any London taxi driver. You only have to sit in a black cab for ten minutes and hear why it's apparently the immigrants/ Tony Blair / gypsies / those bloody Frogs/ Krauts who are to blame to realise that mouthing off over something doesn't mean that you're doing anything about it. There used to be a mobilising quality that set apart students from someone expounding away down the pub. The cabbies must have bored passengers with their *Daily Mail*-cloned opinions thousands of times – but this doesn't make them political activists.

Totalitarian governments suppress universities as they're a hotbed of potentially dangerous political ideas. Your opinions as a student used to be loudly espoused at the time and refuted once you were a bit more old and sensible. Now the only thing to be embarrassed about is what people wrote on your wall on the facebook. It's galling to agree with your parents' politics when you're meant to be in the heart of the action. Most of our views in Cambridge are mainstream: the war was bad; equal

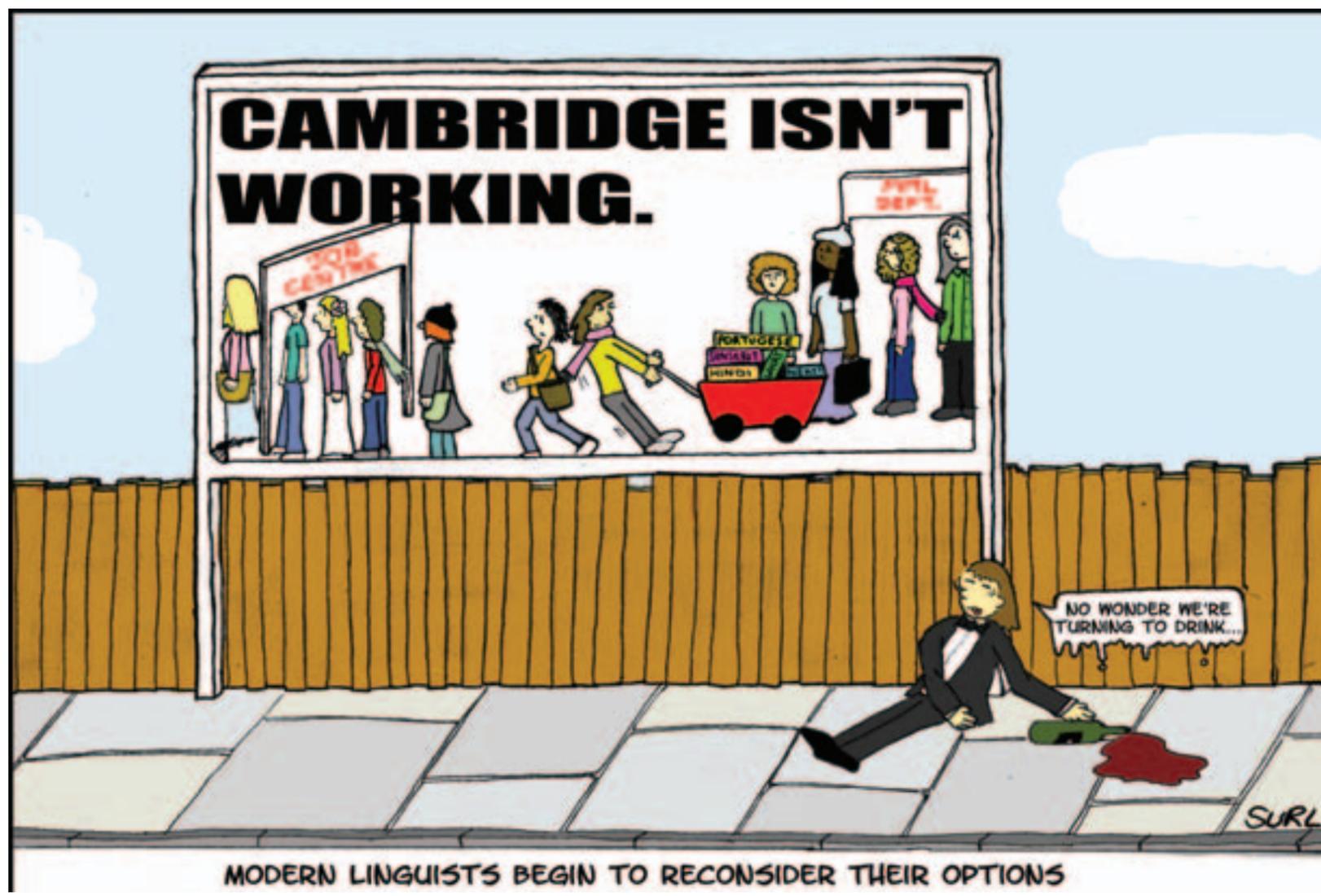
opportunity is good and so on. Even with top-up fees only a small number went to London to protest, and when free tuition was ended in 1997 just 2,000 students bothered to go to the capital to demonstrate.

It could hardly be more different to when the British Vietnam Solidarity Campaign – consisting mostly of students – marched 100,000 people on London in protest at America's continuing involvement in the war in the late 60s. Such views were deemed subversive at the time. A few elderly members of the Countryside Alliance in green wellies and a wax jacket are now more likely to take to the streets than the average student.

So what's wrong with us? Why don't we see some true student political action (and no I don't mean a drunken grope between two CUCA members in a cupboard at a Chairman's dinner)? The reassuring truth is that, Iraq or no Iraq, most graduating students will have it pretty good – but only if they keep on the straight and narrow. Students are the latest victims of the newest era of consensus politics, with a common set of ideas shared not only by

most students but also the majority of other adults. It's hard to be radical when there's nothing to be rebellious about, and when militancy is seen as indicative of madness rather than a sign of progression.

We can get angry about the Portuguese department closing as it affects us, but we won't start sit-ins or wildcat protests. Gone are the days when you could begin as a radical and come back into the fold, and in both politics and business we tend to take a well-worn and secure path. From *Merrill Lynch* to New Labour, people don't look kindly on those who've been rusticated for organising illegal student protests or who've been captured naked except for a badly-scrawled anti-war slogan. And so we're left with a situation where action means putting a motion to CUSU council or going to Live 8. Still wearing your Glastonbury "Make Poverty History" wristband won't make poverty history, (though it will make your arms smell), and it's hardly going to cause a stir. We just don't want to get into trouble. The problem is that, safe as we are, it just isn't much fun, is it?



MODERN LINGUISTS BEGIN TO RECONSIDER THEIR OPTIONS

Students put the world into world class education



MARK KOLLER AND
HAMISH FALCONER

Cambridge, according to *The Times* Education Supplement of 2006, is the second best university globally. But are we a global university?

In 2004, the Department for Education and Skills called for the integration of a global dimension across all sectors of education. It highlighted eight concepts which educational institutions should promote: citizenship, social justice, sustainable development, diversity, values and perceptions, interdependence, conflict resolution and human rights.

Do Cambridge students fulfil this brief? SPS students perhaps have the greatest claim. Studying the Rwandan genocide, the Middle East crises and a host of other topics brings global concerns to their thinking. Anthropologists learn about diversity and the values and perceptions of other cultures. But surely for some of us the divide between applying these concepts and what we study is our own to bridge.

We are afforded the opportunity to think and to learn, but we need to keep our side of the bargain. As the future professionals and policy-makers of our generation, we will have to face a myriad of challenges from global poverty, human rights abuses, new and more fluid threats to security and, not least, climate change.

Awareness does not always lead to action, but in the case of many of us, inaction appears largely the result of cynicism. We are aware of our importance in the global society and yet so derogatory about our ability to make an impact within it.

Some students are taking matters into their own hands. Recognising the need to debate and challenge assumptions on the realities of implementing projects in developing countries, the International Development Course (IDC) was set up by several Cambridge students in March 2005. It runs two student-organised, full-day courses a year. Several Cambridge academics and NGOs support it by lecturing and running workshops. Oxford students, seeing its value, set up an IDC of their own this year.

The U8, which was founded in Cambridge in Michaelmas 2005 and held an Open Debate on Development Policy and Practice only last week, links universities globally to increase understanding of global issues. Some 150 volunteers comprising 30 different nationalities are currently employing their research and skills, acquired in their degrees, to tackle international policy issues together.

It also affords opportunities for greater cultural awareness; Cambridge students have been

linked specifically to students from Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia. Those involved are not experts in the field but they do have the time and resources to apply themselves to researching and discussing these issues.

In 2006, the policy recommendations generated by U8's student volunteers were submitted to the government's Department for International Development, to contribute to their White Paper, and the Conservative's Globalisation

"Student views are listened to, but only if they are given in the first place"

and Global Poverty Policy Group, to contribute to their political manifesto. These were treated as seriously as the submissions of NGOs and think tanks. Student views are listened to, but only if they are given in the first place.

Bart Fleuren spent two terms here on exchange from Utrecht in 2005 and went on to found a student-led political think tank (the RAND-Groep) in the Netherlands. He states that "public debates could benefit a lot from the analytic potential of young academics. By publishing articles and taking student positions in various governmental advisory councils, we can make our academic education useful

for society and make the link between the ivory tower and the ground on which it stands."

Students have a tangible role to play. The successes of the U8 and the IDC show that they can contribute something useful to debates while enhancing their own skills base. Student action can also make a real difference and student led campaigns are increasingly having an impact outside of the bubble.

Last term, over the course of a weekend, Cambridge Amnesty wrote 4,500 letters calling for release of prisoners of conscience. As few as 565 letters led to the release of prisoner of conscience Carlos Taype from a Peruvian prison. Over the course of one weekend, Cambridge students may have had a profound impact, for the better, on the lives of more than seven such prisoners.

Cambridge has also quietly led the way on other issues. New Hall was the first institution outside the United States to consider Sudan divestment as a result of student pressure. The college acted to make sure that its investments were not helping the government of Sudan to commit genocide in the Darfur region. Since then, the LSE student union followed suit last week, campaigns have begun in universities across the UK and the issue has even been mentioned in parliament.

Students are not powerless and they are not mute. The problems of the world are not going to be solved by us, but we can be an important part of any solution.

Hamish Falconer is chair of Cambridge University Amnesty International; Mark Koller is co-president of the U8

Trieste Telegram



SAMANTHA JONES

Telling people that you're spending a year in Italy is like telling an Italian that you're from England: it's assumed you have the Queen on speed-dial; survive solely on a diet of potatoes and tea; and, as the entire length and breadth of the country is occupied by London, you simply cannot be from anywhere else.

So it was when the MML department dispatched me to Italy for a year. It is immediately assumed that I must, of course, be opting for Milan, Bologna, or Rome. Instead, I headed for an insignificant little border-city called Trieste, around the size of Cambridge. Despite the fact that Trieste is contained within Italy by a reluctant afterthought of land, those whom I left behind persisted in thinking that I would be living out a vino-tinted dream.

Trieste fails to meet the idea of a pizza-and-pasta paradise. Specialties include boiled trotter, battered aubergine and something akin to lumps of corned beef. They do, however, still consider themselves a gastronomic authority, meaning that the entire Triestine populace implode with rage whenever I commit the cardinal sin of adding milk to tea.

"Trieste fails to meet the idea of a pizza-and-pasta paradise. Specialities include boiled trotter"

"Well at least you're somewhere hot", you might think. Not quite, practically the only thing this town is famous for is its 150 mile per hour wind, named 'la Bora', discussed with misty-eyed affection due to it being the only thing of any remote interest to ever happen.

Perhaps shopping would be Trieste's redeeming feature, if, indeed, the shops were ever open. When you have to close on Sunday, Monday, Saint's days, your Nan's birthday, a few random days and find time to strike every other week, there's not a lot of time left to open up shop.

As for the supposedly attractive Italian men, this too seems to be a delusion. If greasy hair and luminous pink striped jumpers - this season's Triestine must-have, it seems - push your buttons then yes, the men of Trieste are attractive. But, smooth chat-up lines ranging from "do you know what is blow job?" to "We live happy happy with my mum" might just put you off.

A strange air pervades this frontier city. Perhaps I too will eventually succumb to its eccentricities and then just see what happens when you offer me milk in my tea.

VARSITY

The undergraduate axe

Prospective Cambridge students can apply for only 25 subjects. You do not see Physics listed as an official Cambridge degree, but the University without the discipline of Newton and Hawking is unthinkable. Names such as "MML" and "Natural Sciences" are deceptive umbrellas, containing tens of departments. This means that the University can shut down courses without officially reducing the number of subjects available. But this should not make such closures any more acceptable.

First under the guillotine were Sanskrit and Hindi, removed from the prospectus in 2006. Although only suspended in today's decision, it appears that Portuguese may well join these in the near future and it was revealed this week that the Head of Modern Greek was concerned about his subject's future. Despite the apparent efforts to cull 'minority languages', the fact remains that at its last appraisal in 2001 the MML faculty received a top 5* research rating. Admissions to the faculty in 2005 were the highest in four years. The furore surrounding the potential Architecture axe last year was of a different nature; the faculty had received a low research rating and the building were in need of a complete renovation. This is currently being pushed through with gusto, hopefully in time for the next academic year.

On the dismissal of Sanskrit and Hindi from Tripos options, Dr Johnson told Varsity that it would continue for undergraduates who required the languages for research purposes, but committed the department to caring particularly for its graduate students. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education made similar comments on Portuguese, mentioning the prospect of "increased graduate provision". These comments jar with Vice Chancellor Alison Richard's promise at the beginning of the year for a sharper focus on the Cambridge undergraduate population.

It is puzzling that the University can argue that graduate provision should be strengthened, whilst scrapping undergraduate study. It seems Cambridge is passing this 'weighty' buck to the other Russell Group universities, before happily waving the Portuguese graduates back into the fold, degree paper safely in hand. Despite the importance of research, the University should have a fundamental commitment to teaching. Just as the A-level student seems more important than the pre-pubescent thirteen-year-old, so the PhD takes its place above the BA in the University consciousness. But that in both cases the early education provides a fundamental building block for later study; no PhD comes from a teacher-less vacuum.

Added to this is the question of funding. These cuts suggest the existence of severe financial constraints, yet Cambridge retains its place as one of the two wealthiest universities in the country. Oxford and Cambridge between them have endowments around £6 billion, vastly in excess of the combined total of all other British university endowments. 2004-05 university fundraising provided Oxford and Cambridge with £185 million, with the other UK universities raising an average of £1.6 million each. In contrast, the MML course is one of the cheapest to run. Added to which, the salary of one of the two Portuguese lectureships is completely funded by an institute acting on behalf of the Portuguese government. Whilst recognizing that there are hundreds of demands on University funds, it is surprising that a relatively cheap and small department teaching a language spoken by over 200 million people worldwide has seemingly been marked for abandonment. Whatever the outcome, the plight of Portuguese has served a timely reminder of the vulnerability of undergraduate education at Cambridge. Whilst remaining a world leader in research, the University must not neglect its undergraduate provision.



letters@varsity.co.uk

LETTER OF THE WEEK

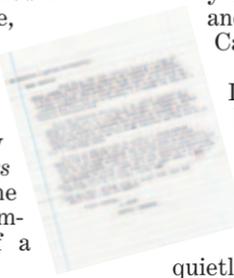
On Writing a Letter to Varsity

Dear Sir,

It's 3am and I've already drained 4 cups of black coffee (fair trade, organic of course - in fact, I hand-picked the beans myself on my recent conservation project in Peru). I've still got 2000 words of an essay on gender perspectives in *Piers Plowman* to complete, but the deadline for this letter is looming... O lament the fate of a Varsity correspondent [sic]!

As I sit clunking the keys of my period typewriter I consider what

bon mots and which diverse anecdotes with which to entertain my readers [sic]. Obviously no Varsity reader wishes to peruse a genuine news story or comment piece they'd much rather listen to me discourse at length about myself, conveniently my favourite subject, and aspects of my hectic Cambridge life.



If only my letter could be granted a photobyline then I can be SOME ONE and the student population could marvel at my kooky haircut and quietly envy my miraculous rise in the murky world of student journalism despite a lack of any discernible writing talent, or, god for-

bid! something meaningful to cover. Maybe if I just throw in a few swear [sic] words then this letter will seem a bit edgy, shit, I mean, a Cambridge student swearing, surely not? Fuck me, this writing lark is easy? Will this do? Can I have a job please?

Yours lovingly [sic!]

A Welch
Girton College



Tell Varsity what's on your mind - each week, the best letter will win a specially selected bottle of wine from our friends at Cambridge Wine Merchants, King's Parade

Dear Sir,

Shortage of space on the front page of last week's edition may have forced you to quote selectively from the comments made about me by the Editor of the *Cambridge Evening News*. I appreciate the need to condense in any story, but I have been encouraged by friends to qualify some of the statements made by Mr Morse.

First, the suggestion that he offered me the chance to give my "full story" to the CEN at the end of the trial. I made it clear at the brief press conference I gave after acquittal that I had agreed to speak exclusively to a particular Sunday paper because (a) their reporter had been present longer than any other during the trial, and so was actually already aware of my side of the story; and (b) I was advised that, if I gave an "exclusive", all other papers would keep away. The CEN was aware that this was the case, but nevertheless a CEN journalist and photographer turned up, unannounced, at my home shortly after 7.30 that evening, when I was finally relaxing with my family after more than a year of considerable stress for all of us.

Second, the suggestion that I had "sold my story to a tabloid Sunday newspaper". I had agreed to talk exclusively to one reporter. There was no question of any payment being made to me, and I had no contract with that paper. The reporter concerned was confident that, if his story were published (in fact it wasn't), the paper would make a substantial donation to RAG. Mr Morse must have been aware that this was the arrangement, as I had explained it at the press conference. It would appear that Mr Morse is still attempting to denigrate me in the local community.

Mr Morse maintains he does not know who has advised me to pursue a libel action. It is the same practice which wrote to him after the first trial, warning him that a particular headline was defamatory and false. The bulk of any damages from a libel action would again be promised to charity.

Mr Morse has already apologised for using a copyright photo of me without permission, and his paper surprisingly included me as one of their "quotes of the year" for 2006 (the fact that I could keep going because I knew I was innocent and

I had such wonderful support). I look forward to a further apology.

Peter Hutchinson
Trinity Hall College

Dear Sir,

Next time you decide to mutually masturbate [producing the V100] please would you kindly care not to distribute the product to your readership.

With ardent sincerity,

David Scales
King's College

Dear Sir,

I refer to last week's article by Imogen Walford. She declares that "Criticism...is the Dead Weight of the newspaper". Turn to the next page, however, and we find Sam Leon's monumental description of drum'n'bass regulars as a "massively fucked legion of professional gurners".

Criticism, dead? Surely not?

Catarina Forster-Tythe
Robinson College

VARSITY

The Independent Cambridge Student Newspaper since 1947

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 Mags*, and an online edition at www.varsity.co.uk.

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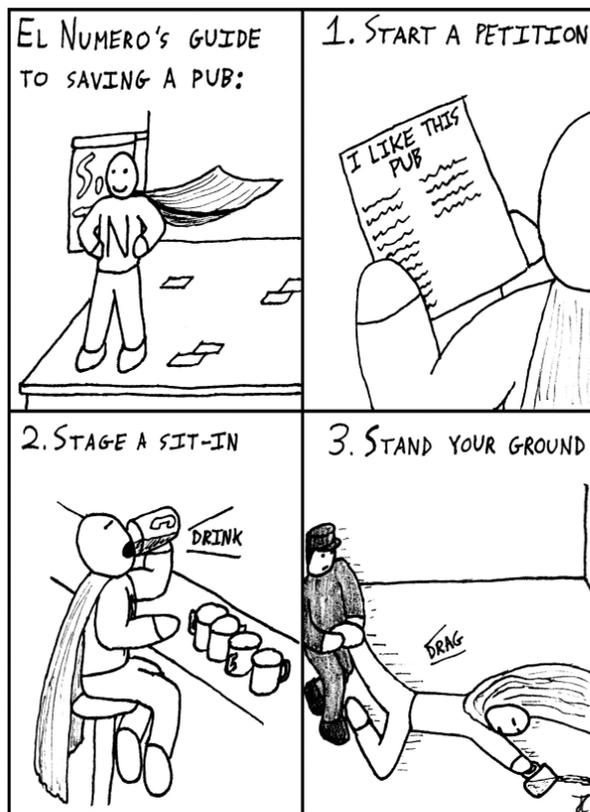
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In this week in 1988, Cambridge students marched on London to defend woman's right to choose. They were protesting David Alton's Member's Bill, which aimed to reduce the legal time limit for abortions from 28 weeks to just 18 weeks.

Plans to merge two Cambridge higher education colleges to create a new "Polytechnic of East Anglia" were discussed. The end result was APU, although the boat club still rows under the name CCAT, the Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology.

A fresh-faced and moustachioed Ken Livingstone announced on a visit to King's College that it was time to "disengage the whole of Europe from America's interests". Plus ca change...

The winter silly season was officially inaugurated as the Mummies announced auditions for an "Anarchic New Play" entitled *Shades of Bastardy in the Colour Crap*. Elaine Scarry, eat your heart out. Meanwhile, members of the Labour party were accused of the "misuse of balloons in a council meeting".

Features & Arts

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Staying in character

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Formal



ILLUSTRATION BY JANE HALL

From Grantchester to the Green Monsters, **Alfred Rudd** steps into a dinner jacket and enters the world of organised fun

I suspect I'm not the only one who hates wearing dinner jackets – there's the self-conscious pinch of over-tight dress trousers, and the uncomfortable feeling that turning one's head will ruin the careful folding of a bow tie.

However, by far the worst is the act you are forced to perform upon on Sainsbury's

'Pennyng Stephen Hawking, definitely to be frowned upon, still makes for a funny story'

stage – where an omnipresent fluorescent spotlight reveals your conspicuous dress to passing folk. Fellow shoppers silently register your charade; surely a true gent doesn't require cheap plonk only ten minutes before sitting down to a fine evening's entertainment? However, as soon as one disappears backstage into some medieval court, itself resonating to the tones of merriment past, the whole performance seems a bit more acceptable.

The way in which a troupe of penguin-suited people is self-accepting, comfortable even, is of course mirrored throughout Cambridge and wider society – row-

ing stash or drinking society blazer are obvious symbols of belonging. From wider society, the hoodie or burqa provide some indication of how the individual lives their life. In Cambridge, a blazer, pub-golf visor or DJ merely tells us how they like their drinking – and the answer is, usually, organised.

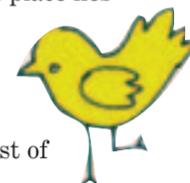
Such institutions give rise to some of this town's pantomime acts of hilarity – the annual Girton Green Monsters vs. Jesus Caesarians 'fight' is an incredible, toga-clad spectator event. Pennyng Stephen Hawking, definitely to be frowned upon, still makes for a funny story. Beyond the drinking arena, the ultimate acts are those of the pesky climbers who wheelie-binned King's Chapel and of the group of engineers that constructed a car on the roof of Senate House. The fact that most people will know these stories without need of further explanation is indicative of the sway they hold, and of our aspiration to leave some record or even vague rumour of our presence here.

Despite our best intentions, by week four life in Cambridge basically consists of an anonymous cycle of work, sleep, dossing and getting drunk – all replaced in week five by drinking tea. So with only nine short terms to leave an indelible mark, or even just a chair leg in place of Trinity gate's sceptre, time is tight.

As such, Cambridge becomes a theme

park in which we partition time into blocks of obligation. A summertime visit to Grantchester's tea rooms is not the lazy fantasy lived by Rupert Brooke, but something to be squeezed in between bouts of revision-induced hysteria. Don't even consider not going overnight punting – its easy to be convinced that your time here means nothing unless you've seen the mist rising off the Cam on a summer morning. The late night Gardies, nominally borne from a physiological need for kebab meat, becomes a means of getting paparazzi'd, to be admired on that famous wall for a fleeting week. Visits are made to the UL not from academic necessity but simply to avoid missing it before graduation, whilst the ultimate fantasy is to ride the Cambridge Sightseeing Tourbus and listen at leisure to the rest of the snatched voiceover that you hear as it passes your bedroom window.

I should end with some suitably moral call for individualism, but that wouldn't be right. The allure of this place lies in its traditions, which define it far more than any particular cohort. After all, we don't hear about what those engineers did for the rest of their time here.



Education

With formal halls and drinking societies dominating the Cambridge social scene, **Bobby Friedman** examines why we would rather dine with strangers than drink with friends

The chairman of the Labour Party, Hazel Blears, recently commented that the British “like getting drunk”. This statement was shocking, mainly because it involved a member of the government giving a straightforward answer to a simple question. But given that Eden and the then French Prime Minister Mollet failed to get their way in the 50s with their bizarre ‘Frangleterre’ plan, a Britain free from the continental concept of moderation will hardly come as much of a surprise to any of us in Cambridge, or the country at large.

And so it is perhaps an anomaly that two of the bastions of institutional Englishness, Oxford and Cambridge, differ so much in their culture of drinking. It is clear that Oxford and Cambridge have varying traits, mainly because Oxford has a few more kebab shops, and a longer walk into the town centre from many colleges (Girton is, however, so far out that it may as well be in Oxford, of course). But in the main, the Oxbridge notion relies on the fact that the similarities between the two universities far

‘People are selected as potential socialising partners based on their suitability for an hour-and-a-half long ritual’

outweigh the differences. They are literally two shades of the same colour. The culture of college ties, varsity matches, debating unions and one-on-one supervisions, albeit under a different name at the other place, sets ourselves and students from Oxford apart from everyone else. It’s not really a very brave claim to shout that you’d “rather be at Oxford than St. John’s.”

Replace Oxford with the University of Scarborough, and then the drunken revellers would really be putting their necks, and their education, on the block.

Bizarrely though, in terms of the ways in which we socialise, Cambridge has managed to develop a culture that is wholly removed from any Oxford equivalent. The drinking society, or ‘dining society’ as it’s probably known by the HR departments of various graduate employers, who receive CVs from formal-hall regulars who have realised that arranging a swap is perhaps the most con-

structive thing they’ve done in their three years here, has become a staple and even socially acceptable part of life here. Pennyng and formal halls seem the most natural thing in the world to my friends in Oxford, but when I try to explain just who the Emma Lions are, and why on earth I’d want to be a member, they give me puzzled looks.

‘Romances longer than one night are rare’

Now I know that not everyone thinks that joining a drinking society is a good idea. Perhaps that’s because there’s always a chance that you might have to spend an hour talking to me at formal hall. More likely, however, is that many societies are seen as elitist, irresponsible in their encouragement of binge drinking, and chauvinistic. It is difficult to explain to others why effectively being set up with ten random members of the opposite sex is perceived as a sign of a high level of sociality, rather than the opposite.

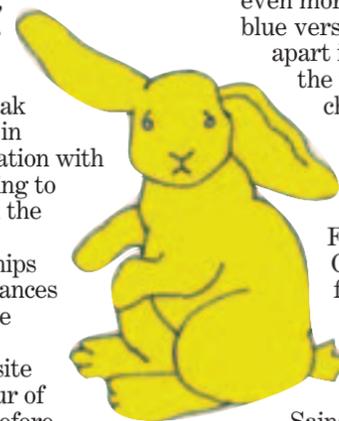
Yet it is harder still to deny that the presence of drinking societies has become pervasive of Cambridge life. As the New Hall alternative prospective told their incoming students, “Each year-group has a drinking society as well which organises formal hall swaps with a group of guys from another College”. Rather optimistically, we’re also told that “New Hall girls have a reputation for being a lot of fun”. Queens’ official website includes references to the Roos and boasts of money being raised for charity through the sale of a “girls’ drinking society”.

While many dislike the whole notion of formal swaps, and eschew the practice, most Cambridge students will have at least attended a couple of drinking society events. By contrast, Oxford’s equivalent relies mainly on so-called “team swaps”, which are far less institutional and which occur infrequently. Their official drinking societies have grander parties, usually on a termly basis.

Such a seemingly trivial issue does, however, create a wholly new cultural niche in Cambridge. And not only because a standard greeting of “Where have you been tonight?” is code for “Where have you been on formal”. In Cambridge, a group mentality is fostered, where people are selected as

potential socialising partners based on their suitability for an hour-and-a-half long ritual.

Here there are often whole groups of friends who will only meet up in clubs, rather than going for dinner or to the theatre. Rather than chatting to a closer group of mates before going out, people end up talking to a bunch of people for a couple of hours, most of whom they will never speak to again. Work is finished in time for drunken conversation with strangers, rather than going to the pub with friends. And the process is repeated week after week. Some friendships are forged on formal; romances (longer than one night) are rare. Yet, for a night out, closer friends of the opposite sex are jettisoned in favour of people we’ve never met before.



Of course people in Oxford get drunk, too, and probably as drunk as people here – Ms Blears would remind them that they are in Britain, after all. There is also a compelling argument that Oxford’s manifestation of the drinking society is more pretentious and even more unfairly exclusive than the light blue version. But what sets Cambridge apart is the all-encompassing nature of the way in which many students choose to socialise. In Oxford, there are equal pressures to drink, but the weekly demands to subscribe to the semi-official drinking society culture simply do not exist. Formal swaps are fun. But in Cambridge we end up being identified with our group, and reputations are forged or, more often, destroyed, by a brief encounter over a formal hall meal and a £3.50 bottle of wine from Sainsbury’s.



VARSITY DRINKING

Student shenanigans past and present

Jos Bird, Downing 1954-57, recalls the College Dining Club, then known as “the Eleven”. After some misdemeanour sadly since lost to history, its members were forced to disband. This minor problem was overcome by the addition of one extra member and an agreement that the new club would not meet in college premises. The club, now 12 in number, called itself “the Exiles”, and continues its fine traditions to this day.

Even the revered May Bumps do not escape unscathed - in 2006 the races were interrupted by the **Ten Men**; Johnian drinkers-cum-swimmers. One race marshal was later described as being “incandescent” with rage.

Gavin Hastings, former Scotland Rugby Captain, was reported by *The Times* upon his return to Magdalene as having fallen into bad old habits. The former **Wyvern**, who once broke the initiation record by downing three and a half pints of beer in thirty-five seconds, was alleged to have had “a night of mild excess” at the Pickerel.

Only nine of the thirty-one colleges in Cambridge have no record of taking **disciplinary action** against their undergraduates for acts committed whilst in a state of drunkenness.

In the Summer of 2005, around 40 ‘tired and emotional’ Oxford students were injured jumping off Magdalen Bridge into shallow water. The story was run by a similar number of newspapers around the world, all apparently amazed at the “difference between conception and reality” of students at the Other Place. Indeed.

In typical Suicide Sunday fashion, the **Robinson Rentals** were alleged to have been involved in an incident on the Cam involving an upturned canoe, a flailing infant and a pair of somewhat distressed parents.

For one unfortunate **goldfish**, emerging back into the world after being vomited up mid-initiation was not punishment enough. Apparently emotionally unscarred, it was kept in a suitable bowl to live out its natural life with only half its full complement of fins.

Members of Oxford’s **Bullington Club**, David Cameron’s former dining society, continued an age-old tradition last year by trashing a pub in the town. Artwork was set ablaze and the floor flooded with beer. Former venues for destruction have included the White Hart in 2004, whose owner was offered “hundreds of pounds” for the damage after seeing the £596 bill settled in cash.



UNDER THE LABCOAT



MicoTatlovic

On biological clocks

We all take a journey through time - our lives - throughout which we obey our natural time rhythms, on a much shorter scale: when we go to bed at night and when we wake up in the morning. But why should this be so? Why do we get sleepy, and why do we seem to work better at some times of the day than others? Recent advances in chronobiology answer these and similar questions but also pose many new ones such as "could we immensely improve the treatment of cancers and various other diseases simply by administering drugs at the appropriate time of day?"

All living organisms on the planet obey biological rhythms set by their biological clocks. These clocks measure time intervals on a cellular level. Each cell of an organism sets self-perpetuating biological rhythms. A simple negative feedback mechanism ensures the quantity of certain proteins rises at one time of a day and falls at another; this sets the clock.

Biological clocks can be adjusted to the outside time and they allow organisms to assess and respond to oscillations such as day/night, low or high tide, summer and winter, and so on. Natural selection has favoured the evolution of biological clocks because Earth is an environment in which having an internal clock can mean the difference between life and death. For example, going out at night can be lethal to diurnal animal: it would waste energy trying to keep warm or would be eaten by a nocturnal predator. So knowing when certain events are coming (like the opportunity to feed, breed or even migrate) allows an animal to prepare for these events and make the most of them.

Humans are no exception when it comes to biological rhythms. Jet lag offers a good example of the strength of our clocks: they are set to the zone we normally live in time by the local light regime, so when we travel through several time zones our clocks need time to reset. The rhythm is set in the brain, and then regulates other organs in the body. It has been found that our cognitive abilities are highest around 11am and our physical stamina best at 6pm. Studies on animals have found that treatment of some cancers may be up to two and a half times more effective, just by administering the same drug at the same concentration at a different time of day. Also, in experimental trials the number of animals dying from side effects was reduced by up to 90 per cent depending on the time of the drug's administration. The medical implications of the daily oscillations of our biological functions are only beginning to be appreciated: it will be a whole new journey of scientific discovery that will eventually lead us to a detailed knowledge of how daily changes in our body can be used to our advantage.



Hacked

Far from hallowed Fleet Street, journalism school gives you the tools of the trade and guarantees that dream job. Or does it? *Varsity* investigates

THE TEACHER

John Tulloch

Lincoln School of Journalism

It's a very exciting time to be studying journalism. The 7/7 bombings in London revealed that anyone with a camera in their mobile phone could provide powerful images and text to newsrooms. The atrocity announced the arrival of 'citizen journalism'. Meanwhile the press has discovered blogging, and even *The Sun* solicits its readers to send in their email contributions.

Could these developments signal the end of the professional hack? Yes it's likely that media organisations will change profoundly as a result of cheap, footloose electronic journalism, based on the world wide web, with armies of readers 'having a go'. But no, there will be a continuing need for news we can trust, that's been gathered, packaged, checked and presented by reliable and truthful reporters.

A good journalism course will help you develop a critical understanding of the history, politics and philosophy of journalism. If you're entering a changing profession it helps to understand something

'The media will change profoundly with cheap, electronic journalism'

about the processes which are creating those changes. Also an understanding of human rights issues - here and around the world - should be part of the toolkit of every young journalist.

Postgraduate courses in journalism tend to be expensive and they are not the only route into the profession, but they're worth serious consideration. They can give you grounding in the basic skills, work placement experience and good contacts.

THE STUDENT

Jon Swaine

City School of Journalism

Journalism school is thoroughgoing, respected and pricey. Entering as a Cambridge arts graduate, the back-to-school level of contact time is a refreshing jolt. Classes in writing, shorthand, ethics, law and a specialism easily fill your week with 9-to-5 days and force you into coping with an intense routine of daily deadlines that should be expected of a future career.

City University's Diploma, or MA if you feel like putting yourself through another dissertation, is highly regarded by many editors. But it is seen as effete and extravagant by others, who prefer their recruits more hungry and raw, arriving with only the more minimal (and affordable) National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) certificate. If you are confident that your natural talent needs only the most minor polish, go for the latter and save the money.

Fees for full-time postgraduate courses are high, especially given the relatively low salaries that graduate journalists should expect, even in London. The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and The Scott Trust offer generous bursaries for journalism courses. Both have details on their websites.

But journalism school is absolutely not vital. As many of today's 'big names' eschewed it as passed through it, and employment chances are as much dictated by dedicated and repeated unpaid work experience placements as a qualification.

As newspapers' circulations decline, several have instigated recruitment freezes. There is a general panic throughout the industry and few older professionals can bear to be asked for career advice from young graduates. When they will answer, their responses typically amount to: "do something else". Journalism is in a difficult patch, and journalism school is no panacea for those wanting to break in.

THE PROFESSIONAL

Torin Douglas

BBC Media Correspondent

After university, I applied for all the newspaper graduate training schemes and failed to get on any of them, so I applied for jobs as a trainee journalist. There weren't any post-graduate journalism courses in the 70s - or at least as far

'They cover a wide range of subjects, many nothing to do with journalism. Many are still quite dismissive'

as I knew - but I'm not sure I'd have wanted to start another course so soon.

In those days, the traditional way of starting in journalism was on local papers under a formal training scheme, which taught you shorthand, law, court reporting and so on. But there was a boom in trade or business papers at that time, and many of today's journalists have come up that route. Not all maintain their specialism when they move on, but many do - the media, education, health and business correspondents are often plucked from the trade press.

These days there are lots of courses and some of them, such as City University and Cardiff, are very good and most people get good jobs afterwards. They give a proper training and have close contacts with media organisations that will provide work experience placements.

But you do have to be careful about media courses. They cover a wide range of subjects - many nothing to do with journalism or broadcasting - and there's a wide range of standards. Many people in journalism are still quite dismissive of them.

Broadcasting Medium

Ling Low talks to Torin Douglas about headlines, deadlines and how to be a Scottish housewife

In the last week alone, three stories about the media have made national headlines. The row over Celebrity Big Brother, which ended up almost obscuring Gordon Brown's diplomatic trip to India, was the most sensational, but there was also the release of the BBC's license fee settlement and the newly available minutes of a BBC meeting that took place in the Hutton Report aftermath. We may take our national institution for granted, but its relationship with the government over recent years has left it in an ambiguous situation, its importance only remembered when it starts to make its own headlines.

Torin Douglas is the BBC Media Correspondent. It took me a moment to get my head round this job title, and once I had, the idea of reporting on the BBC as a BBC reporter still seemed irresistibly strange. I imagined a *Being John Malkovich* scenario. However, according to Douglas, "It's not as hard as people seem to think. You have to treat it the same way you would any other organisation." Moreover, he loves his job. "The BBC makes headlines like no other organisation apart from the Government. Everyone pays for it, everyone has a view on it and it deals with issues everyone is fascinated by. It's also a huge business and employer,

with lots of competitors. It means there is always a potential story."

After reading History at Warwick and editing the student newspaper there, Douglas started out as a trainee at *The Weekly News*, a DC Thomson publication "full of entertainment stories and features." There, he wrote a Consumer Column - under the pseudonym of Anne Muir. "The

'His father had tried to dissuade him from journalism and urged him to get a "proper job" after university'

name was meant to sound like a thrifty Scottish housewife who'd know how to look after the pennies", he explains, recalling how he would have to test out cheap suits and write up his conclusions in the third-person. Little wonder, perhaps, that his father tried to dissuade him from journalism, urging him to get "a proper job".

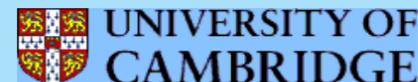
Douglas is now, of course, an established journalist. He has only just stopped writing his weekly column for *Marketing Week*,



which ran for nearly thirty years. "It's recently been decided that no BBC correspondent or presenter should write a column for any publication other than the BBC's own," he explains. "I don't agree with the decision but obviously I have to accept it." After all, he probably knows the reasons better than anyone else. Douglas tells me that relations between the BBC and the government are now better, and that "it's got a six-year licence fee settlement which, while less than the BBC asked for, still gives it a secure income".

He explains the problem of the rise of the internet for the BBC. "It has huge power and is unleashing so-called 'citizen journalism' where people can send in their own reports and pictures - or even bypass the major media altogether. That's why the BBC and all other media organisations are grappling with how best to deal with the future. It's exciting and scary at the same time." So it seems that we will see the media making its own headlines more in future. We have already seen the government engaged in a bitter battle against a broadcaster and now, rapid technological change is entrenching the media further into our lives. As Media Correspondent amid all this, Torin Douglas not only has "a proper job", he has an important one.

Careers Service event



Barristers' Event

Thursday 1 February 1.30 – 4.30 pm

Faculty of Law, Sidgwick Site, Cambridge CB3 9DZ

This new 'Bar only' Event is open to all undergraduates, graduates and alumni of the University. Come and meet the participating Chambers and a representative from The Inns of Court

11 King's Bench Walk 4 Pump Court 9 Gough Square
Blackstone Chambers Essex Court Chambers
Falcon Chambers Four New Square Littleton Chambers
Maitland Chambers One Essex Court Wilberforce Chambers
XXIV Old Buildings WPP



New Blood



Moya Sarnier holds the mirror up to the feast of fresh new writing in Cambridge theatre

Every good story should have a beginning, a middle, and an ending - so the saying goes - but what about the story of the story? What are the beginnings, middles, and endings of play-writing? There's only one way to find out: ask a playwright. With ten pieces of new writing to be staged this term, including seven at the prominent ADC theatre, it is an excruciatingly exciting time for original drama in Cambridge, and there are plenty of writers about. So I asked them.

Let's begin at the beginning, which for Nadia Kamil and Luke Roberts was actually an ending, as the death of their relationship led to the birth of a new play. Their attempted evasion produced an acclaimed creation, with efforts to avoid discussing their breakup forming the foundation of the Edinburgh Fringe hit *Staggered Spaces*. The couple drew inspiration directly from experience: "Is this, just us?" they found themselves asking, "Do we need to think of character names?.. No." Conversely, the ideas for the Footlights Spring Review *Intercontinental* originated entirely from the collective imagination of Laura Kell and Alex Nash, whose sketches arose from chats together and improvisation. Improvising was key too for Cambridge graduates James Topham and David Walter Hall:

as part of Close Knit Productions' inaugural New Writers' Project, eight actors and original director Jeff James devised several scenes over the course of three workshops, which provided these writers with inspiration for *Violent Acts*. Whether characters' conversations were consciously transcribed from a dictaphone, or their reactions unconsciously internalised by the writers, the performers played a major role in triggering the writing process, as Hall relates: "We used the actors as our muses, our canvas, as something to make our ideas concrete. We were inspired by our actors as you might be inspired by life, by your friends". Freshers Mike Kielty and George Reynolds took words and not people as a starting point for *The Queen Is Dead*, as six nouns, adjectives and verbs helped "get some creative ideas going". For Tom Sharpe however, it's quite simple; "I just feel like it and then do it". But beware - "sometimes you just make a mess."

And, *gee whizz*, does Sharpe dislike mess: "If you're 'oh, I've had such a shit day, I will vomit it onto the screen', don't be like 'check this out', because nobody cares. If it's unadulterated, pure vom, nobody wants to see it."

So now to middles, and the writing process proper, in the forms of catharsis as writing for the self; communica-

tion as writing for the other; and collaboration as writing with others. The other interviewees, though somewhat less vehement, agree that cathartic writing is a different kettle of fish. Hall believes "good writing comes from an intention to create something that is dramatic for its own sake", and

'I can't plan. I'm very bad at planning. I think it's good to plan, I'm just not very good at it' (Tom Sharpe)

Sharpe concurs. Very much an art-for-art's-sake man, the latter considers it "wanky and penile" to use creation as a means to an end, as an escape. "Even if you feel so sad and tortured you have to write otherwise you'll die... just don't say it, because you sound like a dick." Quite. Perhaps the lady doth protest too much?

Theatre for its own sake then, but also for the sake of an audience. According to these writers, particularly Kielty, the existence of a public is more vital to the theatrical art than to other literary media - and this is

particularly so for *Staggered Spaces*. Though many may find this play self-indulgent, Kamil believes it is a very audience-directed, audience-dependent show; when dialogue is addressed to the spectators, they become complicit in the couple's actions, like a collective confidante, the third point in a theatrical love triangle. The concept of communicating

wrote scenes independently then worked on them together, such that the script is now fairly indivisible - nonetheless not entirely: "I had my best ideas whenever you got up to go to the toilet" (Hall, to Topham).

From going to the toilet to getting panned, to endings and audience reaction. Are these writers worried how their work will be received? Sharpe

'Often my sketches just come out a bit of a jumble, then Laura tells me that they're rubbish, helps me work on them and makes them better. If I say something that isn't funny, Laura says 'ha ha ha', doesn't say anything else and then doesn't write anything down; there's a bit of an awkward pause and we both don't mention it... the end of the line just disappears...' (Alex Nash)

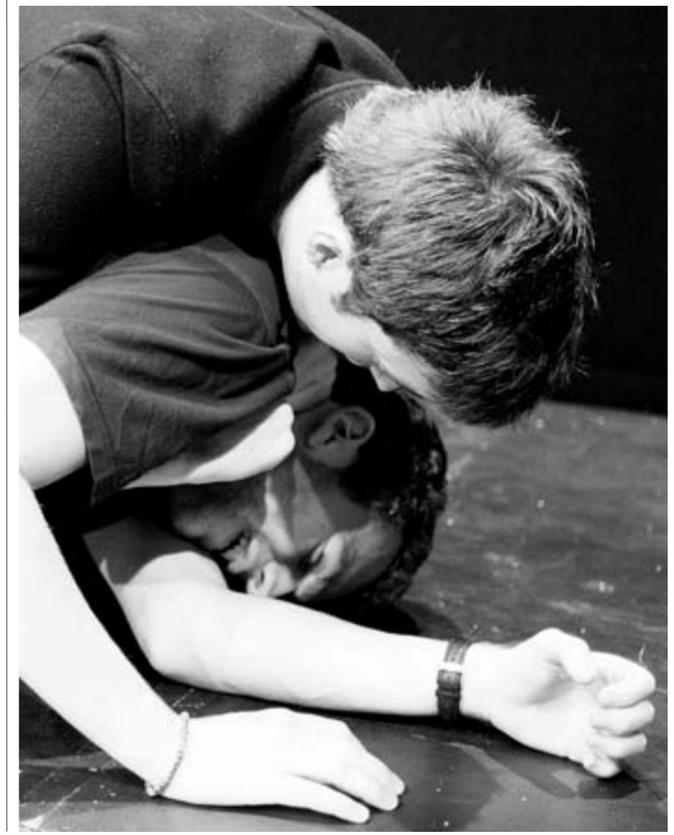
with the public had a significant influence on the re-writing of Sharpe's play too, for when recently adapting *Hang on Mr Bugson* from a script originally written at school, he found he had become "much more aware of how cynical people are, and how hard to please people are, how many things can offend/seem corny/seem pretentious for basically everyone who goes to the theatre because oh they're so clever." The existence of a public means he has to harness his writing to try and make it more accessible, less elusive, "just by literally putting in lines that explain even if they don't sound that nice." He needs to think about the audience, he tells me, or they would not understand the play: "otherwise it would just be like, what?"

So one must always write with the audience in mind, but how to get right into the mind of the audience? How to tell what work will work? Collaborative writing. Henry Eliot (winner of last year's Harry Porter Prize, this year's organizer) explains that creating comedy with others "stops it becoming one-minded in a way that might exclude people". But he also recognises that "there's a great luxury when you're writing on your own in that you can just do whatever you want", and Sharpe agrees. "My method has to change if I'm working with other people because other people need to have a structure. When I'm on my own, I literally just write." Whilst Eliot appreciates this structure, he finds sacrificing his ideas frustrating, though this does nothing to diminish the co-writing high: "it's so exciting when you're throwing ideas around and you have an idea and someone makes it better and then you make it better again and then it just all lifts off". Kamil and Roberts emit the same buzz about teamwork, though they didn't so much invent their script as live it, since "a lot of the writing was actually just us having a conversation and thinking that was quite funny, then putting it down". Such intimacy is, unsurprisingly, not shared by Hall and Topham, who

isn't: "I much prefer criticism to praise, it's so much easier to take. When people praise a particularly good thing that's just to make you feel better. I find in-depth criticism of my writing very satisfying because it means they've thought about it, whereas praise is so empty". What a contrast to Roberts who, he confesses, "will take criticism from very few people without getting shirty about it". I'm betting that *Varsity* critics are not amongst those precious few... as for Sharpe, well, whatever you do, don't mention the reviews: "To be honest,

reviews can fuck off. They're so pointless. I don't really care what people think in a review... Just watch the play. I dunno, that's quite aggressive". No kidding. Reynolds and Kielty seem more intimidated, asking "What's the worst thing that could happen? Someone writes a bad review about us in *Varsity*, we never write in Cambridge again?". Not quite. These two share Sharpe's craving for constructive criticism, seeing feedback as a critical end to the creative process, Reynolds explaining, "Being a novice I couldn't do it without that kind of input. I'm sure when *The Queen is Dead* hits Broadway, I'll be a bit more controlling, but at the moment when I don't have anything under my belt, I really feel I couldn't do without that." Maybe reviews aren't such a waste of space after all.

One new term, two new *Varsity* theatre editors, lots of new writing. And it's about time too: "The new writing scene in Cambridge has been below standard in terms of quantity", Topham asserts. "It hasn't been supported enough until now; the old management at the ADC would not put on new writing as a mainshow." In terms of quality "it lacked ambition," Hall criticizes, "it was aiming too low." The solution? "Why don't you write a play about something you seriously care about, something that matters to you and moves you, because that might be something people want to see. I think that it's having the attitude of, well, the people that write plays are just people like anyone else." So why not? Follow the wise words of Nadia Kamil (and Nike), and "Just sit down and do it, just write, just write, all the time, just do it."



Left: conflict on the ADC stage in *Violent Acts*
Photos: Carl Fletcher

BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS

Intercontinental

Who: Laura Kell and Alex Nash

When: Feb 27th - Mar 3rd, ADC Theatre, 7.45pm

What: "You're a world-dweller, we all are... let's all join hands and experience the joys that can be squeezed from going *INTERCONTINENTAL*." This year's Footlights's Spring Review gets exotic...

Hang on Mr Bugson

Who: Tom Sharpe, current Footlights President

When: Feb 13th - 17th, ADC Theatre, 7.45pm

What: "Mr Bugson's favourite nut is a doughnut!" find a glut of graphics at www.hangonmrbugson.co.uk

Staggered Spaces

Who: Nadia Kamil and Luke Roberts

When: Feb 21st - 24th, ADC Theatre, 11pm

What: "If you're given lemons, you make lemonade. With the lemons. And sugar and water. How much sugar? Quite a lot. Could we do a little recipe for lemonade?"

The Queen is Dead

Who: Mike Kielty and George Reynolds

When: Mar 6th - 10th, Corpus Playroom, 9.30pm

What: "Meetings, attractions and betrayals on a day just a little less ordinary." Two first years take inspiration from a handful of words for dramatic ends.

Violent Acts

Who: James Topham and David Walter Hall

When: Jan 30th - Feb 3rd, ADC Theatre, 7.45pm

What: "8 people. 1 day. Things fall apart." Close Knit Productions bring their latest offer to late-night stage of the ADC Theatre. Expect simmering tension and a little brutality...

ARTS

D.B.C. Pierre

Tess Riley catches up with the Man Booker prize-winning 'bad boy' of literature to talk ducks, Mexico and Sean Paul

I first contacted D.B.C Pierre in 2005 while organising speakers for The Shirley Society. My list of contactees included the 'turn up to the opening of an envelope' celebs to the A-list, who I never expected to reply anyway. D.B.C certainly fell into the latter. Over the following fortnight, emails flooded into my inbox, including "Lord Archer is too busy at the moment but sends his regards". Spiffing. Amidst all these arrived an email from a recipient simply called 'Pierre' (none of your Lords and Ladies here):

"Tess, Thanks for your invitation - I'd be chuffed to come up, though I don't know what I would talk about."

Here was the Man Booker Prize winner, renowned for his outstanding (and outstandingly shocking) debut novel, *Vernon God Little*, now writing his eagerly-anticipated second novel, *Ludmila's Broken English*, and he didn't know what he would talk about? Self-effacing? Yes. Self-doubting? Perhaps: "Seriously, I'm sure you'll think of something... If all goes tits up, there's a lot of free wine."

A plan was hatched and we were to be in touch in the New Year to arrange a date. This is where it all fell apart. D.B.C Pierre, born in Australia, brought up in Mexico, now lives in Ireland so visiting Cambridge would have to tie in with a trip to London. The next email arrived: "Looking forward to meeting you and to that wine you mentioned. I'm over late March - when suits you around then?"

Optimistic I might be, but there's no point arranging a talk in the middle of the holidays. "Can we try a bit earlier?" I timidly replied but, no, after a tour to promote the book, Pierre was off to spend some time in Latin America and that, it seemed, was that.

Or so I thought. An apologetic email promised he would "make it up to me" and a few months later I found myself sending out a similar email barrage, now as *Varsity* Interviews Editor, including one to Pierre: "Tell me to leave you alone forever and I will. However, if you'd be up for a short interview, you'll be the star of Cambridge for the week and that's great publicity (?) Hope Christmas was great. I went and fed ducks; always exciting."

The reply came the next day. "Still feel rubbish for letting you down. Let's do that interview. I ate duck if that counts?"

Next hurdle: what do I ask the man described by the god of all knowledge - Wikipedia - as someone who spent "nine years in a drug-induced haze" and "was involved in illegal and unprofitable schemes"? Starting by asking about his choice of pen-name 'Dirty but Clean' seemed a tad feeble.

I begin with a simple inquiry about his current writing: "Listen, I'm on fire with it as we speak. This one's been brewing a while now - very decadent novel about sexual excess and the tragedy of love - or how exquisitely meagre love can appear next to



Down the pan: Man Booker Prize winner D.B.C. Pierre taking a toilet break from being modern literature's most talked-about writer, thanks in no small part to all those Wikipedia articles on his years living "in a drug-induced haze"

the vast excesses of the mind."

Suddenly I see beyond the scandalous Wikipedia-type articles which present D.B.C as some crazed bad-boy come good. I see a passionate writer who cares deeply about art, music and watching the world go by. From there, the interview takes off. Today he is "having a strange Ian Dury phase, interspersed with Rachmaninov and Sean Paul. Not reading at all just now, though the possibility of it fills me with spirit."

Apparently he read no fiction at all last year, "apart from world news." The latest Man Booker winner, Kiran Desai's book "sounds a beauty though" and he's added it to his ever-growing reading list. At the moment, however, his head is "too full of fiction to make much space for any more." Our book conversations continue, "I have absolutely no idea where anything fits in terms of literary trends. I still find Machiavelli contemporary. Is that alright?" Again, that apologetic self-doubt reappears through the confident exterior.

Pierre prefers to consider himself Mexican, but how do concepts of belonging and nationality affect his writing? "Geographical upbringing colours the fabric of who you are. Some were taken aboard with the lurid volume and speed of *Vernon* - I came to wonder if it wasn't actually a Latin American novel originated in English. Its human speed seemed quite natural to me."

Speed equates with a Mexican way of life? "Basically, yes. Many of the things people find implausible or overdone in my work, I find perfectly realistic. That sounds bloody Mexican. Hot pink and green and excessive." The balance between reality and fantasy arises again when I ask him what he would be doing if he wasn't an author. "A good answer lies somewhere in the space between what I'd like to be doing and what I could be doing. I'd like to be composing and conducting vast symphonies that rip the hearts out of audience's chests. But, I can't play an instrument, so I should just be content with staying out of jail."

He is succeeding admirably; his new year's resolution is to "write 'til I weep. Or rather, write 'til you weep", he is living up a mountain - being "dragged up and down by the dog suffices for sport" - and he has cleared his debts, bar one minor creditor who he's yet to "track down". What's more, a stage-play of *Vernon* is coming to The Young Vic in April, adapted by Tanya Ronder and directed by Rufus Norris, "meaning it should be hot, though I've no idea what they're up to".

By this point, we're almost out of time. "Listen, don't let things get on top of you, that's where mistakes are made. One thing that might be neglected in the current top end of academia is your emotional life, which, in the end, is what will save or sink you. Go and taste the edges, the assignment will wait."

Bloc Party A Weekend In The City

★★★



When asked whether they planned to stick to the agit-rock template of 2005's *Silent Alarm*, Kele Okereke said that "post-punk would not be a noose around our necks" - it sounded worryingly like a slide into 'maturity', to the perfect soundtrack for U2 fan's circle-jerks. Visualise the backlash: from indie rock's great new hopes to scenerster punchbags.

Thankfully, it's not that bad. For one, *A Weekend In The City's* themes go far beyond the abstract soundbites of its predecessor. It is, in fact, almost a concept album, mining J.G. Ballard icy dystopias and Brett-Easton-

Ellis' icy prose for a distressed dissection of metropolitan life, dealing with themes from terrorism, ethnicity and drug abuse to homosexuality and youth culture, all united by a glum take on modernity and the city-as-dangerous. And not in the Strokes/Doherty 'Whoops I fell mournfully onto a pile of gak' sense of the term.

Nevertheless, opener 'Song for Clay', is hardly convincing. Its compressed squall and rather obvious snipes at the banality of everyday hedonism - "Bubbles rise in champagne flutes/But when we kiss I feel nothing" a little trite, a little affected,

Okereke's thicker narrative not leaving the pregnant pauses that made 'Like Eating Glass' so effortlessly moving. He could be breathlessly voicing the laments of a mildly disaffected Cambridge sloane as opposed to the complex of complicity and-subjugation in the alienated.

And if Okereke said he didn't want to hang by the post-punk noose, then 'Hunting for Witches' and 'Waiting for the 7:18' are the equivalents of walking into the Iraqi High Court in full Baath uniform, casually swinging a rope. The resort to reverb-soaked upper register and synths brings to

mind the painfully average drone of Editors.

It's not all generic. The second half is richer and slower, bringing some genuinely affecting moments, even if the initial impression is of half a dozen covers of 'So Here We Are'. The glitchy overdubbed sampling and orchestral swell of 'Where is Home' sees Okereke's lyrical ambitions pay off - fleshing out, without bombast, a resigned rumination on second-generation immigrants seeking identity.

Unfortunately, this is a stilted album - musical developments shortchange lyrical ambition. And one can't help coming back to its opening lines- the clunky grandiosity of "I am trying to be heroic/in an age of modernity", a summary of the imperfect panorama to come. Neither cut n'paste impressionist lyrics, nor Closer-era Joy Division synths can bear the weight of Okereke's theory of pessimism - his attempt to replicate a thousand cries for help against dependence, despair and alienation. Interesting, ambitious, but ultimately flawed.

Was Yaqoob



Liz Bradshaw and Richard Braude

FFWD →
Get Cape. Wear Cape. Fly. The Junction, Mon 29th Jan, £9 Essex boy Sam Duckworth brings own brand of post-teen angst to the Junction, for wailing along the lines of "If this is the war of the worlds, then I don't wanna be a paaart". Uncertain whether this is a comment on contemporary Middle Eastern conflicts or the particularly awful Tom Cruise film, but either way he surprisingly pulls it off. In fact his meditations on 'Our Times' are strangely beguiling, and dare I say it, often quite beautiful. Should be awful. But isn't.

Jazz at Johns Fisher Building, Fri 29th Jan, £4 Arrive early for this one; though the doors open at 9pm, the queue often starts a fair bit earlier, and once it's full, there's not much chance of getting in. That said, it's the cosy atmosphere which makes these nights so appealing. Swing singer Torben Rees followed by Elm Tree regulars the Andy Bowie Quartet provide their usual fix of blue note inspired bop while you sit on the floor and drink ambiguously mixed cocktails. Good spot for a romantic tête a tête or even a flaming row; either way, the music will make it all sound like the movies.

← **RWD**
Pulse presents *Le Cabaret du Néant*, Peterhouse Theatre, Sat 20th Jan. While the curved pews still kept me in my seat staring ahead, the theatrical campness of the maestro and composer Rob Fokkens brought you into the music alertly. Amongst Weill creepings were Chansons, lieder and schläger as well as Fokkens' own pieces followed by a challenging set of pieces which produced the killer line of the evening, "I saw Alexander Balanescu in Safeways / He was standing by the organic broccoli" repeated many times until Safeways became an erotic haunting sylph of a sound.

Shut Up and Dance! Presents Fingathing @ The Soul Tree Tue 23rd Jan. Following on from its success as a Friday night staple at the Union, S.U.A.D inaugurated its new Tuesday slot with a DJ set from renowned turntablist Peter Barker, one half of hip-hop duo Fingathing. Delivered on its promises: good atmosphere, cheap drinks and, of course, great music to dance to. A welcome addition to the weekly line-up.

Interview with John Cale

This Sunday, the Junction's characterless stage will be graced by a man who should probably be classed a musical legend. A founding member of the Velvet Underground, producer of Patti Smith's seminal debut *Horses* and the man who signed The Modern Lovers, John Cale has been making music since his youth.

When I ask him about his forthcoming date at the Junction, his gruff, slightly unsettling transatlantic Welsh twang brightens. "Performing is where I get most satisfaction," he says, the crack of his voice doubled by the crackling telephone, "I'd much rather go on tour than make another record."

Having said that, Cale does have a record coming out on February 19th - though admittedly, *Circus Live* is a double album of live material, so perhaps we can forgive the inconsistency. He is, perhaps, not the most gregarious of performers, but he carries an aura, one saturated with a life lived in and out of rock'n'roll's fast lane.

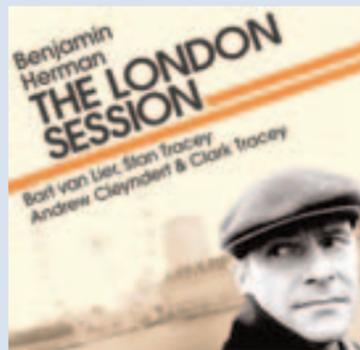
Always keen to experiment, Cale, in recent years "been coming back to rock'n'roll." On Sunday, fans can expect "new material and different arrangements of what they've heard" and maybe "not so much improvisation as they've heard on the record." Cale, a man whose extraordinary droned violas elevated early Velvets recordings from enjoyable to sublime, seems surprisingly keen to return to a more populist sound- perhaps a response to the growth in interest he and other rock veterans have experienced thanks to the retroisation of cool in youth culture. Either way, Cale is enjoying himself: "The wonderful thing about rock'n'roll is that it doesn't require an explanation."

The gig has not sold out; Cale's star still shines far below the stratospheres that Velvets contemporary Lou Reed occupies. But, if you want something a little different - a taste of one of alternative music's most steadfast performers, "Get the hell down there watching".

Lowri Jenkins

Benjamin Herman The London Session

★★★★



I'm a frequent exponent of music from the North, both national and continentally. Bands from Sheffield, Leeds, Liverpool etc are often superior to their southern counterparts and Scandinavian and Lowlands rock 'n' roll have taken the lead over the mediterranean climes. It hasn't always been like this, and somehow I equate the south of England's paucity with that of southern Europe's - once upon a time Italian-made scooters buzzed around Brighton and London, when things like turkish kebabs and olive oil were still something of an exotic treat. Not that I can see pickled herring becoming the number one desire of today's foodies.

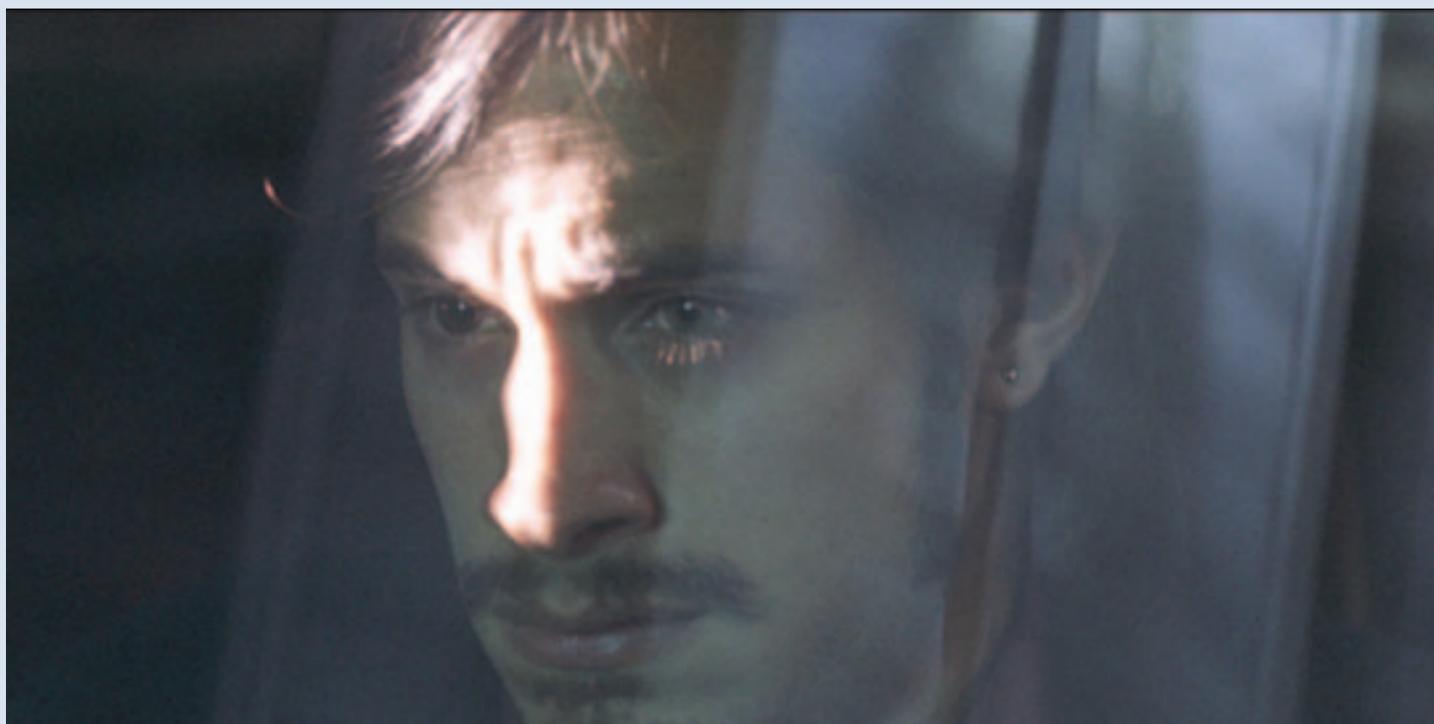
Anyway, imagine my joy when I heard this wonderful get together of Dutch saxophonist Herman and vivacious trombonist van Lier, alongside the trio of Stan Tracey, the elderly statesman of British jazz. Tracey's piano hands were honed through decades of playing at Ronnie Scott's, for many years London's premiere jazz venue, and here, aged though he may be, he sounds just as young as the energetic Dutchmen. Recorded on a rainy Wednesday afternoon, the obvious treat is the first track, 'Psychoville', a snappy piece of Latin bop composition if ever I heard one. The Mod album art fits in with the warmth and playfulness of the horns, sliding you into the chic world of 60s Italy. But its also cosmopolitan - 'Psychoville' could be Rotterdam or anywhere, London or Rome - hey, maybe the south isn't that bad after all. In these cold months perhaps we need to be more like Benjamin Herman, and look to Italy and Latin America for some musical warmth amid the wet and the wind.

Dickie Byron

Babel

Dir: Alejandro González Iñárritu

★★★★★



Babel is the tale of the tragedy that occurs when people fail to listen to each other. Directed by Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, the film stars Brad Pitt, Cate Blanchett, and a host of talented newcomers, among them Rinko Kikuchi, who plays a Japanese deaf-mute teenager named Chieko.

Babel is a masterpiece of four intersecting narratives that, while weaving across political borders and divergent cultures, refuses to crudely flatten difference. We see American tourists Richard and Susan Jones, whose vacation in Morocco turns disastrous

when Susan is accidentally shot; two Moroccan boys who herd their father's goats; the Jones' children, who are taken by their nanny on an impromptu trip to Mexico for a wedding; and Chieko, lonely and looking for love in the florescent metropolis of Tokyo, who sees Susan Jones's picture on television.

The film's title is drawn from the biblical tale in which God punished men for building a tower to heaven by forcing each man to speak in a different tongue. As such, *Babel* seeks to illustrate the difference between

'Babel seeks to illustrate the difference between hearing and listening...the characters cannot truly listen to one another'

hearing and listening, and demonstrates this point through the protagonists' relationships. Each one is trou-

bled because the characters cannot truly listen to one other – while they hear words they do not understand what people say, divided by accidents of history, of culture and language. Chieko reproaches her father for this fault, and the Jones's marriage also suffers from that problem. Then, after Susan's accident, Richard's attempt to obtain help is hampered by his sister's inability to take down the information he provides her over the telephone because she is too upset by news of the shooting. And the fate of the impoverished Moroccan goat herders is sealed when the police too easily dismiss the explanations one of the two offers in the other's defence.

In addition to raw emotional intensity, *Babel* excels in providing the audience with a strong sense of local colour. In the style of a National Geographic film, it juxtaposes the bleak wastes of the stony North African desert and family members eating couscous with their fingers from the same bowl with American tourists who astound their local hosts by requesting diet coke and low-fat meals, and clean their hands with bottled sanitiser.

Babel's ending is at once distressing and humble— perfect for so epic a film. Owing to its ability to dramatize the basic fabric of human communication, it has been accorded the Golden Globes's prize for best drama and is nominated for five Academy Awards. *Babel's* merits have been recognized by many; you will likely appreciate it too.

Catherine Bosley

Elemental ADC

★★★

Elemental, this year's offering from the CU Contemporary Dance Workshop, promised so much that it was almost bound to fail. The professionalism of last year's *Touch* was a harsh barometer for comparison. Although there were some exceptional individual performances and a smattering of stimulating choreography, the presiding impression was one of ill-chosen pieces.

A weak opening initiated this feeling with four dancers in drab costumes. Each represented one of the elements and had the potential to summon our attention in the contradistinction of movements. Thankfully, as we entered the 'fire' section, the theme took on definition with Vaughan-Alicia Watts's piece, 'Fire from Water'. Other choreographers in this section failed to embody their chosen element, with the exception of Jennifer Hersh's flamenco solo where passion penetrated every gesture.

Samsui Water Women (chor: Josephine Chang) opened the 'water' section displaying intuitive choreography, and every step appeared laced

with a deeper significance: the use of the dancers' own clothes to drag their bodies working particularly well to articulate their painful toil. Unfortunately, the piece that followed, 'Spray' (chor: TrubL Roc), appeared awkward in comparison, with unflattering costumes noticeably affecting the dancer's confidence.

The second half presented choreographers with a clearer command of their subject, with Sinead Boughey's piece 'Just Happen' outstanding for its intelligent rendering of chaos theory – the illusion of sporadic interaction aided strongly by superb lighting.

Most original of the evening was the penultimate piece 'Sides to a Girl'. Choreographed by Netta Shamir, dancers explored aspects of femininity, and how these correlate with the elements. If the show were to leave a better lasting impression the performance would have ended here, but an attempt at a variety-style finale brought *Elemental* full circle.

Sarah Wilkinson

Jamie T Panic Prevention

★★★★★



Describing Jamie T to someone who's never heard him is like feeling an elephant in the dark. His music has a variety of texture and moods which beguiles the average listener. So let's get all the obvious comparisons out of the way. He's a mate of Lily Allen's, he's had a big MySpace following, and he belongs to The Streets' genre of musical dirty real-

ism, complete with London accent. Unlike Mike Skinner's downtrodden style of vocals, however, Jamie T's voice is muscular and passionate. His quick-fire rhyming lyrics hold musical conviction. After a few listens, tunes you didn't know were there get stuck in your head like the catchiest of pop songs and the underlying melodies of the album unfold to you. The varying texture of beats, electronic mash-ups, and acoustic bass guitar gives it a rare freshness.

There is no representative track. From the almost operatically emotional "Salvador", we move onto the drunken lullaby tones of "Calm Down Dearest" and later to the downright chirpy "If You Got The Money". Underpinning all the tracks, however, is a combination of cheekiness and tenderness that makes listening to this debut album nothing less than a treat.

Ling Low

Nature in Art and Science

Thomas Endlein

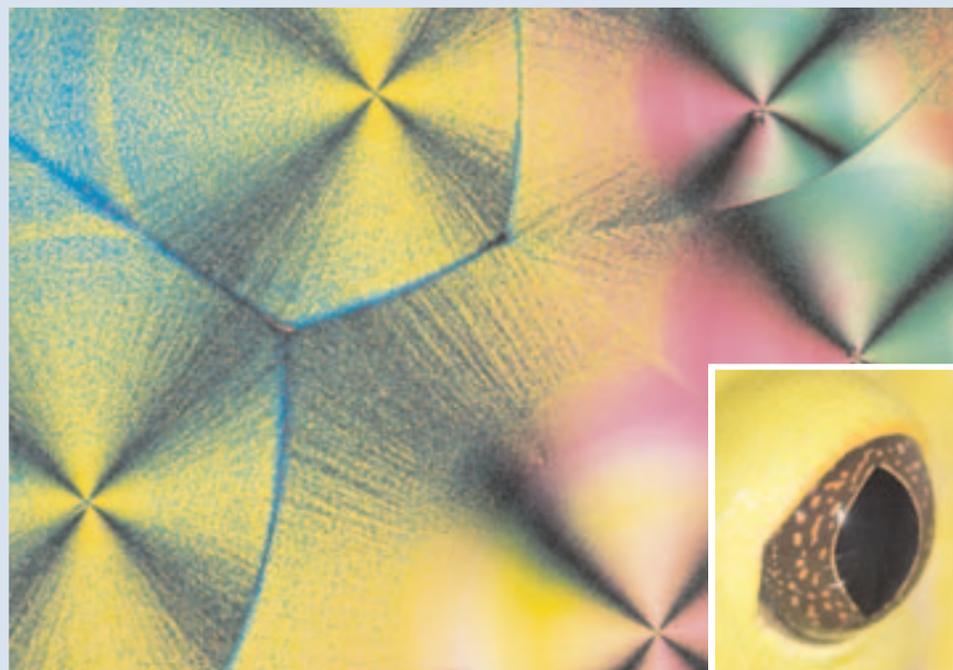
Thomas Endlein has an eye for the finer things in life. His photographs, predominantly of plants and animals, reveal a wealth of minute detail. The intimacy he displays with the intricacies of his subjects, whether in the field or in the lab, is

'In his fifteen years as a photographer, he has climbed trees, hunkered down mud and dirt and waited a very, very long time for that ideal shot'

undoubtedly fostered by his work in zoology, but Endlein's pictures stand independent of the day-job. He captures ferns delicately unfolding their fronds, gem-bright tree frogs as they peer winningly around leaf-edges, the insect life held inside a curled up leaf. The evident sympathy between artist and his subjects has led to a number of awards; Endlein has gained repeated recognition from the prestigious BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year award,

organised by the Natural History Museum and the BBC, and the European Nature Photographer of the Year award. It's been a labour of love: in the 15 years since he began taking photographs he has climbed trees, hunkered down in mud and dirt, and often waited a very, very long time for that ideal shot. Endlein, it is clear, is a very patient man.

Whilst many of Endlein's nature photographs document observations made in countries as diverse as Borneo, Namibia, Trinidad and Sweden, some of his most interesting and sensitive pieces were taken at home in Germany. His studies of small white marsh flowers respond beautifully to the multiple reflections and shadows cast by light on water. Daddy long-legs are caught weaving a delicate ballet in the corner of his kitchen, bats cluster together in an abandoned house, frogs clasp each other lovingly surrounded by their blossoming spawn. It is especially interesting to see the parallels between his wildlife images and those from the laboratory, the stunning kaleidoscopic patterns created by crystals at times echoing his photographs of butterfly wings. These diverse images stand in testament to Endlein's belief that "the world



becomes more interesting the closer you look." His work inspires and demands attention. He also hopes, in his more optimistic moments, that his representations of nature will help promote greater care for it. In light of the increasing awareness of green issues, and with nature photography awards instituting

categories focused on the damage done to wildlife, this is perhaps not so far-fetched a hope. At the very least, a visit to Endlein's website (www.endlein.org) offers a perspective on the world which differs from the daily, and a reminder that beauty is often in the detail.

Catherine Spencer

JPMorgan 

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GUIDED TOUR.
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PICK OF THE WEEK

FILM

The Last King of Scotland
Arts Picturehouse
Your last chance to see Forest Whitaker's mesmerising performance as brutal Ugandan dictator Idi Amin, lurching from cheerful charm offensives to sickening brutality without caricature, completely overshadowing his young Scottish doctor, Nicholas Garrigan (James McAvoy). And because its in the safe pillock-haven of the Picturehouse, you can discuss post-coloniality and the construction of national identities without receiving the punches you so sorely deserve.

All films showing at Arts Picturehouse unless stated otherwise.. Also not all films being shown are listed.

THEATRE

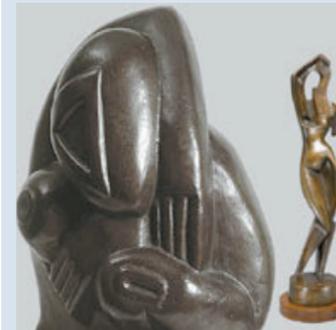


Violent Acts
ADC, Tue 30 Jan - Sat 3 Feb
An innovative and powerful work dissecting the role of violence in the everyday. And we love that shit! etc. Decidedly *not* contemporary dance.

MUSIC

Thee Education Not For Sale Rock and Roll Rumble
Saturday, January 27, King's Cellars, 20.00, £2 donation,
The Sigma, Dickie Byron and the Creatures provide you with an opportunity to hear students do rock with (hopefully) more aplomb and intelligence than lamppost-legged dickwits like the Horrors. You can even drink beer at the same time as listening to punk licks, slowly and painfully reconstructing your masculinity after a week spent reading about 16th C humanism or myths about snakes fighting pythons or whatever the hell. Jesus

OTHER



Henri-Gaudier Brezska Kettle's Yard, Sat 20 Jan - 18 Mar. Come on, its still amazing and in comparison the Fitz about as vital and dynamic as a walking death. this is pretty much just typing now

GOING OUT



Duplo Kamar, Thursday Feb 1st 22.00-03.00, £2/3.50
Some liken the Kamar to a festering wound. WRONG. It is more like a pleasurable rash you keep sending thank you cards to, but stop short of marrying. Cheap drinks, rock-electro-rave, Nice Up DJs, in a word; hope

FR 26

Mystic River (Caius) 20.30
Black Book 17.30, 20.30
Future Shorts 23.10
The Last King of Scotland 16.30, 21.00
Infamous 16.00, 18.30
Volver 23.20

The New Magic Show ADC, 23.00, Fun for all the family as Simon Evans (Close-Up Magician of the Year) pulls his balls out in front of an audience, without being prosecuted. hur

Thee Education Not For Sale Rock and Roll Rumble
The Sigma, Dickie Byron & The Creatures, King's Cellars, 20.00, £2 donation
Nerina Pallot Junction, 19.00, £12 classy Joni-esque folk

Science Film Festival - Wildlife at Risk; Graduate Union, 18.00
Three films lasting 117 minutes featuring animals and nature and bears wearing tuxedos and that

Nice UpDJs with Shut Up And Dance! Union, 21.00-01.00, £3
They are following you everywhere, like contemptuous stalkers

SAT 27

Black Book 17.30, 20.30
Don't Come Knocking 23.10
The Last King of Scotland 16.30, 21.00
Infamous 16.00, 18.30

Violent Acts ADC, 19.45
Will Houston talks about his Coriolanus English Fac, 19.00 - Will Houston discusss his forthcoming RSC production. Obligatory for floaties

Teenage Kicks Corn Exchange, 18.30, £7 - Cambridge's unsigned (reason)
The Hedrons The Loft @ The Graduate, 20.00, £5.50 scuzzy indie punk. I'd rather die, alone

Rembrandt & Saskia
Fitzwilliam Museum - Collection of the great painter's prints, primarily focusing on his wife. But doesn't the Fitz make your eyes roll back into your head? A little

King's Affair Launch Party King's College Bar, 20.00-01.00, FREE
DnB headliners The Force, Indie band The 45s, Project 96, Nice Up DJs,

SUN 28

Boys Don't Cry 20.00
The Last King of Scotland 16.30, 21.00
Infamous 16.00, 18.30
Black Book 17.30, 20.50
Volver (Johns) 23.20

Violent Acts ADC, 19.45
Mozart & Salieri ADC, 23.00
Pushkin's greatest tragedy - the composer Salieri is driven to despair by Mozart's talent. The man is frankly a christing mess.

John Cale Junction, 19.00, £15
Rock veteran - one of the founding members of the Velvet Underground - see our interview on page 19, He's pretty old. But that's fine. Totally fine

Holocaust Memorial Documentary 'Blind Spot'
Graduate Union, 19.30, £3
With Holocaust Memorial Day this week, SocDoc brings you this short documentary film.

Sports Superstars @The Sunday Service
Club Twenty-Two, 22.00-01.00, £3
Here's wishing you a horrific sporting injury

MON 29

Nine Queens (Catz) 20.00 - and it's FREE you cheap shits
Black Book 17.30, 20.50
Infamous 16.00, 18.30
The Last King of Scotland 16.30, 21.00

Violent Acts ADC, 19.45
Will Houston talks about his Coriolanus English Fac, 19.00 - Will Houston discusss his forthcoming RSC production. Obligatory for floaties

Get Cape Wear Cape Fly Cape Junction, SOLD OUT
Angry, urgent and like, totally sold out. Listen to the tap drip in the dark instead. Post-rock

An Introduction to Understanding Film Arts Picturehouse, every Tuesday, 18.00-20.00 Learn about film, boast, beret, pull, words

Fat Poppadaddys
Fez, 21.00 - 03.00, £4
Pleasingly generic, like a liberal democrat beatboxing

TUE 30

Black Book 15.15, 18.15
Infamous 14.20, 16.45
The Last King of Scotland 16.30, 21.15
Hiroshima Mon Amour 21.15

Violent Acts ADC, 19.45
Mozart & Salieri ADC, 23.00
Pushkin's greatest tragedy - the composer Salieri is driven to despair by Mozart's talent. The man is frankly a christing mess.

Vile Bodies, Damn Arms, RATT:AT:AGG Portland Arms, 20.00, £5
Support Cambridge students' rock n roll fight against folk

J. Norman - Compassionate Conservatism Trinity Hall, Graham Storey Room, 20.30, free
watch the Tories pretend to love hip-hop

Kinki, Ballare, 21.00-02.00, £3. 'Go Commando'. In the 'gun' way, hopefully
Precious* LGBT Night
Club 22, 22.00-02.00, £3
Ebonics Fez, 22.00-03.30, £2

WED 31

Life is Beautiful (Caius) 20.30
Black Book 14.30, 21.00
Infamous 16.00, 18.30
The Last King of Scotland 16.30, 21.00

Violent Acts ADC, 19.45
Mozart & Salieri ADC, 23.00
Pushkin's greatest tragedy - the composer Salieri is driven to despair by Mozart's talent. The man is frankly a christing mess.

Dan Sartain The Loft @ The Graduate, 21.00, £6.60. This 23 year-old Alabaman auteur is full of sneery rock and roll spunk, like what you wish Johnny Cash had *really* sounded like.

the end
.....
of the week. but you it symbolises something

Rumboogie
is killing Cambridge
21.00-02.00, £3

THU 1

Black Book 17.30, 20.50
Infamous 14.20, 19.00
The Last King of Scotland 12.00, 16.30, 21.20
Brick (Johns) 21.00
Hiroshima mon Amour 17.00

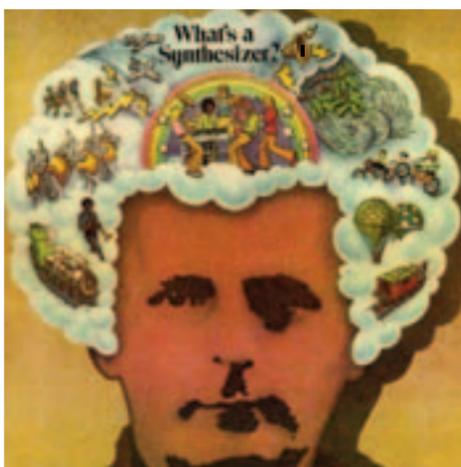
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the end
.....
of the week. but you it symbolises something

Urbanite
Club Twenty-Two, 21.00-02.30, £3
bastion of liberty

GOING OUT



TWITCH @Niche Bar
Tuesday 30th January
21.00-04.00, £1.50 pints, Shisha bar,
Free entry till 11, £3 after

COLDSHOULDER PRODUCTIONS
bring the filthiest Grime experience in Cambridge to back up their forthcoming mixtape. It will make your head pound and your glands swell somewhere.

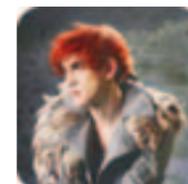
K. Honowski will be bringing will doleful Cold War minimal techno and the underground genre of the moment - dubstep. It is everywhere, it is waiting for you under the pillow. Yeah alright that's enough. Also, electro-sleaze from

Nat Slater will be playing echoey new-wave to fuck to, James Manning will be pounding minimal electro into your skull, and Moriarty will be providing breaks and grime.

Drinks are so cheap that getting so drunk that your small intestine ruptures will actually be cheaper than working for the man. There will also be a shisha bar that will let you recline peacefully and make you think about how, like, mental everything is. The American bouncer from the US Army looks like he has ill-planned regime changes coming out of every orifice as well.

BOOK NOW
Patrick Wolf
The Junction
Sun 11 Feb 19.00, £10.00

The much-vaunted 23 year old brings his wildly energetic blend of electronics and new-folk to Cambridge. Along with his faintly crap fashion sense.



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Little Girl Lost



» There is little time for bunking off in Cambridge, so make fashion your playground. Give your wardrobe an unlikely spring clean by taking a cue from those sixth form days



Opposite: jumper, £10, Portobello Road market. Skirt, £12, Topshop. Top left: dress, £40, Topshop. Above: skirt, £32, Topshop. Jumper, £30, Alfie's antiques market. Bottom left: leggings, £5, Topshop. Shorts, £18, Topshop. Modeled by Emma Draper. Styled by: Bea Wilford, Iona Carter and Lauren Smith



RIP WHAT YOU SEW

Benj Ohad-Seidler On Mixed Messages

In a season riddled by mixed messages and different aesthetics, next spring's key look has somehow managed to emerge as a mix of everything and anything. There are some rules by which a plethora of designers abided, most notably in their use of metallic textiles, but where formally a consensus could be construed, the sociological message is confused at best. The principal dilemma was deciding whether one was a futurist or a new romantic. Some shows made for a clear manifesto (Balenciaga for the former and YSL the latter, for instance). Others created a hit with their mix of traditional (even bucolic) craft techniques styled with a modern aesthetic.

Some of the success of the 'in the mix' shows owed a lot to styling tricks and the layering trend that refuses to expire; but what truly made the collections sent out by Miu Miu, Marni and Vuitton so poignant was the way their ambivalence echoed that of society. These three collections seemed to ask, "now that we can achieve the future, do we really want it?" Everything on the Vuitton catwalk seemed to be an experiment or a proposition, asking questions like, "if we can put a strappy rococo pink satin sandal on a big chunk of space-age sculpted gold metal heel, should we?" Or, "if we can sew together elements from every past season's bags to create a patchwork hybrid of plastic, leather, canvas and fur, may we?" These high/low, new/old looks that Vuitton's Marc Jacobs styled on new-age Fragonardian girls were presented to a world asking its own questions about whether modern technology and frames of mind can enhance our lives. That is, now that air travel has become affordable, should we all embark on a European grand tour even though the environmental cost is obscenely high? Or now that so many have a *laissez-faire* attitude about sex and intimacy, should we just spread the 'love' wherever and whenever we can? When Jacobs played with the LV logo, inserting the letters O and E, the result was half cute and endearing (with letters embroidered in gold and assembled by buttons), but also half sinister and saccharine, suggesting that emotion was not much more than a luxury brand's trend, which we all aspire to afford but which is essentially disposable. Idyllic as she appears to be, spring's Vuitton girl hides thorns amidst her floral cloth.

For every step progression takes, something regresses in its wake. For this winter at Miu Miu, Miuccia Prada made a modern show with contemporary shapes sculpted with ancient-looking materials. Wooden wedges were like carved Baroque table legs, gathered and puffed mini-dresses were an assemblage of rich burgundy and gold brocades. As these dark Marie Antoinette figures emerged, Prada used her wedges to trample on, wither and wilt her gentler, prettier aesthetic. Summertime at Marni has long since waved goodbye to pastoral innocence: no collection made it as clear that we can delight in choosing everything when it comes to fashion. Marni's Consuelo Castiglioni paired chunky wooden clog-sandals and floppy linen hats with cropped sporty leggings, while her Lucite jewellery was made to look like delicately lacquered wood. But in the society of the near-future, a lack of clear decision isn't going to make for a hit in the mix.

THE SALES GUIDE

A quick glance around my room, and I realise that yes, we are still stuck in the murky depths of January; the empty wine bottles and pristine, unworn trainers evidence of resolutions unkept, a teetering pile of books shoved in a corner, unread, and a pile of unworn clothes that can only be described as "heinous errors". A self-confessed addict, I was one of the sad and desperate wandering down Oxford Street, elbowing the old and infirm out of my path, snatching dresses from weedy teenage arms, barging through the sweaty throngs of fellow bargain hunters. Yes, I am ashamed, although fortunately did not lower myself to the standards of the Next sale – yes someone did queue from 5am to nab that sumptuous pleather jacket. The trouble is, having exhausted my sales tolerance before January even started, the rack after rack of unwanted tat that the shops are still wheeling out just doesn't hold the same allure. So, in aid of the bargain-hungry student (and to abstain from the library for as long as possible), I embarked on a quest to see if the January sales still had anything to offer, after a month of retail mania. On a whim, I thought I would make Monsoon my first stop, normally a shining beacon of middle-aged style. After being greeted by a veritable jungle of pastel chiffon and

sequined tunics, I made a swift exit. Buy anything and expect small children to mistake you for their mother in the street. From there I dashed into Office, which was pretty much what would happen if the shoe world hosted a freak show. Some of the leftovers look like someone vomited a packet of crayons onto an irregularly shaped canoe. Peeking from behind

'I was one of the sad and desperate wandering around Oxford Street, elbowing the old and infirm'

these monstrosities were some covetable platforms, as well as grey boots laced to the thigh for that rather appealing sleaze-factor. New Look is a stop on the sale trail only for the brave. As a shameless promoter of its amazing silk mini-dresses, I found that the Cambridge branch now consists of velour "leisure wear" bathed in seedy lighting. My advice here is to make a beeline for the shoes, and get out. Avoiding Warehouse like the plague (the proverbial armpit of the high street), Miss Selfridge was definitely still worth a look.

I was a big fan of the over-sized wool berets, black smock top with lace inserts, and a leopard print brocade jacket. Across the street in Topshop, the window screamed "New Lines Added!" and the fare was decidedly better than the usual "Buy One Get One Free" horrors. There you'll find structured jackets, tulip skirts and tunic dresses, and some leggings that made my shopping companion resemble David Bowie in *Labyrinth*, but in a good way. Alas, nothing in Gap was quite so exciting, unless your wardrobe suffers from a severe drought of "basics" (the very idea of something that dull being essential to your wardrobe is an insult). But before I was about to stomp off, I spied some acid coloured tunics (blatantly left over from summer) for only £10, and slouchy cardigans that would offset mannish tailoring rather nicely. After a pretty paltry day of purchasing, it was French Connection that offered salvation from the dubiously stained pit of high-street doom on show today. What was once over-priced is now distinctly affordable and desirable, with lots of beautiful prints on the dresses, well-crafted sequined items, and satin in delectable shades. Even that sequin-striped shift seen in magazines the world over could be yours for a meagre £60.

Lauren Smith

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL DERRINGER



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Vegging out?

» With hungover bacon butties off the menu, *Varsity* hears the case for and against vegetarianism

THE VEGETARIAN

We live in a society of countless cultural possibilities, of which many of us take advantage, perhaps often without being aware of the luxuries which we have been granted.

I'm undecided about the moral consequences of eating meat, just as much as I am about the existence of a God or whether I like

Bob Dylan, and while I live in a society that gives me the luxury of being able to refrain from eating meat, I do.

I can be extremely healthy by abstaining from meat, indeed I think if anything I eat too few vegetables and have too much chocolate and caffeine. I say this because I think most carnivores

are more suspicious of the dietary weirdness of being a vegetarian rather than the moral message; hey, anyone can list possible moral reasons not to eat meat: the sacredness of life, cruelty, ahimsa.

But my morals aren't absolute. I do eat dairy and eggs, and meat-eaters are often suspicious of this, thinking it is a grey area. I agree, it is. I even went fruitarian for a couple of weeks to answer my own uneasy feelings regarding the killing of plant life.

For now I abstain from eating gelatin, and aren't as fussy I sometimes I would like to be about cheeses made using rennet. In a good English manner, I try not to turn my back on all the wonders of European cuisine.

Nevertheless, there's a great cultural tradition of vegetarianism in Asia. While the stereotype that all vegetarians are hippies has I hope gone out the window along with nut roasts and measly plates of salads in burger bars, it is worth noting that vegetarianism has its roots in the expansive multicultural society in which we live.

I grant you that the aesthetic of vegetarianism isn't always appealing: the pseudo-romance of

'I'm undecided about the morals of meat, just as I am about the existence of God or whether I like Bob Dylan'

the Hell's Angels the prospect of being a testosterone-filled, steak-tearing goliath leaves me feeling somewhat peckish for bacon, however absurd the connection may be.

But maybe one day that will be me; vegetarianism isn't a lifelong decision, it's a temporary solution while I think about whether meat is murder or not.

Richard Braude



THE CARNIVORE

Of all the precocious and patently incorrect things that Einstein said, this is surely his greatest boo-boo: "nothing will benefit human health and increase chances for survival of life on Earth as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet."

Vegetarians have a funny thing with hierarchy, which involves obfuscating the boundaries between man and beast in order to make an ideological point.

'The other bunnies will be glad for a bit more legroom in the hutch'

How can we define the boundary? What if a man is so vegetative he is of the same mental ability as a beast? Would you eat him? No, vegetarians. We would not. This is because things beyond biological actuality make humans human, and that's why meat eaters don't eat their dogs.

Stepping backwards from that,

why do we have a right to eat these (now defined) animals? Here another vegetarian confusion needs dispelling. There is a difference between opposition to systems and opposition to what they convey. I can be opposed to the system of dictatorship without being an anarchist (i.e. without being opposed to the object of "power" that the system conveys).

Similarly, I can be a meat eater without thinking the meat processing industry has a right to act the way it does. One fairly basic aspect of its behaviour I do have to countenance though is that it kills animals. Presuming this can be done painlessly I see no reason why it shouldn't be done plentifully.

Back to history. Animals of the calibre that we eat do not have historical minds. They have no sense (false or otherwise) of progress or development- of direction. It is therefore my contention that they have no event horizon- no consideration of when things will change for the worse- and so no apprehension of death. Vegetarians need to stop their oppressive anthropomor-

phism- no pain in death+no suffering in fearing death= no pain. I reckon even Einstein could figure that shoddy little equation. As for secondary suffering, let's not mince words. The other 7456 bunnies will be glad for a bit more legroom in the hutch.

Three further words in your ear. Firstly, the environmental argument falls with the meaties-

the largest recent cause of deforestation is the growing of palm oil, a substitute for animal fats. Secondly, a roaming pheasant has a much better chance of escape from the gun than a cauliflower has of escaping from the spade. Thirdly; sod it, I'm off to Gardie's for a cowburger.

Tom Evans



THE RESTAURANT COLUMN

Kate Doyle
Caffè Uno
★★★

You're back in Cambridge, at the start of the most miserable term of the year. It's pissing it down outside, freezing cold and even the radiator doesn't work. There's few better ways to offset the winter gloom than with a taste of the Med, and Caffè Uno is just one of the numerous and familiar mock-Italian chain restaurants which line the high streets of Britain. They all profess the usual nonsense, so what makes Caffè Uno any different from that ploddingly familiar bunch?

The menu on offer, whilst predictably typical of chain Italians, is comprehensive and varied – take your pick from various antipasti, salads, pizza and pasta, as well as more substantial meat and fish dishes. A goat's cheese crostini starter and was a well conceived dish; the gentle tang and creamy texture of the goat's cheese is nicely complemented with a fresh pesto dressing, and the well-charred toast really does raise it above its high street equivalents

Caffè Uno offers a good selection of main course specials – a pizza with grilled aubergines, pine nuts, sun-dried tomatoes and basil was an exceptionally well judged offering. The aubergine was grilled to perfection; firm, but not undercooked, and the pine nuts offset its slight bitterness. The pizza is rather more refined than the greasy, cheese-laden offerings of its competitors; mozzarella is sparingly used to dress the rich tomato flavour, rather than as an entire second base. A timballo di penne pasta dish with chicken, bacon and peas was altogether less successful – a slightly stingy portion permeated through with a slightly creepy mystery flavour. The tiramisu which concluded the meal was a slightly underflavoured affair, slightly over-cocoa-ed, but not at all unpleasant. A vanilla pannacotta was more successful, a creamy, quivering mound set off by a zesty raspberry coulis.

Let's not beat about the bush - Caffè Uno isn't going to win any prizes for originality any time soon. But the point is that it doesn't even try to – its goal is simply to offer customers a no-fuss, laid-back and good value meal. Nevertheless, it should be praised for doing its best to stray towards the more Italian side of things – no Hawaiians here, and some remarkably authentic offerings instead. Strada is probably still the king of Cambridge's slew of Italians, but what Caffè Uno lacks in pure quality, it more than makes up for in price, with a 15 per cent discount for Cambridge Union Society members



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VENUS (15) (1h55) (NFT) Daily 10.20* (Sat/Sun Only) 12.40* 14.50* 17.00* 19.20* 21.30* Fri/Sat Late 23.50*

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EDDIE MURPHY, BEYONCE KNOWLES AND JAMIE FOXX in **DREAMGIRLS** (12a) (2h30) (NFT) Sun & Wed Only 12.20 15.20
JUDI DENCH and CATE BLANCHETT in **NOTES ON A SCANDAL** (15) (1h55) (NFT) Thurs Only 18.30

ROCKY BALBOA (12a) (2h05) (NFT) Daily 10.30 (Sat/Sun Only) 13.00 15.30 18.00 20.30 Fri/Sat Late 23.10

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS (12a) (2h20) (NFT) Daily 12.00 14.30 17.10 20.00 Fri/Sat Late 22.40

BABEL (15) (2h45) (NFT) Daily 13.20 16.20 19.30 Fri/Sat Late 22.50

THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND (15) (2h25) Daily 15.40 (Not Sun/Wed) 21.40

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM (PG) (2h10) Daily 10.10 (Sat/Sun Only) 13.10 15.50 18.20 (Not Thurs) 20.50

CASINO ROYALE (12a) (2h50) Daily 12.30 (Not Sun/Wed) 18.25

MISS POTTER (PG) (1h55) (NFT) Daily 13.30 (Not Sat/Sun) 16.00 18.50 21.00

HAPPY FEET (U) (2h10) Sat/Sun Only 10.00

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH (12a) (2h10) Sat/Sun Only 10.50 13.30

FLUSHED AWAY (U) (1h45) Sat/Sun Only 11.10

APOCALYPTO (18) (2h40) Fri/Sat Late 23.15

SMOKIN' ACES (18) (2h10) Fri/Sat Late 23.30

*Audio description is available on these performances - please ask at the Box Office for details

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Applications now open for Easter 2007 at the Playroom!

The Fletcher Players are excited to announce that applications are now open to direct and produce at the Corpus Playroom in Easter term.

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MAXI VON EYE

Success in the pool

OLIVIA DAY

With a home Varsity Match only two weeks away, the Cambridge University swimmers were looking to gain valuable race practice last weekend at the City of Cambridge Swimming Club Open Meet, held at Parkside Pools, Cambridge. The weekend was an unquestionable success with the team rising to the challenge of tough competition from swimming clubs from across the country.

The highlight of the meet was the Freestyle 'skins' events. After seven action-packed rounds, last year's Men's Captain Tom Close powered past six-time Blue Viktor Stein in the final of the Men's event, whilst in the Ladies' event this year's Captain Emma Game took the honours. Over the weekend, the Cambridge team won a total of twelve individual titles, including several clean sweeps of the medals.

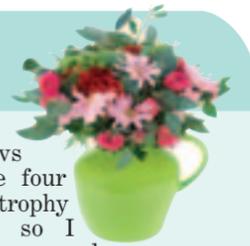
Saturday started with Ben Yeoh and Graeme Spence crafting out victory, followed closely by Cambridge colleagues in 100m Breaststroke and

100m Butterfly respectively. Tom Rose pulled off a dominating performance in the 400m Individual Medley, just shy of the University Record. Brett McLean, endured a punishing schedule but ended the meet in great form, winning titles in two of his less favoured events.

The Ladies' team was up against a strong contingent of City of Birmingham swimmers, including a current GB International. With only two swimmers allowed in each event at Varsity, freshers Natalie Moores, Natalie Couling and Heather Moores, alongside veteran Cat Dobson, gave Captain Emma a selection headache with very little separating them as they all posted promising times in the 100m Backstroke.

The team come back to Cambridge in great shape after an eight day training camp in Crystal Palace and the Ladies' Captain Emma Game was pleased with how the weekend went. "The team's performance this weekend highlighted just how well our preparations have gone. As a team we are strong across the full Varsity programme, and I am confident we will all be ready to swim some great times."

Varsity Vase



With at least two of the Varsity Vase Quarter-finals scheduled for this weekend I'm beginning to get rather excited. Or at least I was, until a match that I was about to play in on Wednesday fell foul of the weather. The groundsman's verdict was that the pitch was too hard. He used the word "frozen" but I wasn't having any of it. I had a feeling I was going to score four so I am particularly upset. I had been practising my free kicks all week and had even popped into the gym.

In any event, weather permitting, the big games this Sunday will be Girton vs St

Catz and Jesus vs Caius. Three of the four have a shot at the trophy (sorry Girton) and so I strongly suggest you go and watch. St Catz should stroll through even though they appeared to struggle in the last round. Meanwhile Caius and Jesus are both playing well, scoring seven and five respectively in the previous round.

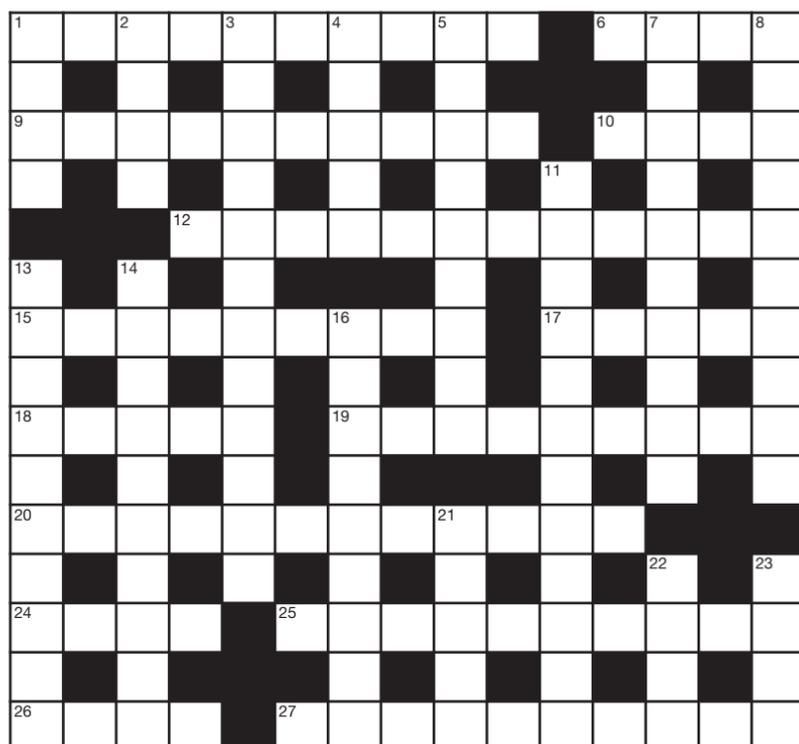
But before you go, I would urge you to bring a coat, gloves, a woolly hat and check beforehand that the games are going ahead.

Oxbridge Academic Programs
SUMMER WORK IN CAMBRIDGE
Summer study schools seek teaching and administrative staff during July. Graduate students can teach a variety of courses in the humanities, sciences and creative arts. Undergraduates can work as Program Assistants and Activities Directors. For further information about what we do, please visit:
www.oxbridgeprograms.com
Candidates are asked to apply by sending their CV and covering letter to Dr. Simon Dyton (dyton@oxbridgeprograms.com) by February 23rd, 2007.

Games and puzzles



Varsity crossword no. 460



ACROSS

- 1. Mitigate effects of deed on bar (10)
- 6. End of pashmina slips, revealing disfigurement (4)
- 9. Made law about support I criticised (10)

10. One who's against Tina Turner? (4)

- 12. Lost puppy punished by Eros? (6,2,4)
- 15. Bewildered, Cathi takes note after Teletubby makes sausage (9)
- 17. Actor used ten times in a life-

- time? (5)
- 18. Hypnotist takes time and energy over female organs (5)
- 19. Score I needed to win this? (6-3)
- 20. Delight as batsman knocks out middle of display (12)
- 24. Scrape top off part of sleeve (4)
- 25. Racing around — no time when storm spreads in mountains (10)
- 26. Time with soap backed to wash this off? (4)
- 27. 'Clear off,' headless pseud reacts to Christ's blessings (10)

DOWN

- 1. Animal's leg muscle (4)
- 2. Encourage to destroy Oriental rug (4)
- 3. References to benefit matches (12)
- 4. Respond to shattered crate (5)
- 5. Car meek accountant destroyed for sticky treat (5,4)
- 7. Mixture firm sergeant, say, caught one with; no going back! (10)
- 8. I retreated, went round, and did it again (10)
- 11. Whim in considered fashion? (12)
- 13. Accepted untidy Parisian who accedes (10)
- 14. My arrows in collier's passages (10)
- 16. Eternal difficulty around at change-over (9)
- 21. Sailor books fortune-teller's cards (5)
- 22. Brought up to bartend oddly? (4)
- 23. A Goddess comes from within — this i see (4)

rotations

COMPETITION

Win a pair of tickets to the Arts Picturehouse
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



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.

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

accenture

High performance. Delivered.

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).

			17	9		
		9			22	
		29				7
	14					
11				7		
17				14		
			5	12		
		20				
			9			

Hitori

Shade in the squares so that no number occurs more than once per row or column. Shaded squares may not be horizontally or vertically adjacent. Unshaded squares must form a single area.

4	2	6	2	5	7	5
1	5	7	1	3	6	2
6	3	4	1	5	2	5
7	4	5	3	6	3	1
2	3	3	7	5	5	4
3	6	2	6	4	1	7
2	3	3	4	7	6	3

Playing to the crowd: reel sports

»As Stallone releases his latest juggernaut, the *Varsity* team examine their all-time favourites

1

RAGING BULL
(1980)

Dir. Martin Scorsese

2

JERRY MAGUIRE
(1996)

Dir. Cameron Crowe

3

MILLION DOLLAR BABY
(2004)

Dir. Clint Eastwood

4

ANY GIVEN SUNDAY
(1999)

Dir. Oliver Stone

5

A KNIGHT'S TALE
(2001)

Dir. Brian Helgeland

VARSITY SPORTS TEAM

The recent release of *Rocky Balboa*, the final instalment of the epic saga, has had a profound effect on the *Varsity* Sports Office. As we set this week's issue, match reports and interviews fell by the wayside as a more alluring question dominated the conversation: what makes a sport film good? Is it the competition? A triumphant underdog? Or is it perhaps the presence of an all conquering love story?

As the Sports team, three boys and one girl, sat down to discuss the matter, hopes of reaching a consensus were conspicuously flung out of the window with the mention of *Blue Crush*. Does it have to have great action? Must it inspire or motivate? Perhaps it just has to have an engaging plot? All agreed that, as funny as it may sound, sport isn't necessarily the most important factor. Let's be honest, if we wanted that, *Match of the Day* would suffice. So what is so fascinating about sport? The intensity of the fight certainly heightens the emotional context. Is it because sport creates heroes? One admires the skill, endurance and spirit of sportsmen and women, and when these elements combine in a gripping sequence, who can help being hooked? It is by nature melodrama, but it is rare to find a viewer who dislikes a good underdog story; a tale of someone overcoming troubles and setbacks but finally achieving victory, fame and sporting glory. Sport is the ultimate clothes horse for a storyline; often used as a metaphor for life, sport can accentuate and throw into new perspective many of the classic themes.

Sport films certainly have a formula. *Rocky Balboa* is, no doubt about it, exactly the same film as the previous five instalments, despite this, people will come out of it as pumped up as Stallone's frightening sexagenarian form, admitting that they enjoyed it. The formula works and Stallone is clearly happy to revisit his most successful incarnation.

Sport films are generally made for the boys. Mentions of *Wimbledon* and *Dirty Dancing* were met with disgusted faces and yelps of derision in the *Varsity* Offices. But it's cer-

tainly not all about boxing and American football. Dance films have swept the box office off its feet in recent years, with *Save The Last Dance* paving the way for *Honey* and *Step Up*, all following in the quicksteps of classics such as *Flashdance* and *Dirty Dancing*. The trials of a young, ambitious lead, coupled with awe-inspiring musical sequences make these showstoppers. There was, however, scant agreement on whether any of these 'chick-flick' latecomers could force their way into our 'Top Ten'. *Compromise* tiptoed into the office, disguised as *Billy Elliot*: a genuine contender for our 'Power 10'.

In an evermore commercial world, the power and prestige within sport does not always lie in the hands of the sportsmen themselves. In films such as *Any Given Sunday* and even more so in *Jerry Maguire* the sport itself is the puppet master, behind the scenes, manipulating the main players. In the award-winning *Jerry Maguire*, commercially driven hollow mantras like "show me the money!", are replaced by honesty and family values as the key to personal and professional success. And there certainly is a love interest, much to the delight of one happy sports editor - it had her at hello.



Rocky makes his sixth comeback

At this juncture, the Chief Sports Editor ventured into the fray with an unconventional suggestion: *A Knight's Tale*. Amid worried glances and fears that he had lost his senses, he set about justifying this eccentric choice. It may seem odd, primarily thought of as a "historical-romantic comedy", but it really is a great sport film in disguise. It has a sport, albeit an extinct sport, but that never stopped *Ben Hur* or *Gladiator* from being engaging. Jousting is a perfect subject for film: it has action, drama and proceeds in nail biting, cliffhanging stages. The story centres around an underdog, a group of losers in fact, who through the sheer force of their will "change their stars". The villain of the piece is the best sort of sporting scoundrel; immensely talented, skilled and strong, but morally weak and not above cheating. It has comedy, nobility and destiny, it even has a montage! Even *Rocky* managed a montage.

Sports comedies tread a difficult tight rope. Sport is a serious matter. For top sportsmen, success is the key and no laughter softens failure. But when it comes to the big screen, we can suspend our intensity and enjoy the ride. *Happy Gilmore's* destruction of the serene etiquette of gentlemen's golf is the comedic element that defines the film: sport can be funny.

Pictures like *Cool Runnings*, *Dodgeball* and *American Pie* (apparently they play Lacrosse...) emphasise the positive and jocular elements that can make a sport film great. And as demonstrated by *Raging Bull* and *Million Dollar Baby*, the intense feelings sport generates can help deliver a poignant tragedy as well as a comedy or a triumph. *Bend it Like Beckham* highlights the ability of sport to cross divides and unify cultures. We are moved by the power of prejudice; its pity and its sadness.

A sport film works when it offers the viewer something to engage with. The best themes - love, loss, comedy, or tragedy - are all found in some measure in sport and it is this fundamental link to the basic strand of human storytelling that makes sport such a fruitful and compelling ground for filmmakers and audiences alike.

6

ROCKY
(1976)

Dir. John G. Avildsen

7

CHARIOTS OF FIRE
(1981)

Dir. Hugh Hudson

8

BEND IT LIKE BECKHAM
(2002)

Dir. Gurinder Chadha

9

HAPPY GILMORE
(1996)

Dir. Dennis Dugan

10

COOL RUNNINGS
(1993)

Dir. Jon Turteltaub



Joe Powell and Oscar Brodtkin

Gamblers Unanimous

We need to start this week with an apology to all those wondering what the screams emanating from Catz library at 4am last Saturday were in aid of. Let us explain: for once it wasn't two frisky freshers engaged in a debauched romp in the photocopier room. Instead we were guilty of breaching the peace whilst jumping for joy as Ricky Hatton won a unanimous points decision in Vegas to bring home the 'Bank Job'. However, an abandoned meeting at Ascot and the narrowest of misses on the NFL leaves us just the wrong side of profit.

Celebrity Big Brother has dominated the front pages over the last week, but for punters it is far more than a "socio-anthropological experiment". While the chattering classes were busy condemning Jade Goody to oblivion, we were piling on Shilpa Shetty to win the competition at odds of around even money. For us there are two simple rules to reality TV betting.

First and foremost, the nation loves an underdog, with Michelle McManus being a prime example of teenage voters being at odds with the judges. Secondly, on the other hand, one can never underestimate the fickleness of the masses. Goody herself was laughed out of the *Big Brother* house in her first appearance but went

to on to become the most successful contestant ever with her earnings topping £8 million since 2002. In summary, when looking for value in reality television betting, always pick someone with a core fan base who will bother to vote, and with character traits that the general public can empathise with. Follow those rules and you should cash in!

This week's 'Bank Job' is a classic FA Cup tie between Birmingham and Reading at St Andrews on Saturday. Although, the Brummies thumped Newcastle last week their priority remains the Championship title and they will be hard-pressed to repeat such a performance. Under the shrewd Steve Coppell, Reading have proved to be a classy outfit this season and we take them to win at odds of around 2/1 (2.9). Stick £10 on to win a score.

The 'Long Shot' comes from the home of jumps racing at Cheltenham on Saturday. There are plenty of class horses in the Cotswold Chase but value is to be had with Exotic Dancer who can be backed at 7/1 (8 on Betfair). This quirky horse has fine form, coming third behind the peerless Kauto Star in the King George on Boxing Day and winning the Paddy Power Chase. If he runs to the best of his ability he will take a lot of beat-

ing. £4 to win will net you just under thirty quid.

We stay at Cheltenham for the 'Porters' Tip' where a little birdie tells us that Black Jack Ketchum will hack up in the Cleeve Hurdle. 10/11 (1.88) may seem a bit tight for some of you but you should never knock a gift horse in the mouth. Our last £6 goes on this to win.

Running total: -£3.30

The Bank Job
Birmingham Vs Reading - Reading to win
Stake: £10

The Long Shot
Cotswold Chase
Exotic Dancer
Stake: £4

The Porters' Tip
Cleeve Hurdle - Black Jack Ketchum to win.
Stake: £6

betfair.com

Sport In Brief



New Captain for Rugby Blues

Ross Blake has been elected Captain of the Blues Rugby team for the season 2007-2008. Ross joined Cambridge this year gaining his first Blue in this Christmas' triumph over 'the other place'. Ross is studying for a BA in economics at Hughes Hall. He has played for Bath and Bristol RFC. He plays at both inside and outside half, the latter an important position to fill, with Jon Ufton leaving Cambridge this year. Hamish Murray was elected to position of Hon. Sec.

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Women's Hockey



Rosie Sherman

How long have you been playing Hockey?

I started playing hockey when I was 12 for school and played for both the county and the West of England from 15 to 18. During this time I also played for Clifton Hockey Club but gave up when I went on my gap year (teaching hockey in Ghana). I had two England trials when I was 16 and 18 but unfortunately nothing came of it - probably the two hardest weeks of my life!

How often do the Blues train in one week?

The Blues train on a Monday and Thursday with matches on Wednesday and Saturday and an extra fitness on a Tuesday! Just that added bit of extra fun.

What has been the highlight of your career playing Hockey for Cambridge?

That would have to be the Varsity Match at Southgate in my first year. The atmosphere was just incredible - there is nothing quite like it.

When is this year's Varsity and how are the Blues' chances this year?

This year's Varsity Match is on the 6th March in Southgate, London. This year's Oxford squad is extremely strong (having only lost one game all season). However, I am confident that with the performances we have been producing recently we have a very good chance of giving Oxford a serious run for their money - the girls' determination and enthusiasm this year is absolutely fantastic.

Hockey fortunes mixed

»Men and Women's Blues do battle in Chelmsford

VARSIITY REPORTER

Men's Blues	4
Chelmsford	3

The Blues continued their push for promotion with yet another commanding performance this weekend against Chelmsford at Fortress Wilby. Lying in second place in the league, two points behind local rivals Harleston, Cambridge knew that a victory was a necessity to stay in touch. Following an intense pre mid-season period, the Blues came out of the blocks flying and were soon putting the visitors under severe pressure.

Captain Mikey Palmer and Alun Rees were causing a multitude of problems for the opposition on the right, and the Blues found themselves with several opportunities in the circle, although failed to capitalise. It wasn't until the 14th minute when Palmer won a short corner that the students took the lead with a trademark drag-flick from Tom Littlewood high into the net. This was a deserved reward but the scores were soon level when Chelmsford seized a rare opportunity in the 18th minute.

The Blues were not to be dismayed and they pushed on, increasing the pace, and they retook the lead when a winding run from Rees found Philip Balbirnie unmarked and he punched a shot low into the bottom corner. Cambridge took the lead into the break and following some strong words by Coach Andrew Middleton, they came out looking to put the game to rest. Nick McLaren, playing in centre-midfield began to dictate midfield proceedings alongside Stuart Penman, and the Blues demonstrated why they were already top league scorers. Following some good build up play on the right, a run along the baseline found Simon Ashton who made no mistake in tucking the ball home to put the Blues 3-1 up. This score should have settled the remainder of the match, but Chelmsford, refusing to submit, narrowed the lead within minutes.

Cambridge were clearly determined not to let this game slip and exciting hockey from both teams fol-



The women's team had a hard match in tough conditions ALEX WORKMAN

lowed. Littlewood hit the post from a short corner but it was Dave Jones who re-established order when a deft touch in the circle diverted the ball home: 4-2.

Again Chelmsford looked for a reply, finding one in the 62nd minute when, following a scramble in the circle, they managed to sneak the ball in. This led to a tense final few minutes, during which Cambridge could have secured the game, were it not for an uncharacteristic misplaced pass from Mark Greatholder that failed to hit the spot. The Blues held out for what was, in the end, a comfortable victory,

"The Blues held out for what was a comfortable win"

even though the score suggested a more tightly fought contest.

Coach Middleton commented after the game, "I am pleased with the result. We created a number of chances and should have won convincingly. We panicked towards the end but at the end of the day it's all about the result. I may look at our short corner defence during the week as that was disappointing". The result lifted the Blues to top of the table as leaders Harleston lost to Ipswich.

Women's Blues	0
Chelmsford	2

Again for the women's Blues the score did not entirely represent the match: unfortunately this time, not in the University's favour. Despite ferocious winds and drizzly rain, Cambridge managed to start the game with vigour and aggression.

In the opening ten minutes Cambridge retained the majority of the possession with the ball rarely leaving their half. Despite some positive runs from the forwards and a few near-misses, the team failed to convert the hard work into a goal. As the first half progressed, Chelmsford managed to step up their game and after a lucky break and a swiftly converted short corner, Cambridge saw themselves one nil down.

Perhaps still a little shaken up, another break only minutes later pushed Chelmsford to a 2-0 lead, one which Cambridge would struggle to pull back. The second half saw renewed energy, giving Cambridge the hope that they needed to raise their game. Across the pitch Cambridge showed class: a strong defence line who stepped up to any pressure, good skills from the midfield and some superb runs up front. Unfortunately, however, Chelmsford's exceptional goal-keeper made converting skill to goals tough, and the team was unable to match the opposition's scoreboard domination. The final score was a disappointing 2-0 to Chelmsford.

Blues win in lacklustre encounter

After a month of deserved excess and celebration Cambridge's Varsity heroes came blinking into the daylight of Grange Road to take on their Northern rivals, Durham. If they had been hoping for an easy exhibition match, the boys were in for a surprise. A tight, confident and clearly motivated Durham came to win. However, despite an error-strewn display Cambridge managed to grind out a victory, with a typically physical game. The Backs failed to find form and basic handling errors characterised much of play. It was with genuine relief that the Blue lead 10-8 when the final whistle blew.



SOPHIE PICKFORD

Sports Round Up

Upcoming Fixtures

January 27

Cambridge University Bowmen Vs Oxford "Grudge Match", Christ's Fields
Men's Lacrosse Vs Croydon, Away

Women's Hockey I Vs Thurrock I, Away
Women's Hockey II Vs St Ives I, Wilberforce Road 12:30pm
Women's Hockey III Vs Cambridge City III
Wilberforce Road
11:00am

January 28

Eton Fives EFA Trophy

BUSA: Men's Waterpolo Vs Loughborough, Away

January 31

Women's lacrosse Blues Vs Bath, Away
Women's Lacrosse II Vs Oxford II, Home
Women's Rugby Vs Nottingham Trent, Home
Women's Hockey II Vs Leicester, Away
Women's Hockey I Vs Loughborough III
Wilberforce Road, 2:00pm
Cambridge University Bowmen v Oxford, Christ's Fields, 3:00pm

February 1

Men's Waterpolo v City of Cambridge, Away

Results

Men's Lacrosse

Blues Vs Southampton University (round 2 of Flags cup)
Won 16-3

Men's Waterpolo

Blues Vs ULU (BUSU round 1)
Lost 17-10
University II Vs UCL I
Lost 0-2
Blues Vs Surrey University
Lost 0-2
Blues Vs Portsmouth University
4 - 4

Women's Hockey

Blues Vs Chelmsford
Lost 0-2
University II Vs Bourne I
Lost 2-4
University III Vs Bourne II
1-1

Men's Football

Blues Vs Arthurian League
Drew 0-0
Blues Vs Aston Uni
Won 7-1

Badminton

Blues Vs Imperial College
Won 8-0

SPORT

Sport in film

The *Varsity* top ten

Page 30

Men's lacrosse

Cambridge on top

Online



John's take the honours in league grudge match

» Jesus beaten as Johnian rugby dominance continues

PETE HUNTINGFORD
Rugby Correspondent

St John's	32
Jesus	10

A bitterly cold Tuesday afternoon saw a powerful St John's side all but take the title after a passionate display that boasted some fine individual performances. Having won the title five years in a row, there was no doubt that John's were the favourites coming into this match. This by no means deterred Jesus as they fought hard for a victory that always seemed beyond them. While scrappy in parts, this was a game that was dictated by form, the most valued asset of any team, which can so often be the decider on big match occasions.

The weather almost certainly influenced the opening stages of the match as within minutes a plague of handling errors and injuries predicated the early departure of Jesus prop Mike Coxhead. It was John's, however, who had dominated the possession early on as the forwards made their intentions clear with some ferocious rucking facilitating a number of turnovers. Despite having the majority of possession, John's rarely moved the ball out of their own half. The Jesus defence worked overtime, dominated by some inspired tacking from John Messer at outside centre, to prevent any return for John's efforts. However, John's did themselves no favours, having twice failed to utilise a two man overlap through some sloppy backs handling.

As time progressed John's piled on the pressure with some surging runs from Richard Lum that forced the defence of Jesus to retreat. With a new found confidence John's broke the deadlock on 22 minutes as centre Jono Murray exploited a gap in the opposing defence, leading to a 5-0 lead after Maclennan sent the resulting conversion wide. But their advantage was short-lived, as hero became villain when try scorer Murray failed to control a simple pass that resulted in a easy try for Jesus' Richard Armstrong, which Johanson duly converted. A two point lead imbued Jesus with hope as the game opened up. John's accordingly raised their game and star player Lum continued his domination of the Jesus defence with a sensational run, putting Maclennan in for the try, which he then failed to convert. The John's for-

wards continued to ratch up the intensity and aggression levels, which led to a penalty for Jesus shortly before half-time, capitalised on by Johanson to ensure the two sides went into the half-time break level pegging at 10-10.

The interval did nothing to disturb John's rhythm as they dominated the early lineouts with some superb catches from Ashley Elliot that led to an early penalty, after a 20 yard drive was pulled down just short of the posts. Sensing it was not his day, Maclennan handed the kicking duties over to Ben Smith, which proved a shrewd move as John's pushed 13-10 in front. What followed was nothing short of a bombardment of pressure from John's with both backs and for-

Hockey

Mens' victory and ladies' bitter disappointment.

Full match reports and Captain's Corner

Page 31

wards surpassing the resistance of Jesus with tries from Morrison and Murray, both of which were converted to increase John's lead to 27-10. A deflated looking Jesus side continued to tackle hard and mounted several convincing counter-attacks but, sadly for them, to no avail as victory for John's was sealed when Murray fittingly completed his hat-trick just before full-time. Smith failed to convert but this by no means hampered John's as they finished the game triumphantly with the score at 32-10.

Speaking after the game, hat-trick hero Jono Murray said "we didn't play well today but we got the points and that's what is important". Injured John's captain Ollie Buxton was pleased with the result, feeling assured of victory throughout, "We haven't lost all season so we were confident coming here today". While the Jesus match effectively seals the league for another year for the Red Boys, it will take the formality of a win against Tit Hall for John's to be able to boast an unassailable numerical lead. It would take a brave man to bet against them.



Ashley Elliot reaches for victory as John's dominate Jesus on Tuesday afternoon

LINDSEY MEHRER

Saw the game? Read the report? Think you could write it? sport@varsity.co.uk