Attacks at Trinity Hall

» Intruders to Bishop Bateman Court ‘throttle’ one student and assault others

» Room raider claimed to be a ‘foreign student’

» At least one intruder still on site when police arrive but unnoticed by official search

Camilla Temple
Chief News Editor

An accommodation block belonging to Trinity Hall was broken into and students there were attacked in their rooms in the early hours of Saturday morning.

Two students, who were asleep in rooms in Bishop Bateman Court on Thompson’s Lane, were attacked by the intruders and one student’s room was ransacked. The intruders went through the students’ belongings and then left them in a variety of locations including the roof of the building and the garden area.

One of the victims, Tom Cheshire, said: “I just woke up and this guy was throttling me. His trousers were undone and he didn’t have his shirt on. I was quite scared. At first I thought it was my friend who also has a shaved head so I told him to stop it, but then he whacked my girlfriend. I wrestled him off and then he said, ‘Sorry, I’ve got the wrong person’ and left.” This incident took place at around 4.35 am.

Cheshire reported that at six o’clock, “A hand came through my window and was on my laptop. They couldn’t take the laptop because it was held by the speaker wires. They took my Latin books though and left them on a windowsill outside. The first intruder could hardly walk but the second one was quite agile.” Cheshire said that his door had not been locked.

Julia Tilley was in her boyfriend’s room when an intruder came in. “Someone walked into the room,” she said. “My boyfriend shouted ‘Who the hell are you?’ and he replied ‘I’m a foreign student’ and then left.”

“When I got back to my room in the early morning, my laptop was gone and my room was ransacked. I felt violated and disturbed. They had broken the window and left a rolled-up ten pound note, probably for coke, on my desk. It was really upsetting.”

Camilla Winfield said that she awoke at around 4.30am to see a man clawing at her window and trying to force it open. “It was like a scene from a horror film”, she said.

David Fanego said that he heard the screams of his neighbour when one of the intruders entered her room. He claims he then heard the muffled words, “help me” and the sound of something being forced into her mouth. He took a knife from the kitchen and opened her door but the intruder had escaped.

The victim of this attack returned to her room at around 4.35am and made a search of the property but no one was found.” However, complaints have been made about police procedure and response to the accident. Fanego alleges that when the police came they took no notes and were uninterested in what he had to say. He thinks this may have been because he is Spanish and his English is not fluent.

Students claim that the intruder must still have been on the property at the time of the police search. There are reports that he was subsequently seen at around 6am searching in the undergrowth at the back of Bishop Bateman Court and was then seen falling asleep in a bush.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary said, “That’s their report. Unless we’re told there are people hiding in the bushes we wouldn’t search the bushes outside as that is not a sensible use of police time.”

The police were called again in the morning when they received
In Brief
Stress is good

Controversial author and scientist Nick Lane has told Cambridge students that some forms of stress may be good for health. Speaking at a talk organised by the Biological Society on Monday, Lane suggested that the low-level physiological stresses encountered in every day life can allow us to live longer, healthier lives. Exercise, calorie-restriction and “mild toxins” former Oxford Student Union president Dr Bampson also speculated that “short periods of psychological stress” could have similar benefits.

Xiaoyan Xue

John’s beat application record

St John’s has broken the record for undergraduate applications for courses beginning in Michaelmas 2008. For this cycle the college received 863 applications from students across the world, making St John’s the most-over-subscribed college for one admissions cycle ever. Natural Sciences received 140 applications, which is twice the number of the 2004 admissions cycle. The college’s Senior Tutor, Matthias Bielfeld, told Varsity: “The college has made a tremendous effort with admissions – from hosting symposiums for teaching and learning teams and open days, to dispatching thousands of prospectuses.” He also emphasized that every applicant will be subjected to a fair admission process despite the large number of applicants.

Vishnu Parameshwaran

New diabetes drug

Cambridge scientists have discovered that a previously-developed drug has the potential to treat type 2 diabetes. Researchers led by Liging Zhao at the university’s Department of Clinical Biochemistry have discovered that the appetite-suppressing drug mCPP improves blood sugar levels in obese and diabetic mice and human cells and may be used as a new treatment for diabetes. Lora Heisler, a member of the 2004 admissions cycle, said: “We have a finite amount of resources. This incident was not an ongoing burglary. Grade ‘A’ incidents, such as violent crimes, must take priority. However, it will be fully investigated.”

One Trinity Hall undergraduate commented that this incident has made the student body feel unsafe. “I was told that in Bishop Bateman Court, someone can ring on the bell, and anyone can buzz them in. Court, someone can ring on the bell, and anyone can buzz them in.” JCR President Rob Chapman commented, “Our JCR is under- standably upset by the break in. Cambridge is on the whole a safe place and many of us get too comfortable in that and do not necessarily protect ourselves properly.”

The Senior Tutor and Head Porter were in college all weekend assisting the police with their enquiries and supporting our students. Cambridge University is experiencing a significant decline in applicants for its computer science courses. Applications to study the subject at Cambridge have been steadily reducing since 2000. Last year, 70 were accepted out of 210 applications on the figures for 2000, when 500 applications were made and 100 accepted. This Thursday the Cambridge Computer Laboratories will hold their recruitment fair in which 55 leading companies, each looking to hire several graduates, will be competing to recruit just 70 graduating students.

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council’s International Review of ICT calls this lack of interest in computer science ‘alarming’. They blame the dropping numbers of applications on the bursting of the dotcom bubble after the internet craze of the nineties, and on the outsourcing of graduate jobs to lower cost countries such as India and China.

The Review reports that ‘many people do not find the career described sufficiently attractive’, a view shared by Professor David Patterson, Professor of Computer Science at the University of California at Berkeley. He attributes the falling number of applicants worldwide to the ‘current negative view of the computer science profession by pre-college students’, and the assumption that career potential is limited to ‘universal applications and fields of cubicles with displays and keyboards’.

Professor Peter Robinson, deputy head of Cambridge’s Computer Laboratory, has pointed out that ‘starting salaries for computer science students are among the highest for any graduates’ whilst multinational technology companies, forced to recruit graduates in maths, engineering and natural sciences, are taking the shortage of properly trained graduates seriously.

The University of North Carolina, Wilmington

Researchers in Cambridge University’s Department of Clinical Biochemistry have discovered that genes dictate why some people put on more weight than others. Working in collaboration with Oxford University and Cancer Research UK, a group led by Professor Stephen O’Rahilly has discovered a gene which exists in two forms, one of which is implicated in obesity.

Those with one copy of this ‘fat gene’ are on average one and half kilograms heavier than those without, while those who have two copies – approximately one in six of the UK population – are three kilograms heavier, with 15 per cent more body fat. This group are also more likely to have type two diabetes.

The research is producing an enzyme which can act to modify DNA, and may act as a switch to turn off as well as on involved in weight control. It is located in the part of the brain responsible for appetite and feelings of fullness, and so may affect the way the brain perceives hunger.

The biological function of this gene is not yet fully understood, and the researchers will still to be establish its exact nature.

These findings form part of a concerted effort to unlock the causes of obesity, which scientists have found hard to be to particular genes. If the role of genes in obesity can be established, it will have wide implications for new treatments and therapies to reduce the risk of weight gain.

Underwater tutorials

Dr Annelise Hagan, Visiting Scholar in Cambridge University’s Coastal Research Unit, is broadcasting from Aquarius, a fixed underwater research station. Dr Hagan is joined by Professor Dave MacMillan in the Aquarius, which is 60 feet below the surface of the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of the Florida Keys. She broadcasted live lessons on physical oceanography over the Internet on Wednesday.

Burglary and assault at Trinity Hall

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

whether the college holds students responsible because many did not lock their doors, Dr Bampson said, “The College makes every effort to ensure that all accommodation is secure and all locks operational. It appears that some students leave their doors unlocked overnight. The College emphasises the need to secure rooms at all times.”

Dr Bampson added “The security and safety of our students is of the highest priority. The College has a duty to protect its students by providing secure accommodation and informing all students of the importance of adhering to our security protocols, all of which are assessed and updated on a regular basis.

The events early on Saturday morning highlighted what can happen if windows or doors are not locked. Cambridge may not be the safest place people would like it to be, which is why all members of the College must be cautious when in College accommodation or simply walking through the town.”

JCR President Rob Chapman commented, “Our JCR is understandably upset by the break in. Cambridge is on the whole a safe place and many of us get too comfortable in that and do not necessarily protect ourselves properly.”

“The Senior Tutor and Head Porter were in college all weekend assisting the police with their enquiries and supporting our students. Cambridge seems to have settled back down well this week. The JCR will offer every support possible to help them recover.”

University short of CompSci applications

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Microsoft Research is currently sponsoring an outreach event talking in the Cambridge Computer Laboratory for local sixth forms in December and Google recently sent a team of people into the Laboratory offering interviews and summer internships to any students who were interested.

University of North Carolina, Wilmington
Soap star Sky to switch on festive lights

KATHERINE FAULKNER
Chief News Editor

Neighbours star Stephanie McIntosh, who until a few weeks ago played Sky Mangel in the television show, will be switching on Cambridge’s Christmas lights this year as well as performing her new single in Market Square.

The visit, announced this week by Cambridge City Council, will be the first of two by Neighbours stars this month. Alan Fletcher, who has played Dr Karl Kennedy in the soap since 1994, will be joining the Sunday Service at Club 22 on November 25.

“Stephanie is very talented, and has a new record out,” said Emma Thornton, Head of Tourism and City Centre Management. “We thought she would appeal to

There’s no chance of a May Ball in 2009...
News Investigation

It’s no great secret that Cambridge students are pushed for time. Each of us has a huge academic workload, and when we’ve dealt with that we’d like to squeeze in something resembling a social life every week. The solution for many is simply to sleep less. Lots of us are reliant on energy drinks and caffeine tablets, but a growing number are turning to ‘brain-boosting’ drugs to stay alert. Katy Lee considers the effects these substances might be having on our mental and physical health, and the ethical implications of using what are effectively performance enhancing drugs for academia.

A Varsity Investigation has found that some Cambridge students are using prescription-only drugs in the hope that it will enable them to work more efficiently, while simultaneous use in the form of caffeine pills and energy drinks is widespread.

Two Cambridge professors have also claimed to have been offered the “brain-boosting” drug Ritalin by colleagues during international conferences.

In a Varsity survey, many students said they occasionally used caffeine pills such as Pro Plus or beverages marketed as “energy drinks”, which combine caffeine with other ingredients such as extracts from the high-caffeine guarana plant, taurine and other chemicals.

92 per cent had tried Red Bull, Relentless, or another brand of energy drink and 38 per cent said they bought such a drink two or more times a week. This figure increases to 48 per cent in exam term, and 46 per cent of second or third year students had used Pro Plus or a different caffeine tablet during exam term.

“I drank a lot of Relentless during exam term last year,” said Laura Cremer, a second year MML student from Selwyn. “It was really useful for working into the night. We’d have a can of Relentless at about seven-thirty and take a half an hour break to drink it. Then we’d work without any problems until about seven-thirty and take a half can of Relentless at eight-thirty. It was really useful for working into the night.”

Another Selwyn student said taking caffeine tablets had improved her concentration during the early stages of her revision last year. “It was at the stage of my revision where I wasn’t really motivated, so I needed something to make me focus. By the time it got to exams I was scared enough to work already. If you’re busy and going short on sleep, it’s really much easier to focus when you’ve got something like Red Bull or Pro Plus. If I took a lot, and drank coffee as well, I’d get a bit shaky. But I didn’t have any major side effects.”

The majority of student users appear to be consuming these substances in moderation, but half of those who have tried Pro Plus or a different caffeine tablet admitted they had exceeded the recommended dose at some point.

Few students seemed concerned about the possible side effects of excessive consumption of caffeine supplements and caffeine-based energy drinks. “The problem with caffeine is that the effects can vary, so it is difficult to say what is a safe level. High levels of caffeine can be dangerous for people with high blood pressure or anxiety disorders,” said Lyndel Costain, a dietician. While some people experience no side effects from caffeine supplements, others suffer insomnia, nervousness and headaches.

There have been frequent allegations of health risks associated with certain brands of energy drink. Britain investigated the drink, but has only issued a warning against its consumption by pregnant women.

Several research studies suggest that people who regularly consume energy drinks are more likely to develop diabetes mellitus. “There is plenty of research on the effects of caffeine, but it’s impossible to re-

Smart drugs: Ritalin, Modafinil and Adderall

RITALIN

Methylphenidate (Ritalin) is a stimulant usually prescribed to patients with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). It has a calming effect on individuals with ADD or ADHD, reducing impulsive behaviour and improving ability to focus on tasks.

Unprescribed Ritalin is classified as a Class B drug in the UK. Possession can earn you up to five years in prison and an unlimited fine.

Common side effects of Ritalin include insomnia, nervousness, headache, decreased appetite, abdominal pain and cardiovascular effects such as tachycardia or palpitations.

The long-term effects of use of this drug by healthy people, who do not suffer from the disorders it is designed to treat, are as yet unknown. The same is true for modafinil and Adderall.

MODAFINIL

Modafinil is a stimulant most commonly prescribed to people with narcolepsy, a neurological condition resulting in the sufferer experiencing disturbed nocturnal sleep and falling asleep at any random time.

It is not listed in the Misuse of Drugs Act, and is therefore available by prescription without legal restrictions.

Common side effects include headaches, nausea and anxiety.

The drug has been linked in rare cases to anorexia.

ADDERALL

Adderall is a stimulant consisting of mixed amphetamine salts. It is used primarily to treat ADD/ADHD and narcolepsy.

It has the same legal status in the UK as Ritalin.

It has been used “off label” for weight loss as well as among students hoping to improve concentration.

Side effects in adults include headaches, loss of appetite and difficulty in falling asleep.
ally know the effects of caffeine pills such as Pro Plus because they put other ingredients with them,” said Trevor Robbins, Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience at Cambridge University. “The same goes for energy drinks.”

Varsity also spoke to one student who claimed to have worked after taking the recreational Class A drug ecstasy. “I’d been out, but I had an essay due in the next morning and I knew I had to get it done whether I was high or not,” he said. “I sat down to do it about 8am, and I’d done it within 45 minutes – it would usually take me at least three hours to churn out that kind of work. I just worked like a machine. I was completely focused – I had this massive drive to just get it done and not to procrastinate. I don’t think I’d ever take it specifically to work, but if I wanted to go out and take ecstasy and hadn’t finished my work yet, I wouldn’t worry.”

Students are becoming increasingly aware of trends among American universities where students use prescription-only drugs, designed to treat mental or neurological disorders, to help them concentrate. A study by the University of New Hampshire last year found 16.2 per cent of American students of New Hampshire last year found to treat mental or neurological disorders wouldn’t worry.”

Ben said: “I will be sticking to coffee and, after half an hour, completing another ‘medium’ sudoku. I used to do it at about 2am, and I’d end up going to bed not having done much. This second experience was particularly good or bad, but it was adequate for the next day’s supervision. It is certainly possible that the beneficial effect I noticed had a strong link between taking Ritalin and doing Adherall, and drinking coffee or an energy drink to stay alert. It’s hard to draw a line ethically,” he said. “Colleges would discourage this for any students who felt it necessary to be taking stimulants to help with their studies and/or examinations, and would work with them in other ways.”

Professor Robbins, however, has argued that there are no intrinsic ethical differences between taking Ritalin and Adherall. “It’s hard to legislate against, particularly as restricting access to these drugs would be difficult.”

He went on to suggest that Britain should prepare for the use of “cognitive enhancers” on the internet. “It’s hard to legislate against, except in a competitive situation where there would be inequalities of access – in exam situations, for example. We’ve been being currently being considered by a report by the Academy of Medical Sciences, on which I should serve.”

One student has suggested such drugs could be helpful to him. “It is certainly becoming more widespread in academic circles. ‘I have been of- fered similar drugs by friends when I’ve been at conferences, without asking for it,” she said. “Professor Robbins’ study showed that he had similar experiences.”

A report published by the British Medical Association last week has called for public discussion on ethics. “There is something startling and poten- tially worrying about interventions that try to subtly change the way we think. We control such facets of personality, individuality and our sense of self,” she said. “We are emphasizing that the long-term ef- fects of taking such drugs over a long period of time, particularly the effect on the developing brain, are still being assessed.”

Robbins’ university has con- demned the use of such drugs by students. “The University does not approve of any non-medicinal drug users. ‘Colleges would discourage this for any students who felt it neces- sary to be taking stimulants to help with their studies and/or examinations, and would work with them in other ways.’”

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“I was completely focused - I had this massive drive to work”

I have tried Ritalin a couple of times. I heard about people using it in America, and I was given some by an American friend who was going to throw them away. Each time I tried Ritalin it was for composing through the night for a deadline the next morning.

I tried it because I was having problems sitting down and doing the work, often getting easily distracted before important deadlines. I needed to get my work done in one or two sittings, and not knowing much about recommended dosage. The first time I did notice a beneficial effect, and wrote a substantial amount. I was able to concentrate a little better, moving more quickly on the next bar of music, rather than focusing on the previous, tinkering with it, wondering how it could sound better. It was also helping me to study.

Whether or not this altered process reflected a more efficient style of working, or merely impeded my own critical faculties, producing more work of a lower quality, I cannot say. The music I wrote was not particularly good or bad, but it was adequate for the next day’s supervision.

The second time I tried it, a few months later, I noticed no positive effect at all. I was more tired that night anyway, and didn’t stick with it for long.

I ended up going to bed not having done much. This second experience made me reassess the first, perhaps it hadn’t had that much effect after all. I was the kind of student who worked in short, concentrated bursts followed by long periods of inactivity anyway, so staying up all night to produce two weeks’ work, as I had done the first time, was not that out of the ordinary.

It is certainly possible that the beneficial effect I noticed was more placebo than anything else. Anyway, having used up what I had, I decided not to get any more, and trusted in the old staples of coffee and cigarettes during exam term.
Lion Yard at risk of collapse

» Shopping centre’s supporting wall ‘cracked’ and not secured to foundations

EMMA INKESTER
Senior News Reporter

Urgent safety checks are taking place at the Cambridge Lion Yard this week after engineers discovered that one of the shopping centre’s largest walls is at risk of collapse.

The danger will delay the 15 month long refurbishment of the new central library by six months, and leave Cambridgeshire County Council with a bill of £1 million. Council spokesman Glenn Thwaites talked about the threat posed by the wall. “It is cracked in places, and the worst-case scenario is that it could have collapsed - although we believe that probably would not have happened. Needless to say the safety of the public is our main concern.”

The fault was noticed by engineers surveying the centre’s old library building. They noticed that one of the shopping centre’s largest walls is at risk of collapse.

Thwaites explained the situation: “The present building has an open patio-style area on the third floor, and part of the design of the new scheme involves covering this with a roof, to increase the floor space of the library. It was discovered that the wall, which is three storeys high, and four in some places, is not tied in to the concrete structure of the building with steel ties, as it should be.”

Of the imminent refurbishment of the central library Thwaites said: “It now looks like it will be next summer when the new library will open, rather than next spring, as we had originally planned.”

Managers are attempting to reassure the public that the wall has been shored up and that it is still safe to shop in Lions Yard. Checks are being carried out on the rest of the shopping centre to ensure that the problem is not widespread.

One wall is said to be ‘not appropriately fixed’ to the building.

This man is Friedrich Nietzsche. He believed that one should aspire to become der Übermensch

ANGELA FANSHAW
Scholars at Gonville and Caius College were angered this week when it emerged that they would not be receiving invitations to the college’s annual Perse Feast.

The feast, which is held just after the end of Michaelmas term, is usually attended by third and fourth-year undergraduates who have achieved a first in their end-of-year examinations. But a rise in the number of fellows and scholars has forced the college to exclude third-years from the celebrations. Instead, they will be invited to a second feast, the Drosier Feast, held in Lent term.

One finalist said, “It genuinely upsets me. I was really looking forward to it.” Another affected undergraduate said that he had chosen not to travel by coach to this year’s Varsity ski trip because it departed on December 7, the same day he anticipated attending the Feast. He explained that he would now “miss a whole day of the trip” for no reason.

The decision to change the college’s policy was taken by the Feast Management Committee on June 20 2007, but students were only informed this week, a delay which has provoked criticism of college. “The thing that is pissing me off isn’t the specifics about the feast, it's the fact that college, as usual, neither consulted nor informed us of this decision when it was taken,” one student told Varsity. He added, “I think it’s symptomatic of certain college administrators’ complete disregard for students.” On the matter of the Perse Feast, though, the college has been apologetic. Caius’ Domestic Bursar, Ian Herd, has sent a letter dated 13 November to all those involved stating that he is “sorry” that “communication over the Perse Feast has been defective. We realise now that it would have been more efficient to avoid any misunderstanding by letting all scholars know of the new arrangements sooner, and we apologise for this. I am glad that we have been able to put the picture straight with almost a month to go before the date of the Feast.”

Sir Christopher Hum, Master of Caius, told Varsity that he was sorry for the confusion caused, but said that he was “glad” that the Drosier Feast, which had been discontinued for “reasons of economy” some years ago, was to be reinstated. He added, “This gives us the chance also to invite a slightly larger number of college guests (people prominent in the University and in public life), thereby showing a more friendly face to the outside world.”

This latest controversy comes amidst a general rise in student dissatisfaction with the college’s administration this term. Caius is the only college in Cambridge in which undergraduates are forced to buy a fixed number of “dinner tickets” for evening hall, a long-standing bone of contention. Discontent has also been inflamed this term by kitchens having frequently run out of food and by the removal of hobs from kitchens. In addition, there have been reports of college officials entering sleeping students’ bedrooms without their permission to take down posters stuck up with banned Blu-Tac.

Caius scholars banned from their own feast

This is the Varsity

Nominate your friends.
Nominate yourself.
100@varsity.co.uk

ONE WALL IS SAID TO BE ‘NOT APPROPRIATELY FIXED’ TO THE BUILDING.

MARIANNA XENOPHONTOS
Student debt to be sold to private sector

ALEX CLYMO

The government has announced plans to sell student debt to the private sector, provoking fear that it may abandon the low interest rates currently paid by students on maintenance and tuition fee loans.

The sale of the debt, which is currently worth approximately £1.1 million, is expected to raise around £1 billion.

According to the government, “the transactions will represent good value for money, including a genuine risk transfer to the capital markets”.

But the National Union of Students has expressed concern that once the debt has been passed over to the private sector, the government may abandon the low interest rate that applies to these loans. At present, students only pay enough interest to cover inflation.

NUS President Gemma Tumelty said, “The fact that the government is yet again selling off the student loan book raises questions about the long-term sustainability of a funding system that encourages long-term debt.”

The government has insisted that it will keep control of all loan terms and conditions, including interest rates, but this provides no guarantee that rates will remain low. Many university Vice-Chancellors think that top-up fees will have to at least double after the funding system for higher education is reviewed in 2009.

Since loans are subsidised by the government, it is possible that fee increases could lead to an interest rate hike as it is unlikely that the government would be able to fully subsidise these increased loans.

There are also fears that the sale of the loans will require the disclosure of personal information to third parties. Tumelty has said that “the NUS takes information security extremely seriously. If the government proposals allowed data to be shared with credit reference agencies, we would oppose them.”

Tumelty also raised questions about what the government plans to do with the money raised from the sale. “Since the £6 billion has been raised from students via their loan debts, it should be ploughed back directly into higher education rather than being absorbed into other education commitments, laudable as those might be.”
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NUS announce ‘historic’ reforms

» CUSU back plans to speedtrack changes by an extraordinary conference of student unions

KATHERINE FAULKNER
Chief News Editor

CUSU are backing proposals to revolutionise the National Union of Students, despite claims by some student groups that the proposals are an attempt to “cut out democracy.”

If ratified, the reforms, which the NUS has called “the most significant set of changes in the history of the organisation”, will restructure the organisation’s policy making procedures and create a board of trustees comprised of both students and legal and financial “experts.” These experts will “share NUS values” oversee its activities.

CUSU has put itself forward as one of the NUS-affiliated student unions needed nationally to call an “extraordinary conference” dealing with these reforms, after Mark Fletcher expressed his support.

“We’re happy to see that the NUS is moving in the right direction,” said Pete Coulthard, CUSU academic officer. “These proposals aren’t perfect but they will hopefully make the NUS more effective.”

However, Ed Maltby of the Education Not For Sale group’s Cambridge branch has called the decision to hold an extraordinary conference “secretive and undemocratic.” He says: “For years, the right wing of the NUS has been trying to cut democracy. This latest trick is merely a continuation of the NUS executive’s long-standing hostility to democracy in our union.” Maltby argues that the conference will be “unrepresentative and massively expensive” and asks, “Why can’t the matter be put to Annual Conference, where all representatives will be elected, not just last-minute appointees?”

Defending the proposals, NUS vice president for Education Wes Streeting said: “I enthusiastically support these reforms. Far from happening too fast, I’d say they’re overdue. We’ve got democratic structures that are totally outdated.”

Wes Streeting argues that the way in which the NUS is currently functioning is unsustainable.

“That’s no way to run an organisation. Despite the best will of NUS officers the style of governance has created recurrent political and financial crises.”

It is hoped that the proposal, though cost-neutral, will make the union more effective and install the requisite skills and experience to prevent further financial mismanagement. Streeting also hopes the restructuring of policy areas will end what he believes to be the dominance of “over-represented far left voices”. He is vocal in his criticism of this “tag-bag” of dissidents, who he says “are the only people who benefit from the current system, which is undemocratic and has allowed them to entrench themselves onto a national executive committee.”

“What they really mean by democracy is that they want control. It’s a total disgrace that these people as a political minority think they can dictate NUS policy. They have fielded far-left candidates in every presidential election and year on year they have been rejected by students. People should be under no illusions these are individuals with vested interests.”

University replace diversity officer with consultants

EMMA INKESTER
Senior Reporter

Cambridge University’s Equality and Diversity department has made the decision not to continue the University’s Head of Equality and Diversity’s six month contract.

The position may be left vacant for three to six months, and a top consultancy firm has been asked to do the job in the interim.

Victoria Showunmi has not been asked by the University to renew her contract when it expires on 23 November and has been informed that it would be too expensive to continue to employ her while a replacement is found. Showunmi has been asked to step down immediately. Her place will be filled by specialist consultants Schneider Ross.

An anonymous source told Varsity: “What’s happened seems to suggest that elements within the university are pushing Victoria Showunmi out of the back door perhaps because of her high level of activity on equality and diversity.”

“It is very worrying that such a highly ranked member and successful member of staff is being treated in this way.”

However, a University spokesperson said that while Showunmi’s contribution to Equality and Diversity initiatives has been immense, it was always the intention to proceed to a permanent arrangement to further develop provision and service in this important area.

Showunmi has spent the last six months identifying various initiatives to further equality in Cambridge, and has been praised for her developments. CUSU Sabbatical officers told Varsity that a link has now been made between the officers and the diversity department which has helped to build relationships and support undergraduate students.

Elly Shepherd, CUSU Women’s Officer, described her work as “a massive step forward for the university in equality and diversity”.

Andrew Walro, CUSU Welfare Officer, expressed worries concerning the future of diversity within Cambridge University.

“Victoria has done a lot in getting things started within the university in terms of Equality and Diversity”, she said. “However her legacy will be short-lived if, as the rumours go, anything about claim, a team of consultants take over this role.”

In particular I think that the work going on in terms of the Disability Equality Scheme will be put to the bottom of a pile, which I find worrying will completely undermine the experience of students with disabilities within the university.”

Junior Juma Penge spoke of his disappointment as Head of Black Students’ Campaign. He told Varsity that he is “distraught” at the prospect of Showunmi’s departure.

“I think the university needs to take action, and get someone else ASAP. I understand that she plays an important role, and that her position supports our campaigns. We are not impressed.”

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When it’s good to talk

It can sometimes seem like none of the colleges want students to have fun at all. The last few weeks have seen the cancellation of the Peterhouse May Hall, (yes, it has been cancelled, despite the early denials of a rather flustered JCR President,) and the decision by Caius not to invite its scholars to their own Feast. Queens’ Ents were cancelled by a proved Dean and then reinstated after an ICR managed to put up a sufficiently convincing show of penitence. A narrow escape, and one which is sure to have further soured already tetchy relations between staff and students. The common denominator in each case is a difference in estimation of the student body. At Queens’, the Dean is understood to have been angered by what he perceived to be a lack of respect amongst students, culminating in the abuse of a fire extinguisher. Undergraduates were frustrated at the lack of meaningful dialogue to resolve the issue but in the end had to bite their tongues in order to get their Ent back. Their response was mature and considered, suggesting that perhaps this kind of dialogue is what they were after. The obvious problem is that the Dean was dealing with quite different characters to whoever decided to play around with the fire extinguisher.

At Peterhouse, college authorities scrambled the Ball without consulting a single student and, it is believed, as a direct response to poor academic performance. At a small college, we were told, fifteen students constitutes much too high a percentage of overall results (not, of course, that anyone gives a hoot about the Tompkins Table). At Caius, students again found themselves denied what they thought would be a memorable night without any consultation. One scholar would say “the thing that is pissing me off isn’t the lack of student input, it’s that the college didn’t consider the students at all.”

Both Universities are no strangers to a sort of paternalism. It can sometimes seem like none of the colleges want students to have fun at all. The last few weeks have seen the cancellation of the Peterhouse May Hall, yes, it has been cancelled, despite the early denials of a rather flustered JCR President, and the decision by Caius not to invite its scholars to their own Feast. Queens’ Ents were cancelled by a proved Dean and then reinstated after an ICR managed to put up a sufficiently convincing show of penitence. A narrow escape, and one which is sure to have further soured already tetchy relations between staff and students. The common denominator in each case is a difference in estimation of the student body. At Queens’, the Dean is understood to have been angered by what he perceived to be a lack of respect amongst students, culminating in the abuse of a fire extinguisher. Undergraduates were frustrated at the lack of meaningful dialogue to resolve the issue but in the end had to bite their tongues in order to get their Ent back. Their response was mature and considered, suggesting that perhaps this kind of dialogue is what they were after. The obvious problem is that the Dean was dealing with quite different characters to whoever decided to play around with the fire extinguisher.

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There is a culture in Cambridge colleges, probably always has been too, of officialism rather enjoying being able to totally ignore or money that you had as a single person, but you are a parent with responsibilities, and so need to adjust to, not have the responsibilities adjust to you. I am very grateful to the university for taking me on as a student, and I feel that although I strongly disagree with the article “Barriers from within” from issue 694 of Varsity (2013) which stated that the university fails to integrate its foreign students effectively. As far as I am concerned, this is entirely contradictory to my experience. I am an Erasmus student from Madrid and am living in Trinity Hall. Although my English is not perfect, I have managed to make some great friends. I do not feel at all lonely and I was impressed by all of the social activities arranged for the new students to get to know everyone, which seemed considerably better compared with the experiences shared by some of my friends at other universities. Moreover, from the majority of international students I have met in Cambridge have had no problem with integration. The only problem is that due to the huge amount of work we have each week, we do not have a many opportunities to socialize with our English friends.

Daniel Pérez Trinity Hall

Positive about Parenting

I would like to write in response to the article on “Unseen Student Parents”. I think a very well-edited and well written piece it is. The only problem is that due to the huge amount of work we have each week, we do not have a many opportunities to socialize with our English friends.

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News nightmare

Newspaper sales are failing, the blogosphere is expanding and serious journalism is under threat. Bite-sized reports have replaced in-depth analysis and quality has been sacrificed for quantity. But for John Lloyd, contributing editor to the Financial Times, these changes offer a challenge that the media sector should seek to overcome.

The threat to journalism in democracies is not what they were. Censorship, suppression, imprisonment of editors, blackouts are not to another age. Now, instead, the talk about journalism is that it is threatened not by power but by indifference. Our enemies are not political power so much as market power, and the effort to impose one voice but the huge proliferation of choice; not a public forbidden to read or see or listen to what we wish to tell them, but unwilling to even sample it. The public's enemy is not the press; it includes: The internet which produces information in huge quantities for no up-front cost; who supply opinion free; satellite and cable technology, allowing TV choice; free newspapers, taking away newspapers' markets; advertisers who support opinion magazines and TV news programmes; editors, not caring about politics and foreign affairs; consumers, not being willing to pay for not for profit institutions. Newspapers are developing websites which include the journalism done for the papers – and increasingly, journalism is aimed at the national public. It is thus done for the web. And above all, people are developing websites which include the journalism done for the web. And above all, people are able to put together their universe of news from the vast libraries of opinion available online – everything from serious titles, may continue to need support, or the subscriber/supporter model, will be more than one. Already, a few good deals are being made. But there is no point in doing so will open a new chapter. The job of journalists now was “to save journalism itself…to ensure the survival – if they face the future of journalism, we must now have faith intelligently – as electronic products, which will look something like this. Magazines containing serious journalism, ossified, investigative journalism, are becoming accustomed to getting news for free; corporations who cut newsgroups, concentrate ownership and crowd out family companies dedicated to high news standards, editors who lose often assign reporters to hard stories, do not want a lot of information on current affairs or business, or foreign affairs are served – free. They are, of course, a great threat to the remaining establishment – especially the remaining city evening papers. The who are alarmed by these trends is our media sector. If we care about journalism, we must now have faith that the “way” of how it is: there is never

News is now not handed down, but is material to have the money, which was brought out by John Carrol’s blast against newspaper

The loss seems to be in what has been thought of as the general news which is aimed at the national public. This had been viewed by those who made it or wrote it as bringing the nation together around a common agenda. It reached its apex after in radio then in TV news, with the image and to an extent the reality of the nation gathering round the radio or TV to be informed on issues of the day. But newspapers shared that – though they differed greatly, they usually agreed on the choice of the most important stories. Now, mostly, they don’t.

One could lengthen the list of doom. But there is no point in doing that here. The larger issue is that which was brought out by John Carroll: that the job of journalists now is “large, independent, principled, questioning, deep-digging”.

The great newspapers will survive – if they face the future intelligently – as electronic products, by developing a mix of professional and amateur journalism and to an extent the reality of the nation gathering round the radio or TV to be informed on issues of the day. But newspapers shared that – though they differed greatly, they usually agreed on the choice of the most important stories. Now, mostly, they don’t.
**A poor investment**

Don’t fall for the city lights at the cost of your dreams

By Natalie Woollam

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**Embracing the enemy**

Despite its hazardous past, nuclear power works

By Michael Hilton

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**Why do socialists make so much noise about the working class?**

Why, in a society where people do, do we privilege the working class above all other parts of society as an agent (the agent) of social change?

Is it because we are ridden with envy agent (the agent) of social change, or perhaps we are afraid of being judged against people who happen to have more than we do? Well, no.

It is a very difficult thing to see the wretched of the earth, just because the wretched of the earth are the people we put workers on a pedestal because they are more oppressed than any other group in society. Again, no.

Socialists do not put workers at the centre of our programme because we think that anyone else, or consider them to be, person for person, morally superior people. An individual worker is no more inherently given to generosity or heroism than anyone else. Class struggle is not about a fight between good and bad people. It is a fight between classes, which are necessarily more than the sum of their parts.

First you have to teach its workers the benefits of organisation. In the workplace, workers pool their labour in order to achieve more together than they could alone. In this way they receive a very fundamental lesson about the necessity of collective effort, none of which can be taught in discipline – in a word, solidarity.

Secondly, workers are driven toOrganisation (or collective bargaining) towards a vision of a new society, where the minute aFrame that are not satisfied are satisfied, they are bodilyserviced.

…

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**It is high time the British embraced a dangerous, waste-producing, genetically-mutating menace.**

The disasters were tragic but it is out of proportion with the fear spread by the nuclear industry. Despite its hazardous past, nuclear power works is the single best prospect for reducing carbon emissions. Without the efforts of the British nuclear industry in the last six weeks, global warming must be one of the most beautiful in the world in the last six weeks.

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**“It is high time that the loudest voices were not those environmentalists who are unable to see the bigger picture”**

As with every technology, it has improved drastically in the years since the British lost interest. By 2012, both France and Norway will have begun selling electricity generation is the single best prospect for reducing carbon emissions. Without the efforts of the British nuclear industry in the last six weeks, global warming must be one of the most beautiful in the world in the last six weeks.
Quality, not quantity
The school leaving age should not be raised to eighteen

In a recent interview, the mother of a twenty-three-year-old alcoholic, who died from illnesses directly relating to alcohol abuse, expressed concern that a failure in the educational system to provide children with “fixed aspirations” is partly responsible for teenage desperateness, and subsequent reliance on drugs and alcohol. She described how students at her son's sixth form college had been able to flit from course to course without question, “without anyone asking what they wanted to do with their lives.”

Reading this brought back memories of Year 9 Careers Guidance, which in my school basically consisted of meandering around for an hour or so during PSHE on a computer programme that generated a list of jobs based on a series of vaguely worded questionnaires. This was followed by a five-minute session with a counsellor who was expected to offer advice on everything from acting to investment banking. The computer had suggested “leather worker” (I’m a vegetarian), and the counsellor had swiftly mapped out my future on a sheet of A5 in response to a few words mumbled under pressure, I can’t say I was particularly convinced, or inspired, by the experience - and no follow-up meeting was ever proposed.

The next week the debate returned to smoking and abortion, and our personal futures. I cast a retrospective glance back towards making them more employable, is bizarre.”

Inflicting a criminal record on adolescents, as part of a process geared to force students to comply is entirely the government’s frustration at the failure of policies that have been implemented in the past to enforce these laws. The plane has been criticized by various organizations, including the National Union of Teachers, who, whilst supporting the extension of compulsory education in principle, feel that the use of threats and persecution to force students to comply is entirely the wrong approach – the authorities should, they say, "supporting young people, not criminalising them.”

Inflicting a criminal record on adolescents, as part of a process apparently geared towards making them more employable, is bizarre.”

By Lindsey Kennedy

Until yesterday, I regarded myself as being of a sturdy disposition. Yet as I squatted on my seat on the C1 last, seasonally turning the yellow-green colour of a recently expired leaf, I was unrecognisable from the pre-pubescent who had manfully outlasted his peers in the clandestine late-night viewing of Channel 5’s “Plastic Surgery Live!”. I’d rather endure a botched breast reduction than drive past the Christmas Routemaster if Cilla Black personally commanded the entire magpie population of America, it would take all the years between now and the Nativ- ity to amass a comparably revolting mound of distastefully shiny trinkets.

The next week the debate returned to smoking and abortion, and our personal futures. On youth unemployment on the rise, we could see the terrible face of the agonised young man – the individual needs of students are surely capable of judging for themselves, and whether they want to remain in education.

Considering that you can legally leave home (or be thrown out of it), get married and have children at sixteen, and sign your life away to the army a year later, you might think that responsibility for your own education was a minor issue in comparison. But such inconsistencies are bountiful – a glance at recent headlines reveals that whilst it is now illegal for under-eighteens to buy cigarettes, Gordon Brown has agreed to hold a debate in response to calls from the Scottish National Party to lower the voting age to sixteen.

Rather than indicative of genuine concern that adolescents are being neglected too early, these reforms reflect the actions of an anxious government who, having failed to persuade young people to make the choices they would wish them to, are now withdrawing choice altogether. True, this may prove ultimately beneficial to teenagers who might otherwise have limited their employment options by dropping out too early, but it also misses the point.

What needs to be acknowledged is that, if sixteen-year-olds are apathetic and academi- cally unambitious, this is owing in no small part to issues in the educational system itself – its failure to motivate and inspire, or to help its students develop clear goals and tailor their studies so as to achieve them. The main problem with keeping students in compul- sory education for another two years is the government’s frustratingly precriptive attitude – the individual needs of students are often ignored, whilst practical options such as apprenticeships are overlooked. If Brown’s aim is for Britain to produce better qualified, more employable school leavers, he needs to start paying attention to improving the quality of education, not increasing its length.

The school leaving age should not be raised to eighteen.
We are currently looking for students interested in joining the Editorial Committee to read submissions in prose and poetry, copy-editors and general support.

To apply, please email with your contact information, which position you are interested in, and a short statement on your relevant background or interest in being involved.

Please submit your details by 23rd November, 5pm.
Tony Benn, the socialist politician who gave up his peerage to sit in the House of Commons and went on to head the Stop the War Coalition, sat down for a cup of tea with Camilla Temple.

On our way in to the interview with Tony Benn, we pass a tramp sitting on a small stool and puffing on his pipe. He is wearing a red bobble hat and is wrapped up in a large coat. Neither I nor the photographer paid him much attention.

After we have entered, a lady asks us to wait and tells us reverently that “Tony is just outside having a puff”. I imagine Benn would be quite pleased that, despite having been such an eminent politician, he could pass so easily for a tramp. He is deeply aware of those whose voices are ignored by our society, from British students to Saddam Hussein, and works hard to get their voices heard. I imagine he might also have found the aesthetics of such a description droolly satisfying.

When we do meet, Benn speaks endearingly of “the young people”, an old fashioned phrase which reminds us that this man, who remains a driving force behind many important protests, is in fact eighty two years old. There’s a very grandfatherly side to the grand old man of left-wing Labour politics; this is the role he slips into at the end of our interview, posing for the camera - a photo

Continues on next page
Tony Benn: a politician at all times

where there were seventy seven nationalities and a refugee centre in the school. He is clearly delighted with so liberal an upbringing. “When I went to visit the school it was like talking to the UN general assembly.”

Benn looks back with admiration on his own generation’s political engagement. “All our debates about the future, they weren’t theoretical debates, they were always, ‘What can we do?’ In the 1930s there was mass unemployment but we didn’t have any unemployment during the war. We had full employment by killing Germans, why couldn’t you have full employment recruiting nurses and teachers? The Welfare State grew out of peoples’ experience.”

In Benn’s view, the Welfare State is a prime example of a political change resulting from strong public feeling. Benn’s own political views have grown out of watching this happen. He believes passionately in the power of demonstration and the responsibility of Parliament to respond to public feeling. He spent fifty years in Parliament and describes it as “the buckle that links the demonstration to Downing Street.”

“Born in 1925, Benn was a young boy at the start of the Second World War and has been profoundly influenced by his experiences. “When I hear of bombings attacking Fallujah or Baghdad or Kabul, I remember what it was like when I was a kid in London during the Blitz. I was terrified every night we went into the shelter.”

“When I came back to university, I’d been a pilot in the RAF and I’d been in Africa for a year. I’d lost a brother in the war and lots of my school comrades were killed. I was very much against war, a great believer in the UN.”

He articulates what many feel about the war in Iraq, and he has been saying it, repeatedly and consistently since the debate began. “They say it’s a war on terror but that’s an extraordinary phrase, it’s actually a war on Iraq and Afghani- stan. It’s far worse than a stealth bomber and a suicide bomber are moral equivalents, both kill innocent people for political purposes. This war on terror is a complete illusion, there’s nothing new as a war on terror, but they’ve found a word that makes it a bit more respectable.”

At the time of the Iraq controversy, Benn did what pretty much no one else has admitted doing. He asked Saddam Hussein two simple questions: “Have you got weapons? and ‘Do you have links with Al Qaeda?’ He received the answer ‘No’ in both cases, and of course I don’t know if it was true that he didn’t have weapons, but it was. I knew that he didn’t have links with Al Qaeda. Saddam Laden hated Saddam because Saddam was secular. It was an attempt by Saddam to get people to show that the argument for the war was a phoney argument. The way he was doing it was with weapons at all.”

He is clear and outspoken on the war which is still relatively uncommon amongst senior political voices. “Blair lied to us; he said there were weap- ons when there weren’t. He said it was about weapons, which it wasn’t; it was about Bush wanting to topple Saddam. It was an oil war presented as a democra- cy fight against terror and that is a complete lie. Blair said he took a tough decision. He took the easiest decision in the world; he took orders from someone stronger than he was.”

In response to questions about how Blair has managed to get away with these lies, Benn points a finger at the media. “Language is terribly important. You could hear a news bulletin that sounded like this: ‘The hard line president of the United States, following his controvers- ial visit to Israel, is to dispatch 160,000 American insurgents into Iraq to launch terrorist at- tacks on Iran and Syria.’ That is what we hear about Ahmadinejad, but that is actually true about Bush. If you look at the foreign relations of America, that’s friendly fire.”

Benn is extremely charming throughout, but he never lets you forget his trade. He peers over his glasses and answers questions with the gentleness of an elderly man, but the steely determination of a shrewd politician. Benn has often said that change comes from public feeling and demonstration at the bottom of the political hierarchy, so I asked him why he’d spent 50 years in Parliament, his response was a justification of the role of Parlia- ment, rather than a justification of his own choice. It was a good answer and a very neat sidestep. It’s not that he doesn’t listen to you, but he has his soundbites - lots of mini-speeches on lots of different issues. He’ll always pick up on the theme and answer with the appropriate soundbite, but there is an overwhelming sense throughout the interview that he isn’t really prepared to get involved in dialogue. It makes him an extremely difficult man to argue with.

Tony Benn: a politician at all times

This week it is revealed in the pages of this esteemed organ (Issue 666, as it happens) that Sir Richard Branson, that peddler of all things Virginial and a breathing example that being Ginger, bearded and left- leaning need hold nobody back, bought up Neddevik Island in the British Virgin Islands (where else?) for a mere £900,000. He claims that he had to scrape around for the money, but I find that pretty hard to believe, unless by scraping around he meant “dipping in” to his gigantic Scrooge McDuck-style pile of cash.

But anyway, the concern of this column is not how hard Sir Richard had to scrape around to find his island, but rather what he could do with the rather greater wealth he has humped into subsequently. According to Wikipedia, this is a substantially-acquired pile which currently stands at approximately £4 billion. By this stage, it surely needs me to describe to you the ramifications of this pile of potential future island-purchasing.

Now, Richard Branson may feel that one island is quite enough for one man, especially when that one island is raking in $3550,000 a week, but we're to go on a spree, and land himself some more lands, he would be able to buy a pretty decent chunk of them. And this is where it gets weird. Divide £4 billion by 60,000 (not a piece of wishy-washy arithmetic most of us are faced with on a daily basis), and things start to get very, very weird. If Richard Branson decided to divide his £4 billion by 60,000, he'd be to buy exactly 666 Neckner Islands. 666.

The Mark of the Beast. No wonder he made the Virgin logo red. And no wonder he styles himself like Satan. Mr Branson, if you would seem, is not the like- able rogue everyone wants to believe, but in fact a seafaring eccentocrat of Mannomon, sworn to buy plots of land surrounded by ocean and build luxury villas of his own choosing, a complete world of his own design, indeed. And once again, you heard it here first.

Profile of the Week
You’ve put it online, we’ve taken it off!
This Is You  Sporting Horror

Lycra vest, explained ironically, worn with furious pride
“Gun”, oiled extensively and revealed before pudding

Anti-fog, anti-glare, anti-light, anti-conversational “shades” £400
Lip balm, worn on twine around neck

Semen-threatening shorts, justified as “aerodynamic”
Bulging calf, source of intense pride - “hardest place to gain mass”

Balls (assorted)

Nike Ubershoes, telling you every second of every day
how fat you are, how fast your heart is beating and how
many non-sporting friends you have (few)

Cantabulous/ Oxfordire

Scotland

According to Alex Ferguson “the master race is back.”
Having already crushed our heartstrings, expect
more of the same against the Italians at Hampden on
Saturday.

Bulging calf, source of intense pride -
“hardest place to gain mass”

5th Week
I am literally so, so tired. I
can never do another essay.
I never want to read another
book, all I really want to do is
waddle into a tiny little hole
in the ground and talk to my
mother. Oh wait, there’s three
weeks to go. Uh good. I’m
absolutely delighted.

Pets
Every day I am more puzz-
zed about the day the first
human decided that the best
idea possible would be to take
a small, furry, smelly wild
animal and emotionally an-
thropomorphise them against
their will.

England
Definitely going down (and
cut), to a combination of
countries from the old CCCP.
Proof that no one with a red
face has won anything since
Chris Evans.

McClaren: Red-faced

UndergraduaTelly

We watch TV, so you don’t have to.

Picture the scene, if you will: you
have just finished a lengthy pub
session at closing time (like a lad)
and successfully found your way
home without wetting yourself,
inside the painful contractions of
your WDJK-fitted bladder in the
frosty winter air. You are now
deciding what to do; too pissed
to do any work or reading, too
lonely to have a two-player game of ProEve, and too lazy
to throw saladinas at the loud, drunken,
chino-clad louts beneath your
window, you decide (with a pang
of self-loathing) to turn on your
Freeview television, which prom-
ised so much when you bought it
with its 30+ channels.

(It is worth noting at this
stage that if you have Sky, you
should probably turn your at-
tention to the always-amusing
theatre section of this paper, or
read on and glut at our more
plebian miseries). You quickly
realise that the only things on
at this advanced hour are “Two
Pints of Lager and a Packet of
Crisps” (which is incidentally
a comedy which breaks new
ground in its audacious and
historically unprecedented absence
of jokes) and phone-in quiz
shows in which living legend
Brian Dowling grins at you from a
headset (have you ever noticed
how these presenters are always
glancing nervously away from
the camera, as if there were a
man pointing a gun at them
mouthing “That’s it, keep being
shit, don’t stop”, and winking)
and asks what you think is the
most likely anagram of OBOB.

Yet despite this there are
clear parallels between late-
night Freeview and Cambridge
nightlife. Both are exercises in
a combination of damage-limita-
tion and suicide averision. Indeed,
televisioned Poker (which your
erstwhile correspondent reckons
the most edifying of post-mid-
night TV treats) is almost exactly
analogous to a “night out” at Club
TwentyTwo. Both take place
in seedy-ller, underground rooms
and involve a cast of vomit-spattered,
sporadically-smartly-dressed
men losing a lot of money, with
the odd token female (generally
slightly overweight or otherwise
hideous) providing the eye-
candy. In an interesting aside,
my friend Adrian has uncovered
the great mystery surrounding
the rebranding of the club once
known as Life (surely an exam-
ple of ironic gesture politics in
nightclub nomenclature, given
the blood pools collected on the
periphery of the dance floor, the
sweat dripping from the ceiling,
and the rotting human entrails
floating in the beer barrels
deep beneath Waterstone’s).
The only explanation of your pint’s
dehydrally taste). Twenty Two,
it has emerged after painstaking
research, is the number of limp
cadavers with which the bounc-
ers hope to fill the trade bins
down that fateful passageway
before 2am on every Saturday.

But to return to our subject,
such staples of the freeview diet as
The Hits and The Hits occupy
a unique place in the hearts of
those who do not like News 24 or
BBC comedies set in Runcorn,
and haven’t discovered Asterix
books as superior post-pub en-
tertainment. Although on The
Hits “Umbrella” is still played
every other song, and on TMF
they show programmes about
Hulk Hogan’s inauspicious rela-
tionship with his weird-ass kids,
they make you realise how rela-
tive the idea of musical quality
is – spend enough time sitting
in front of The Feeling, Britney’s
post-Lucky work, or “Wham!
Best of” countdowns and you’ll
find yourself jumping for joy
when KYT Tourist, Girls Aloud
or even Emma Bunton’s solo
stuff comes on (no-one can deny
the haunting beauty of What
 Took You So Long?).

The big question when trying
objectively to assess the quality
of these two channels is: Why
are they the two very worst
music channels you don’t have to pay
for? The answer must surely be
that they are the two very worst
music channels, not good enough
even to exist within the stagger-
ingly unselective Murdoch media
empire. This leads us to our more
profound question: why is Freeview in general so shit,
leaving us either to find some-
thing else to do after midnight
or watch some blokes in a dark
room, pretending to be asleep,
or watch some blokes in a dark
room, pretending to be asleep,
or even Emma Bunton’s solo
stuff comes on (no-one can deny
the haunting beauty of What
 Took You So Long?).

We watch TV, so you don’t have to.

(Right) Hogan: Hulking
Sir Richard Branson is one of the world’s most recognisable figures – since his teens an icon of entrepreneurship and philanthropy, and living proof that you needn’t follow the beaten track to achieve immense success. Guy Kiddey, caught up with him to talk spaceships, babes, business, and vast sums of money raised for charity.

I thought I’d begin by finding out exactly how you go about your charitable campaigning? I use myself quite a bit - speeches, mainly. I brought along Elvis Costello from England last night, and we put Necker Island (Sir Richard’s Caribbean paradise) up for auction. We’re generally trying to have a fun way of raising money. We raised 30 million dollars last night.

Is that from ticket sales? I put about 30 days a year aside for making speeches and trying to raise money, and then about another five months a year working on the Virgin Unite Foundation, and then the other six months working on the Virgin group and taking it into new areas.

Your public image is, amongst other things, of a great philanthropist – do you agree? What has inspired this philanthropy in you? I think that ever since I was a teenager, being a lad of the Sixties, I have been interested in seeing whether I can make a difference. I set up a student advisory centre when I was in my teens, which is still running actually, but under a new name: it’s called HELP now, and essentially has changed somewhat in its approach, but young students have got all kinds of problems, or they certainly did in those days.

Was your ambition to set up that service due to personal experience, or did you regard yourself as quite a strong personality as a young person, which you could use to help to others? I think it was a mixture of the two. I had my fair share of social issues when I was a teenager, but equally I ran a student magazine and was in a good position to tackle the problems. We had a service where people could phone up if they were contemplating suicide, we could talk about abortions and so on…

You’ve always been quite a crusader, and this crusade is still very prominent in your life, though it seems to have evolved over time. Yes, I think that capitalism seems to be the only system in the world that works. Communism has been tried and failed, but the trouble with capitalism is that the extreme wealth goes to relatively few people. Therefore, I think that extreme responsibility goes to extreme people, successful entrepreneurs. Quite a lot of the profits that Virgin makes over the years will be ploughed back into trying to tackle global issues, and then I will be trying to use some entrepreneurial skill, making sure that this money is sustainable.

You’re very self-aware. One of the questions I was going to ask is whether you are at all embarrassed by your extreme wealth, and does that conflict with any communist leanings you might have had when you were younger? I am not embarrassment as long as I use it properly. The critical thing is that you make sure that money doesn’t languish in a bank account; it is used to transform industries, to employ new people, to tackle social issues around the world. As long as you use it constructively, you can sleep well at night. I have personal luxuries: my biggest personal luxury is this beautiful island that I bought when I was 27 years old in the Caribbean. It cost £60,000, money which I had to scrounge around to get. It’s now one of the most beautiful places in the world. In order to assuage my guilt, having something that special, I rent it out when I am not there and last night, for example, we auctioned off a week there and got $350,000 for a week on the island.

You have spoken a lot about sustainability. I notice that you are quite interested in making your fleet of aeroplanes a greener fleet by having them run on biofuels. Has any progress been made in that respect? Yes. We have a number of dirty businesses: we have the airline business, the train business, which is much less dirty, and we have decided to put all of the profits from those two businesses into developing cleaner fuels, so that we can balance out the bad effects somewhat. What we are trying to do is develop fuels that are clean, and the initial thing with planes is to see whether we can prove that biofuels will be able to power a jet engine. We have said that sometime next year we will fly a 747 with a part biofuel mix in with the dirty fuel.

Is your decision to investigate the green fuels route a result of the increasing prices in oil? I remember you saying about a year ago that you were concerned about a worldwide recession when oil topped $100 a barrel, which has since happened. Is that a major concern for you? Very often in life there are a number of different reasons for doing things. If I switch the clock back about four years, I read a book called The Skeptical Environmentalist (by Bjorn Lomborg, interviewed in Issue 661), and wasn’t convinced about global warming, and therefore was much more interested in worrying about keeping my oil prices low. Also about four years ago I decided to build an oil refinery to try and bring down the price of my oil. As a result of a meeting I had about that time, and after having read a lot more books, I met James Lovelock, who wrote the Gaia theory, I ended up being very worried about what was happening to the world. We decided to build clean oil refineries. We also are offering a $25 million prize to anybody who can work out how to extract carbon from the atmosphere. James Lovelock is correct in saying that the only way we can save the situation is by removing carbon from the atmosphere.

You must be in a constant battle with your conscience. I am sure you have been tempted to establish a Virgin cheap flights airline in the UK.

The principal reason [that Virgin has not established a cheap flights airline in the UK] is that you have to look where there is an obvious need. In America, the airline industry is diabolical, so we set up a low fares airline. The same is true in Australia. In Britain, EasyJet and Ryanair are doing a great job, so there is no need for another low cost airline. We are looking at Russia and Nigeria. The President of Nigeria came to me and said that the Nigerian Airways planes are kept crashing, and we need a safe West African airline.

Innovation is the key, obviously. It is interesting that you have this dedication to Africa. We tend to see lots of money being raised, and a lot of charity and aid being offered to Africa, but I think it is commonly accepted that Africa is not going to get out of its poverty situation really by being able to develop its own industry and infrastructure. I wonder if you have any views on this, and have any ways that you think you might be able to contribute?

First of all, I think you’re right. We have set a number of schemes to deal with this. We have set up the School of Entrepreneurship in Johannesburg, which is training Africans from the townships to become entrepreneurs, to give them the basic skills they need, which is a very difficult thing to do, admittedly. Having Africans build their own businesses is extremely important for the future, and also having overseas companies investing in Africa. Virgin tries to invest in Africa. We already have financial services and mobile phones there.
possible to hate

The Elders, left to right: Graça Machel, Mary Robinson, Jimmy Carter, Nelson Mandela, Richard Branson, Peter Gabriel, Li Xiaoxing, Kofi Annan, Muhammad Yunus, Desmond Tutu

Bought for £60,000 when Branson was 27, a week at Necker Island has just been auctioned off for £350,000

You mentioned that it is quite hard to train people to be entrepre- neurs. There is a Management Course here at Cambridge University. Their opening line is "we can't teach you how to be a good manager, but we can show you the skills you need to become a good manager." I wonder if the reason you decided not to go to university is precisely because of that, because you already have the skills that you thought that you needed.

"If Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Dalai Lama collectively say they want to see you, you are not going to turn them down"

I think the reason I decided not to go to university was because I was never particularly academic, I was dyslexic, and when I was 15 an academic career would not have suited me. At quite a young age, I saw the Vietnam War going on and decided to set up a magazine to give students a voice. My own particular learning was learning the art of survival. I think a good university can give people the tools, but what students have got to be careful about is that, if you leave school when you are 16, you have got nothing to lose, you've got no girlfriend, no mortgage commit- ment. You leave university at 22 or 23, you are beginning to become conservative, and you can suddenly see that you can get yourself a steady job and money...

The bal- lons are behind me. I go for weekend balloon rides, and think it is a wonderful thing to do, but having been pulled out of the sea seven times by helicopter, I have decided that enough is enough on that front. The very excit- ing challenge at the moment is the space programme. We are about two years away, and I will certainly be taking the first flight on that. We have got five spaceships and a few mother ships being built, and we hope that this will be the start of a whole new era of space travel.

That would be the ultimate travel experience, mind broadening experience. Through the technology that we develop being able to take people into space, we hope that we will then be able to develop the future clean planes which can travel across the world in half an hour, by popping them out of the world's atmosphere, and popping them straight back down again. It could be the beginning of something extremely exciting. You are obviously always on the go. Do you ever find that that gets too much? Basically, the answer is no. I have one of the most exciting lives that I could possibly have, I meet thousands of people, I love learning, I am learning all the time. I am in quite a unique position, and I don't want to waste that position. Peter Gabriel and myself recently set up an organisation called The Elders (pictured above), which is fronted by Nelson Mandela. The idea behind it is that if the 12 most respected, wisest people in the world can get together, and look at conflicts and potential conflicts with their moral authority, there will hopefully be a chance to avert conflicts or stop conflicts that are already taking place.

Is that not a very idealistic view to take? Organisations like the UN seem to be very optional in the eyes of the big superpowers of the world, (over Iraq, for example,) where the voice of the UN was outright ignored. Do you think that this

The idea behind it is that if the 12 most respected, wisest people in the world can get together, and look at conflicts and potential conflicts with their moral authority, there will hopefully be a chance to avert conflicts or stop conflicts that are already taking place.

The Elders, left to right: Graça Machel, Mary Robinson, Jimmy Carter, Nelson Mandela, Richard Branson, Peter Gabriel, Li Xiaoxing, Kofi Annan, Muhammad Yunus, Desmond Tutu

I am certainly not cynical. There are some leaders who have made some ghostly mistakes. The American President particularly in the last few years, which has set the world back enormously. This must not ever happen again. In this day and age war should be the absolute exception to the rule, and people must be able to come up with alterna- tive ways.

I notice that you often have very beautiful women along- side you in your press shots, and I wonder if you could quickly tell me: How important is sex in advertising?

I must have a very understand- ing wife. All of us men are susceptible to good looking women. Advertising should be fun. One of the most fun promo- tions was the day when I was on my house boat when they were trying to lift the London Eye, sponsored by British Airways, to show it off to the world. It had never been upright before, and I get a telephone call saying that they couldn't get the wheel up, because of a technical problem. All the world's press were there. So we scrambled an airship, and had it fly over the wheel with a huge banner saying "BA CAN'T GET IT UP!"
VIEW Fashion

It’s a hot and steamy Tuesday night. The air is thick, the mirrors are moist, there is a sweet stench of cheesy feet. Yes, you’re in Club 22. You are just hav- ing a little dance to the new Spicegirls’ song, when your ears are suddenly subjected to a painfully high-pitched assault. Has Victoria fi- nally been given that solo she’s been so desperate for all these years? Have the other girls fi- nally realised just how scary Mel B actually is? Oh no, it’s just James Trafford’s scream- ingly gay outfit. Makeover Victim No. 4.

First things fi- rst, there is no light in Club 22 (which is a bonus if you’ve ever ac- tually seen any of the people who frequent it). Save those shades for the morning – you’ll need them for the walk of shame. There is a reason why the label on that vest reads “Underwear”. You may a) think you are saving valuable bedroom time, b) be adhering to the saying “less is more”, or c) showing off your gorgeous, golden glow. a) you’re going home alone dressed like that, love, b) more is more in your case – put some clothes on, and c) it comes out of a can. Everyone looks tanned in the dark. James. No need to waste money on fake tan – spend it on better, or just more, clothes.

Even Johnny and Luciana have to admit that they can’t fi- nd much wrong with the jeans and shoes, but there’s al- ways a little room for improve- ment. We swapped Trafford’s baggy, faded blues for these slimmer, darker denims from Cambridge’s newest store, Bank (£60). We also trimmed down his feet with these slimmer, smarter, Paul Smith shoes from SoleTrader (£75). Everyone gets cold, but, as we all know, Cambridge clubs do not. This leather jacket (£60) from the snazzy new John Lewis store will keep James warm and dry, and from the club, then he can strip off, dance the night away, and show everyone that he is by no means ‘Mr. Lazy’, as his t-shirt (Bank, £25) would suggest. To finish off the Trail- formation, we delicately shoved James’s head under the cold tap in the Ladies’ (much to the dismay of the woman who looked like she really did need to get into the cubicle) to wash off the Malibu Barbie visage and rinse his crispy locks.

Fresh of face and curly of hair, James looks ready to face any- thing. Even Club 22.

All clothes from Dixie’s market stall. Tights from Topshop. Modelled by Alice Edgerley and Izzy Finkel. Styled by Iona Carter. Photographed by Francesca Perry.
French students are currently engaged in the biggest mass movement the country has seen since the massive mobilisation of 2005.

In response to a raft of government attacks on public services, education, workers' rights and immigrants, and in the teeth of massive betrayal by the major students' union, UNEF (the French Student Union) and the Lycées, alongside other public sector employees, are in the process of an unprecedented wave of strikes.

Around a quarter of universities across France are striking, or blockaded, while hundreds of students cram into mass meetings almost daily to decide the course of the movement. In cold lecture theatres across the country, elected strike committees prepare statements and plan demonstrations until late into the night, while university presidents try desperately to split the movement, sending out streams of emails to students and calling in riot police to break picket lines.

The problem is not just in universities; Parisians are hurriedly preparing for the biggest, longest transport strike in years as rail and metro workers take action in defence of their pensions and the right to strike. Staffrooms, too, are rowdier than usual, as teachers and students in colleges and schools across the country organise stoppages in response to the elimination of 11,200 teaching posts nationwide, and in defence of immigrant students threatened with deportation.

Unrest has been brewing since the summer. After his election, the new President Sarkozy started planning a series of major reforms, intended to break the power of the French unions and ease the privatisation of public services. In a nod to the right-wing voters he is trying to charm away from the Front National and towards his own UMP party, Sarkozy also spent the summer laying the groundwork for intensified attacks against immigrants, legal and illegal. These attacks were almost all announced in the summer, and as many as possible were rushed through parliament before the end of the holidays in an attempt (clearly misguided) to avert any kind of mobilisation of the students' movement.

The initial union response was that the government had been rushed through “without proper negotiation”.

“T’m not talking about martyring ourselves. But we need to move now, and unfortunately, strike is our only means of defending ourselves.”

But what was more scandalous to students was that the top brass in UNEF, the major French students' union, chose to "negotiate" with the government on the LRU without properly consulting the membership. And after a touch-sounding but short-lived media campaign, the UNEF bureaucracy accepted every important part of the new law. Yet this was still trumpeted, amazingly, as a victory for students.

However, recent events in France were working against both the timid careerists in the unions and the Thatcherite revolutionaries in government. Whereas in Britain the workers' and students' movement has known nothing but defeat since the 1980s, French workers have struck a series of resounding blows in defence of their welfare state. In 1994, students defeated an attempt to introduce a new minimum wage for the young. In 1995, against virtually identical attacks threatened by the then-minister Alain Juppé, French public-sector workers unleashed a month of strikes which brought the country to a standstill.

In 2006, a major movement of students and young workers defeated attempts to bring in the CPE, an employment contract which sought to eliminate job security for the young. The result of these battles, which are still very much at the forefront of the French public imagination, is that ordinary workers and students are very much aware not only of how to fight and win...
The French Revolution

November, meetings of over a thousand students became commonplace. To the horror of the UNEF bureaucrats (who were met with boos and jeering whenever they stood up to speak in such meetings) and university directors, these meetings voted overwhelmingly against the LRU.

Very quickly, the right-wing newspapers and the government started trying to discredit the general assemblies, describing them as disturbances created by minorities of radical students and outside agitators.

Late one evening, while we were sitting outside the Sorbonne after a long meeting, I raised this with an exhausted activist who sat smoking greedily next to me. “Not so,” he replied, speaking slowly from fatigue, “People come to the assemblies who disagree, but what makes them important is that real debates happen there.” I was in Tolbiac (University Paris I) last week, in a meeting of about 800. At the start, I’d say around 80% must have been against the idea of a strike, and many were even for the LRU. But after three hours of bedlam we won the vote with a two-thirds majority, and the meeting was bigger at the end than at the beginning.

“People changed their minds when we talked to them about the law. Directors want to organise secret internet ballots. Apart from the fact that we obviously shouldn’t trust them to count the votes, we need to make decisions together, with discussion. Without discussion, how can any collective decision be legitimate?”

Shortly thereafter, the strike committee voted in by that day’s assembly elected the blockade of the Sorbonne, carefully plugging tons of classroom furniture in the central courtyard.

The next day, at Tolbiac, one of the largest and historically most radical universities in Paris, 1,300 students filed past private security guards into a vast lecture theatre, while the chair, a tall, young Arab from Saint-Denis beatboxed over the PA and young activists from different unions and revolutionary groups ran around, jittery from lack of sleep, frantically organising. The guarded doors now had to be flung wide open as the crowd spilled out into the foyer, cramming to see, while a tall student scribbled motions up on the blackboard at the front of the room.

The meeting cheered to hear the news from outside Paris – 37 universities were sending delegations to the meeting of the national student co-ordination at Rennes, and in Paris, Nanterre, Clignancourt and Paris VIII had all voted to blockade. Gaels of laughter greeted the chair when he read out the director’s statement about how hooded youths with iron bars were responsible for the strike and blockades. Many new students had arrived, so it was necessary to reframe the old arguments about the necessity of strike and opposition to the LRU. The main points were: discussion on the most recent developments. Some argued that a strike would be wrong, as it would deprive them of their right to study. Others countered that were the laws, conditions of study for this and future generations of students would be changed by the strikes. As one girl pointed out, “I’m not talking about martyring ourselves but we need to move now, and unfortunately, strike is our only means of defending ourselves.”

An Algerian echoed her point, to deafening applause: “I’m trying to study, I’m trying to get ahead, but Sarkozy stands in my way. He slurs me as scum, he’s interfering with my studies, what can I do? When his family came to France, no-one demanded their DNA!”

“So we’re not dangerous revolutionaries,” another added, “we’re ordinary people defending our interests. We have to tell Sarko that he can’t just do whatever he likes with our universities.” A member of the UNEF hierarchy spoke up, calling for “moderation”, and acceptance that the repeal of the LRU was “just unrealistic”. He was howled down. Outside, pamphlets were being circulated, warning against fascist youth groups which were mobilising against the strikers.

“bureaucrats were met with boos and jeering whenever they stood up to speak”

Union leaders were desperate to resolve the tension against the authorities, but also of the necessity of taking direct action to defend their jobs and conditions of study, rather than leaving it to union leaders. As one student remarked, “the heads of unions, be it UNEF or the CGT, will do whatever they can to remain intermediaries between us and the government, including selling us out. But they have to remember that we’re standing on our backs, and that when we move, so do they.”

Throughout September, the railway workers began to make the first steps in the construction of the current movement. General assemblies of the type used to devastating effect in 1995 were called at workplaces across the French rail network. These assemblies put major pressure on the union bureaucrats to call strikes and demonstrations.

Francoist efforts by workers and union activists brought several industries together for the day of action: teachers, students, public sector workers, restaurant workers and metro workers all joined the “cheminots”, as they struck and demonstrated against the government’s raft of attacks. From that date, the trickle of student meetings and actions turned into a torrent.

Across France, students too began calling general assemblies to discuss the new law in greater and greater numbers. At first, such meetings only succeeded in bringing together a few hundreds of students each. But as October turned into November, meetings of over 1,300 students filed past private security guards into a vast lecture theatre, while the chair, a tall, young Arab from Saint-Denis beatboxed over the PA and young activists

Students crammed into lecture halls to protest

“Sarkozy stands in my way. He slurs me as scum, he’s interfering with my studies, what can I do?”

we’re ordinary people defending our interests. We have to tell Sarko that he can’t just do whatever he likes with our universities”

past. Several hundred representatives from across France, the best speakers and hardest bargainers, the most wily experienced and respected activists the movement could throw together were trying to hammer out a programme together. Inevitably, this meant hours upon hours of negotiation, as every word in the joint statement was scrutinised and the political implications of every call to action and every demand were discussed at length.

Delegates snatched a few hours’ sleep on damp mattress in another theatre down the hall, only to begin again the next morning. By five in the afternoon on Sunday, after 18 hours of discussion, the press were allowed in to crowd around the podium while a committee of exhausted students read out the Declaration of the National Co-ordination: “We call on the population to support our mobilisation, and that of the railway workers and the public service strike of the 20th of November. It is by the struggle of all for all that we will once again be driving back the government.”

We call for students to go on strike immediately to build the struggle with strike pickets, blockade and occupation, and to discuss and convince those around them to build an even more massive movement. We call all the university staff to join us in striking. We call for a national day of action to blockade train stations on Tuesday the 13th of November.

We call for demonstrations alongside railway workers on the 14th or the 15th of November or as is appropriate to each town. We call for mass demonstrations on the 20th of November alongside the striking public servants.

We call for public and private sector workers to choose these dates to join us in striking, because it is all together, students and workers, that we shall drive back the government. The Co-ordination refuses to recognise, and condemns all negotiation on the part of trade unions with the government, because the objective must be the creation of massive force, which is the only means which can satisfy our demands.”

For November 13, for the first time in France’s history, the transport unions called a “reconductible” strike: a strike where every evening, instead of taking a vote, workers at each workplace decide in a mass meeting whether or not to continue the strike for the next day. Union leaders have never before ceded such control to the membership over the direction of a strike.

Getting off the train, I walked through the bustling station to the metro stop. As I bought my ticket at a counter, I said to the man serving me, “Hey, good luck for Tuesday.” He added, “I wish we could all join you.”
An actress of the old school

When Penelope Keith started out, acting was a craft to be learnt, and experience and vocal prowess were the means to success. Today, she wouldn’t recommend the profession to young actors. The grande dame of the British sitcom talks to Elie Yoo about comedy, duty, and why we must keep quoting Donne.

At first, meeting Penelope Keith is a bit like meeting the Queen. As soon as her voice ripples from her stately 5’10” stature, it becomes clear that here is a virtuoso of the English language; a theatrical grande dame for whom words are sacred, and whose sharp elocution brings new meaning to the term ‘cut-glass’.

Before the interview I’d been terrified that Keith would be a real-life Lady Bracknell, whose persona she was adopting last week at the Arts theatre in The Importance of Being Earnest. I wasn’t expecting her to scream at me about a handbag but I also wasn’t expecting quite such remarkable warmth coupled with a keen sense of curiosity. As soon as we meet, she ensures: what do I want to do after I leave Cambridge? Am I enjoying my time here? “The wonderful thing about getting older is that you can ask questions – you’re not afraid of it anymore” she chuckles.

In a way, she is the perfect interviewee; after a question, she would roll off eloquently at length on any number of subjects, and it’s easy to see how audiences have been spellbound by her soliloquies on stage.

As a young actress, Keith joined the Royal Shakespeare Company in its golden age in the 1960s, having frequently watched Olivier, Gielgud and Ascroft tread the boards. Did she always want to act? “Absolutely. It never ever crossed my mind that I wanted to be something else.” After having what she describes as a “bog standard education” she, like the rest of her generation, made her career early. “Everyone knew what they wanted to do because that was what was expected – it’s different for you nowadays, but then the choices for women were secretarial, teacher, nurse. Stewardess was here is a virtuoso of the English language; a theatrical grande dame for whom words are sacred, and whose sharp elocution brings new meaning to the term ‘cut-glass’.

Keith looks back fondly on the camaraderie of the old days of terrible digs, spear carrying at the Hyde Park Hotel to fund it all - but has the scene changed for better or for worse? She pronounces her judgement on the predication of aspiring young actors thoughtfully; “I’m not sure I would recommend it to actors now. It’s never been a secure profession, but there used to be a sort of pattern – you knew you could learn your craft by going to a repertory company. People now get funnelled into one area – soap or the RSC – and stay there but my generation of actors did everything, which was marvellous.”

Keith has some of the most memorable comedic parts of her generation them, you need for Coward, Shaw, Wilde to name but a few – want fame and are getting less and less experience.”

What is striking about Keith is not just her passion for her craft, but the way in which she uses it to involve herself in community work. Having served as County Sheriff for Surrey for a few years in which she met a “huge variety of people”, one senses that she despises the alleged self absorption of the theatre world and also of young people’s introspection today. “My generation was brought up with a duty of service, which sounds awfully pretentious I know. But the thing that worries me about now is that people don’t seem to be aware of their fellow human beings. Young people – it’s not your fault really, it’s the culture – are not encouraged to think about others. “I agree nervously, nodding fervently as she lets rip on the insensitivity of Cambridge cyclists. But, I ask, should theatre be important to young people? What can we do to encourage greater attendance? Theatre is hardly at the forefront of students’ minds today. As well as being a fierce proponent of making theatre cheaper (to the anger of many an accountant, she gleefully adds), the immediacy of theatre, as opposed to films and television, can “speak to people in all sorts of different ways. I’ve been a part of the Crime Diversion Scheme, where men volunteer and take part with young offenders to tell their stories. It’s some of the best drama I’ve ever seen in my life.” As we end the interview, she comments “I suppose we must keep quoting Donne. No man is an island – we forget that, it’s not quoted very much these days. We are all becoming little islands. You can change it,” she says to me with an enigmatic smile.
Best of the Rest

**Varsity** goes continental and checks out the pick of European music

France has given us some truly great musicians: Serge Gainsbourg (and even the Vatican had something to say about Je t'aime...moi non plus, a single infused with overt sexuality), the 'Spazm!', Edith Piaf, and Plastic Bertrand (although, technically he's Belgo, but let's overlook that for now since he does sing in French). You probably haven't heard of Phoenix, but you've almost certainly heard their music. If you've seen The Virgin Suicides, Shallow Hal or Lost in Translation, you'll know the dulcet tones of Thomas Mars will have enveloped your state of ignorant bliss. Unlike Air and Daft Punk (who are undeniably brilliant, of course), they've moved away from the electro scene and towards the alternative rock. But this isn't all France has to offer. Manu Chao, soundtrack to pretty much any student who has taken a gap year, also hails from the city of vaudeville and arrondissements, and though Parisian by birth manages to produce some of the best 'world' music in as many languages as you can shake a stick at, including Arabic and Gallo-Italian. And these talented Gauls don't stop there, as MC Solaar and the Trip Stasa Crew hold the torch for rap and hip hop, mixed in with a dash of dancehall and reggae. Recent isn't even the word, they are immensely popular throughout all francophone countries and even beyond, as MC Solaar supported De La Squal, collaborated as a guest rapper on a Mosé Elliot track, and recorded with members of Gangstarr. But currently leading the invasion (it's 1966 all over again) are the Teenagers, a trio of French folks who think nothing of casually inserting what is probably the most talked about language throughout their single Homecoming. But that's ok, because a) they're French and b) they're typically blase about, well, everything. Vive la France.

Verity Simpson

Scandinavian music has moved on from the three As – Abba, A-Ha and Aqua – who blighted its reputation in successive generations. The birth of the death cab for six saw an unexpected garage-rock revival, with bands such as Turbonegro, a four-guy death-metal-pop collective whose signature tune I Got Erection spawned a literal army of devoted followers, the Turquoise girl group Sahara Hotnights, and a host of somewhat derivative shooby bands such as Gluefifer, the Idiotapists (sic) and The Soundtrack Of Our Lives. This tradition has faded, but lives on in such bands as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen as the (once seminal, now very much fat) freshmen. In the current mix, there are the Teenagers, a trio of French folks who think nothing of casually inserting what is probably the most talked about language throughout their single Homecoming. But that's ok, because a) they're French and b) they're typically blase about, well, everything. Vive la France.

Verity Simpson

I in dance music, where confusing genres abound, German techno's dominant forms can be difficult to distinguish. Minimal is the tag most frequently used, and although it's become a blanket term, it can still be identified by its sparse synths and stuttering beats. It's a sound that dominates German clubs, with Berlin and Cologne its centres, Ricardo Villalobos and Ellen Allien its kings and queens. Relaxed licensing laws let Berlin clubs play on until past sunrise; the decadent Berghain, an enormous converted power plant, is techno's world epicentre.

With leading labels like Playhouse and Rhythm Control, much of the techno coming out of Berlin is dark, repetitive, and bassy; a recent trend, linked to growing ketamine consumption, is to extend tracks to ridiculous lengths, with Villalobos' 2006 release, Fishbourne-Zaelkein stretching over 37 minutes. Two recent albums on Berlin labels, Isie's 'We Are Monster' and Booka Shade's 'Movements', won widespread acclaim, and contributed to the genre's growing popularity.

Cologne, home to the Kompaakt label, has brought melancholy (and the indie kids) to the dancefloor. Its trademark tracks, like Rong Pong Pong's 'So Wee Wee Noch Nie belong to the genre known as 'micro-house'. Incorporating vocals and organic samples, they build up to a wistful euphoria, and work well for home listening. This year the label has released excellent albums by the Field, a Swedish production collective, and the Brazilian Gui Boratto, suggesting that techno's reach is spreading. Swiss labels are receiving a lot of attention, and Villalobos believes that Romania will be a new techno powerhouse. But for now, at least, Germany remains its home.

Daniel Cohen

Restaurant Review

Tom Evans

Le Gros Frang

What happy men Asterix and Obelix are. They have the Romans on their doorstep, one of them is congenitally osteoplastic and the other has the worst facial hair arrangement since an ex-teacher of mine called Mrs Macumberga. But they still maintain a robust British sense of humour about the whole affair. Remember that time when they went to Rome? What wouldn't they do? At the start of every Asterix and Obelix book there is a hand with a magnifying glass over it, magnifying the tiny corner holding out against the occupation and showing the Roman camp and the Gaulish village. This ranks with ATMs among children's haircuts. I said the following loudly to a friend at primary school:

"Who is the hand with the magnifying glass and why is he looking over Asterix and Obelix's town?! Go away hand! If you stay there for long enough the sun will go through the magnifying glass and burn Asterix and Obelix like it burns ants! Is that really big? Is God's hand and God's magnifying glass?! Or just my dad's, because my dad is huge and he has a magnifying glass? What is there a magnifying glass over me too? Is that why I have chicken pox? Is that why it hurts when I'm peeling an orange and a bit of orange goes in my eye? Is that why I have three verucas and Emma has only one? Is that why my Emma's mum said about people with clean hair getting lice true or was she just trying to defend Emma? Or are Asterix and Obelix just really small? In which case how can Obelix be fat if he is small? So, what are they all just babies pretending to be adults because the only small people are babies? And what about Getafix the Druid?"

The questions singed my brain. I now know that Borges added the page for a giggle. It still scratches my gewsh every time I take a peek. Nowadays copies of Asterix and Obelix are harder to come across. Is it with French restaurants in this town. Le Gros Frang prides itself as the only authentic French restaurant in Cambridge, and the exquisite Camembert as four starter inclined us to agree. The stuffed aubergine may be fat if he is small? So what, are they all just babies pretending to be adults because the only small people are babies? And what about Getafix the Druid?"

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Lowri Jenkins looks at some of the most notorious cultural icons of modern culture and explores the difference between the presented image of the artist and the reality that often belies it. Does this skewed celebrity mean we’re worshipping false idols?

Walt Whitman, godfather of American poetry, writes in the infamous opening lines of ‘Song of Myself’: I celebrate myself and sing myself! And what I assume you shall assume! For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

Written in 1855, this is Whitman’s exultant call to poetic arms. His self-celebration is not narcissistic but nationalist, one which creates and appreciates a vision of new America.

I wonder what those lines might mean if I applied them to Tracey Emin, queen of YBAs (Young British Artists) and, for all her talk of keeping it ‘real’, a shameless self-publicist. However removed she may be from Whitman, her work could quite easily be seen as a song of herself. Emin is a prime example of repulsive self-centred art: art which is only made acceptable, or discernible from pretentious wankery, by a passing knowledge of the person who made it. Most people know her as the ‘bad girl’ who gets wasted and swears on national television: her skewed celebrity precedes her work.

If we were to take the pretentious-wankery side of things, the Charles Saatchi route if you will, pieces such as Emin’s ‘My Bed’ are searing examples of the utter schism in the boundaries between life and art. It is an honest, brutal and unflinching case of self-examination, and a critique of the disposability of modern life ironically made permanent or time-worthy simply by being put in a gallery. I actually think it’s just a dirty mess. Emin sells on the strength of her branded persona, and little else; her celebrity is a convenient disguise for theemptiness of her creations.

This slide between social celebrity and artistic persona balances a difficult see-saw. While having ‘celebrity’ status (not wholly related to your work) can do wonders for your commercial success, it can nevertheless have a damaging effect on perceptions of the work itself. This is nowhere more obvious than in the case of some of the twentieth century’s greatest cult icons, who have not necessarily courted publicity to Emin’s extent, but have nevertheless become victims of a culture which blurs the line between the persona represented in art and the artist in real life in order to make an image sell.

Case in point: prose ‘maverick’ Jack Kerouac. His second novel, On The Road, precedes...
his reputation, to the point of the art defining the man. It focuses on the angelic, unstoppable, efficacious Dean Moriarty, a Denver wildchild greedy and fascinated by the America around him, watched through the eyes of Sal Paradise, who records their misadventures. Sal is our Kerouac; Dean was based on Neal Cassady, a close member of Kerouac’s group, and the man to whom Allen Ginsberg dedicated his equally seminal and controversial long poem Howl.

The veil, however thin, between these literary personas seems to be largely ignored. Kerouac blended excited imaginations with his close friends and seemed to be pretty sexy to some, but it doesn’t usually involve any of its participants sitting in a bar in a Vegas casino so fucked on acid that they think they’re surrounded by blood-sucking reptiles. And the people behind them seems to be largely ignored. Kerouac blended excited imaginings with transcripts from tape recordings of conversations with his close friends and found the (semi)-fictionalised nature of his art was suddenly reversed and projected onto critic’s ideas of the artist. Road broke into the mainstream thanks in no small part to one review which championed Kerouac as the king of an elusive ‘beat’ movement which no one cared to define, but everyone thought was cool.

Gilbert Millerstein’s 1957 critique, published in the New York Times, called the novel “the most beautifully executed, the clearest and most important utterance yet made by the generation Kerouac himself named years ago as ‘beat’ and whose principal avatar he is”. All of a sudden, this sheepish son of Quebecean immigrants, who lived with his mom, read comic books and drank too much beer, was transformed into a dope-smoking, jazz-worshipping prophet for a new America, naive enough to believe in its own potential glory.

This fairly simplistic misdirection still works today: mention the ‘Beat’ Generation, or On the Road, and the general response involves drugs/drink/getting laid. It’s not that Kerouac’s work doesn’t cover this – it would be a hell of a lot less readable (and about 80% shorter) if it didn’t – but that the bizarre aura of cool which surrounds his work is misleading and doesn’t help very much in understanding it. It just helped sell a lot of books, and has put thevariables image of Jack and Neal, nonchalantly leaning against a wall, on bedroom and café walls everywhere.

It is because of this marketable ‘cool’ factor that we often forget to think of these people as artists, or serious innovators: they simply become personalities. Ironically, on the fluid market of exchange that is modern culture, it works the other way: personalities suddenly become artists. In the writer Hunter S. Thompson we see someone who drug-hazed headfuck. Whereas Kerouac might have been given his Beat mantle by the media, Thompson was the media: he wasn’t a ‘novelist’, but (supposedly) a journalist. It was through his work riding with the Hell’s Angels in the late 60s, and the bizarre string of events which led to Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas that Thompson developed the idea of Gonzo journalism, which threw objectivity to the wind and insisted on plunging the reporter into the centre of every story.

In Fear and Loathing, Thompson uses Raoul Duke (his alter ego) and his ‘at-torney’, a 300-pound Samoan called Dr Gonzo, to transform what should have been a 400-word summation of some crazy car race in the Nevada desert into one of the biggest cult novels of the twentieth century. The precepts of motor journalism (does motor journalism actually have precepts?) just don’t apply. Top Gear may be pretty sexy to some, but it doesn’t usually involve any of its participants sitting in a bar in a Vegas casino so fucked on acid that they think they’re surrounded by blood-sucking reptiles. Thompson flagrantly cultivated the wild reputation that his alter ego, of course, thousands of miles away, would wake up as in the morning. And for most people of our generation, it’s hard to picture exactly who Hunter S. Thompson might have been, but Raoul Duke getting in the way.

In a world now fascinated by the cult of celebrity, where people are famous for doing nothing at all (Peaches Geldof, I’m looking at you – a documentary about how the hijab is ‘a good look’ (do you think an artist makes), it’s easier to package if we can conflate the gap between artist and fictional persona. It’s more fun to see Thompson as Duke, just as it’s more fun to see Kerouac as Sal Paradise.

Yet this often has its disadvantages. The conflation of artist and fictional persona may be a brilliant commercial tool, but – as we have seen with Kerouac – it is a very difficult critical one. Let’s take the emperor of commercialism and art, Andy Warhol. It’s much easier to go along with the images of the white-haired man-boy sipping cocktails at Studio 54 or standing next to Edie Sedgwick all in black at New York loft apartments. It goes along with an image of the artist that makes him sellable (something Warhol hardly would have loved), part of a brand along with his silk screens of celebrities he adored. Less saleable is the Andy Warhol that neither the artist, nor consumer culture, were quick to market: the sickly child whose Byzantine Eklekticism informs the iconographic nature of his art as much as ‘pop culture’ does. One thing that Warhol understood was that packaging yourself in the right way meant artistic survival. It’s something that Emin probably understands too; in the music industry, one need only look at Madonna or David Bowie to see how profoundly that mantra can be taken.

Cult characters like Thompson and Kerouac shouldn’t be judged simply on their cool factor. The fact that they are more about us, than it does about them. We have a consumer culture where art itself is little more than another product, each with its own special label. Most of the artists I’ve talked about are attached to their own labelled “movements”; Kerouac means the Beats, Warhol means Pop Art, Thompson means Gonzo. Just as these movements have become brands, so too their propagators have become their greatest advertisements. And in response to this commodification of culture, artists begin to sell themselves. The key is that they very seldom have control over what ‘self’ is that gets put on the market. Roland Barthes writes that, in committing a work to paper, the creator loses control over its becoming brain; the reader suddenly has all the power, and this includes not only the work of art, but it would seem, the very identity of the artist itself.
The Creation of Adam

George Grist catches up with Adam Buxton, film-maker, radio presenter and co-creator of the cult Adam and Joe Show, to discuss why he hates Beowulf (unless it’s in CGI), chilling with Radiohead and how he’s planning to trump YouTube with MeeBox

“I thought he was a stupid twat. He thought I was thick, which I was a little bit, and I thought he was a supercilious ponce.” Adam Buxton is disarmingly nice, and even his seemingly bitter diatribe against schoolmate Giles Coren underlies his actual affection. “But everyone was horrible to each other in those days – that’s what it’s like when you’re at school. When the girls arrived, it all sorted everything out, and everyone became more civilised. But Louis [Theroux, another contemporary] was always very civilised.”

Buxton subsequently headed up to Warwick University for a term to study American and English literature. “I thought it was going to be lots of beat poets and exciting fun, modern American stuff, but we didn’t see any of that in the first term. It was all Beowulf, but not exciting CGI Beowulf with Angelina Jolie’s knockers, it was just boring Beowulf. I hated it.” He dropped out and went to study sculpture at Cheltenham College of Art, before reuniting with schoolmate Joe Cornish to create the Adam and Joe Show. The seminal programme, a razor sharp yet pleasingly fluffy pop-culture pseustake, with victims as diverse as Changing Rooms and Star Wars, ran for four series, and Buxton’s comedy leanings were clearly shining through from much earlier. He recalls his final essay (Beowulf, naturally) at Warwick: “We had to write an essay and the only thing I could think of to draw a comparison with was Withnail and I. The tutor held me back and said she wanted to talk to me about the essay. I genuinely thought she was going to say, ‘I didn’t want to embarrass you but it’s the best essay I’ve read for years.’ But instead she said, ‘are you upset with me? This is just an insult, it’s dreadful – I want you to rewrite it or you’ll fail the course.’ At that point I thought, ‘well you can fuck off then. I hate this course.’”

Being seen as part of an established double act with Cornish must have taken its toll, and I ask whether everything was always shipshape behind the cameras and the microphones. “We were always productive and carefree at school. But friendly competitiveness can turn fraught quite quickly. We made the show almost entirely ourselves. To get things done we’d split up into two groups - well, two groups of one. We were very competitive and insecure about what the other was doing. Joe would come back with something brilliant and I’d think fuck, I’ve really got to up my game here.”

Their relationship has stood the test of time, however; they were recently commissioned for a long Saturday morning stint at BBC6.

Given the freeform nature of some of their phone-ins and content (Text the Nation and Song Wars, an epic nonsense jingle face-off), does the latest BBC phone-in scandal limit their output? “The BBC’s going through a little brainfart at the moment. They’ve just become very paranoid, but who gives a fuck? It’s ludicrous. The BBC have the best intentions and they want people to be happy. We’re not given total control but music-wise there’s more flexibility, more of an eclectic remit than we’ve had in the past. There’s not much we can’t say, as long as we don’t swear or

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end of the week he was really cool and very interesting to talk to - he’s one of those people you need to settle in with a bit. Recollecting the legendary Adam and Joe Robert De Niro Calypso video, I optimistically wondered whether Buxton might have encountered his co-star and discussed its merits. “I didn’t meet him unfortunately; all my scenes were with the ghosts. I don’t suppose he would have been very effusive. The point of De Niro is that he’s got a finely honed skill, he’s a craftsman – you wouldn’t necessarily want to hang out with the guy.”

Recently Buxton helped Radiohead record a series of videocasts to celebrate the release of their tracks on the album In Rainbows. “I got to know them through Travis (the band). When we were recording the Performance and Joe Show, we bumped into them and became friends. They were being produced at the time by Nigel Godrich, who now produces Radiohead.” For a band with such an ethereal, unlovable quality, I’m intrigued to know how Buxton found them. “They are down to earth actually, very normal, polite and reserved. But on the other hand suddenly they’ll start playing and you’ll think, ‘oh, right, this is what it’s all about.’ And then Thom starts singing and it’s amazing and suddenly they’re on a different plain, no longer just people to chat with. They’re incredibly talented.”

Buxton’s talents extend to stand-up character comedy, and earlier this year he performed at London’s 100 Club in a gig hosted by David Cross, Arrested Development character Tobias Funke. “It doesn’t come naturally,” he explains, “and I have to force myself to do it. It’s unpleasant, really, for most of the time. You come off stage and don’t really like yourself. You think, ‘Wow, I’m a dick. Why did I do that?’ But the 100 Club was one of the times I really loved it. Nights like that are what you hang out for.”

So what’s next? I can’t help but ask if there’s a chance of an Adam and Joe film, a reunion perhaps, but Buxton is equivocal. “There’s such a huge number of different pressures involved in making a TV show. And it’s a kind of throwback; people would think they’d have seen it before, and in a way they would have done. But we’d like to do it, and if we got a call tomorrow asking us to do some new Adam and Joe telly stuff, we would, even though we’d be ready and yucky looking now. It’s hard enough for me seeing my stupid face on the TV for the Meeklo thing. Would we still be sat on a bed? I wouldn’t want us to be behind a desk or something like that.”

By MeeBox, he refers to his nearly-completed pilot for the BBC incorporating live action sketches (some based on his stand up characters) with youtube-esque videos. Some will feature his legendary character Ken Korda, an absurdly ignorant media figure whose interviews with ‘personalities’ such as Pat Sharp and Handy Andy parodied the grave style of the South Bank Show. The actual pilot will be screened sometime early next year, and based on the calibre of Buxton’s work so far I’d be surprised if it didn’t propel Buxton to much bigger things.

Concluding the piece, I asked Buxton what he takes to the table. “I take the stage and don’t really care about the output. I’m not really interested in any of it, and I don’t think my audience is interested in any of it.”

As a metaphor for all the dead punk - how many of those have we seen in the last few years? – with the right guitarists and haircuts and all. Their bassist provided a half-arsed Slits pastiche, while the drummer tried as best she could to give some energy to the proceedings, but overall it was a disappointment.

Unfortunately his singing looked like Boris Johnson who clearly wanted to you have to put some kind of energy and excitement into your playing, and holding your guitar at right angles to your chest and from time to time stamping your feet out of time does not count.

Sons and Daughters soon came on to slight cheers from the middle aged faithful, clutching their beers at the bar. The Glaswegian four-piece launched into their slightly over driven and sped up rock act, each song with four straight chords, token gesture choruses - often sung dreadfully out of tune - about some form of ‘hurt’ or ‘guilt complex’, while their rhythm section trudged through, both looking almost brain dead as they stared into space.

Ken Korda’s Funny Factory: “Media twat” Ken Korda takes a tour of the BBC centre. “I can often stare for hours at the BBC weather presenters and their unusually white teeth.”

The Victorian English Gentleman’s Club [sic] were the support act, and it was as exciting a new take on post punk - how many of those have we seen in the last few years? – with the right guitarists and haircuts and all. Their bassist provided a half-arsed Slits pastiche, while the drummer tried as best she could to give some energy to the proceedings, but overall it was a disappointment.

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The Visit

Friedrich Dürrenmatt’s The Visit is a comedy that sets justice against revenge; moral integrity versus the corruptive influence of money. It is a darkly humorous exploration of how the destitute might be transformed by their impoverished town’s most prosperous alumnus: an old lady, the wealthiest woman in the world, whose offer proves irresistible.

James Lewis and Lauren Conney’s production as the ADC Fresher’s Mainshow was visually striking, carefully choreographed and certainly competent. However, amidst thisunistly ignored the play’s tragic notes in seats were beautifully exaggerated the comedy into something often resembling a bitter black-and-white mini-series.

Particularly in the first act, the characters’otte grittily arranged tabiex-vivants, with overstated physicality and a tendency to domineer their scenes to the audience (or to the ceiling above them) rather than to each other. It was also a shame when it seemed that some were hamming their lines to play for cheap laughs: this is a subtle play, and understate-ment might have been more effective than overacting.

Some directorial decisions were slightly bewildering too: it was unclear, for example, what the addition of ballet dancers during scene breaks, or char—acters sitting on invisible chairs, was really to add to the production. Similarly incongruous were the abrupt music changes and occasional frenzied Ger-man interludes. This some-what confusing inconsistency was problematic. And Ver-hendungseffekt by all means, but not because actors keep peer- ing over their shoulders.

Despite this, some of the acting was impressive. Ben Hayward stood out with a subtle and brilliantly paced performance of the Mayor; Celeste Dring, Robyn Hoedemaker and Robert Craig were also convincing. It was unfortu-nate that the grotesque old woman was played by a girl far too delicate and ‘pretty’ to be either suitably horrifying or plausibly aged.

This was not her fault of course, and Rosin Kibere was another treat. A certain languid malice, but an odd casting de-cision nonetheless.

Some of the play’s more surreal mo-ments were beautifully achieved too: the transformation of people into trees and a deer, for example, was graceful and effective.

This production is not the most sophisticated, but it is entertaining, exciting and sometimes funny: it is a classic play and this is a com-mitted cast. Certainly not an evening wasted.

Alex Reza

The After Dinner Joke

The After Dinner Joke attempts to provoke the audience into reflecting upon our approaches to charity as the season of good-will approaches. Yet the main question the play has us asking was why the ADC committee chose such a deadly serious play for the Fresher’s LateShow?

They made a brave effort with this material. Originally written for television, the play does not translate onto stage entirely successfully. Caryl Churchill’s trademark non-linear narrative and fragmented plot are intended to make us think back from the comedy and question why we are laughing. Yet at the same time, the technique is not always smooth and some of the shorter sketches fell flat.

Anna Maguire was engaging as the sweet Miss Selby, who wishes to organise great charit-a-able deeds, but finds herself distri-buted by the hypocrisy of the business. However, her nervous breakdown is scattered across the last 15 minutes of the play, like a handful of dollar notes caught in the breeze, making no impact. Monty D’Inverno was the highlight of the play as the cynical and slightly creepy ‘Major’ whose all-absorbing passion in life is snakes. With a contagion of his fabulously expressive eye-brows, he injected some Pythonesque humour into Churchill’s peculiar brand of satire.

The audience was slow to react to the running joke of the ‘paki’ thief, a modern day Robin Hood who stalked in spotlights and strobe lighting, stealing from the rich to give to the poor. The silent film was an interesting theatrical device, although in trying to be both witty and hard-hitting, it was neither. However, the use of projections to show Russian propaganda and Miss Selby’s controversial advertising scheme was inspired.

The central irony, that char-ity is inseparable from the dirty dealings of 19 moments spin, was well-expressed in the set design — a bold display of red, yellow and blue, representing the three main political par-ties. A sad parade of coloured flags swaying across the balcony reminds us that the reality of business charity is a world away from the innocent village fetes we associate with fund-raising and good works.

Churchill’s over-simplified and over-generalised argument, together with the play’s awk-ward phrasing and awkwardness, explains why The After Dinner Joke is under-performed. Al-though there were enjoyable moments in this production, it is not quite slick enough to make this rough patchwork blanket more eye-catching.

Sophie Sawicka-Sykes
Burial
Untrue
Album
★★★★★
Dir: Balulu Bakupa-Kanyinda
Film
★★★★★

Juuju Factory
The new film from Congolese director Balulu Bakupa-Kanyinda takes place in Matongo Village, an African neighbourhood in Brussels (Dieudonné Kabongo), a writer commissioned to write a travel guide to the area by his publisher, Joseph Desire – a Congolese man who prefers to identify with Belgians, and refuses to share Kongo’s interest in the traumas of Congolese history. As Kongo’s book matutes into a broader examination of Africa and colonialism, he faces a number of pressures belongs, his adulterous brother and Desire’s opposition to the book’s direction. Yet the film fails to create any atmosphere, or to provide real narrative drive. We get little sense of what Matongo is really like, nor of the interaction between this immigrant community and the rest of Brussels, and there is little of the tension conveyed in Michel Haneke’s Code Unknown.

Sarah Cook

Burial’s 2006 self-titled debut had to be one of the most emotionally moving electronic instrumental albums ever created. On listening, you can imagine yourself walking down a puddle-lined alley at a crisp 3am, followed by an incessant paranoia, ever forcing yourself to refrain from looking back. Throughout the journey across the eerie London soundscapes Burial sets before us, we are never allowed to stray that extra footstep into the fatal path of the Underground train going in for late-night repairs; we are always cushioned by warbass. We always feel safe.

I’m Wide Awake, It’s Morning
Bright Eyes

The end result is arguably the debut which was supposed to resonate with the ennui of the new Lost Generation, abandoning felt country music, and making room for the over-keen and already-fucked-up generation of Nazareth is loud enough to bring you running back in to dance. Happy, things took off.

Krafty Kuts
The band is made up of Conor Lee ever wrote. Dylan may have now become some kind of high priest of the sacred groove, but trust me, Oberst can say it took him a decade to come up with it.

DJs are a bit like drummers: you know how to work a beat, but you wouldn’t really want to see them strutting in the spotlight. You don’t need to watch them adoringly, sing a long to every word or hit them in the face; just stick your head down and try to keep up with them.

DJs aren’t really coverstars. So arriving at Soul Tree to find that Krafty Kuts looks a lot like the drummer from Blur is a pleasing confirmation of my DJ/drummer theory.

But to be honest, you could have looked like Animal from the Muppets Show and I wouldn’t have noticed, because the moment he came on the decks, there was no lapse in the set, which packed the Soul Tree head back so soon to make you turn around completely sober and run back in to dance. I might sound pretty excitable, but compared to half of the crowd in there, this review is writing it fairly cool. And all I can say is, thank fuck enough of Cambridgeshire’s youth has turned away from the Cindies grope-test to dance like utter twats to quiet men who drum unbelievable beats whilst looking like indie drummers.

Daniel Cohen

Daniel Cohen

The draft is coming to perfection, a synthesis of the political and the personal; the twilit twilight of Kongo, embracing a heritage of heart-felt country music, and making space for the rise of the new Lost Generation, abandoned, aimless, but determined by nothing.

Burial

being allowed to write for a fine publication such as this is a privilege. Sadly, it is one I have abused. In my pieces I have sworn, discussed disgusting bodily fluids, and depicted for far too long on my own private proclivities. Now, I break the ultimate 21st century taboo: that of absolute sincerity.

This album moves me more than any other act of artistic creation I have encountered.

The band is made up of Conor Oberst, Mike Mogis, Nate Walcott, and a host of revolv- ing friends, but it’s Oberst (the songwriter and front-man) who makes them what they are. He is, quite frankly, one of our greatest living poets, and this album is as close to being the Great American Novel as anything Norman Mailer’s The Naked and the Dead Lee ever wrote. Dylan may have now become some kind of high priest of the sacred groove, but trust me, Oberst can say it took him a decade to come up with it.

Every Bright Eyes album has its breathtaking moments, but as with most albums closest to perfection, a synthesis of the political and the personal, the twilight of Kongo, embracing a heritage of heart-felt country music, and making space for the rise of the new Lost Generation, abandoned, aimless, but determined by nothing.

The absence of the record, and testament to Oberst’s power, is Landlocked Blues, the kind of song you hear for the first time and then listen to ten times in a row. “The world’s got me dizzy again – you’d think after 22 years, I’d be used to the spin… We made love on the living room floor, with the noise in the background of a televised war”. Every line is ex- quisite, as fragile and perfect as a newborn child. I believe that true literary genius occurs when a writer accepts the two limitations that forbid true transcendence – language, which can only carry so much, and time, that limits all experience. If this is so, Oberst has reached painful genius already. “You’ll be free child once you have died, from the shackles of language and measurable time”.

And if such sounds like surrender, it isn’t. For all the darkness, there is always hope in beauty and love. “She took a small silver ro- ver red and pinned it on to me, and said this one will bring you love”. I don’t know if it’s true, but I keep it for good luck.” We don’t need anything more than this.
pick of the week

**Federico Fellini's 8 1/2**
Thursday 22 Nov, Arts Picturehouse, 17.00

Fellini is a god, and nobody can dispute this. So, with this in mind, do go and see his 8 1/2, which depicts Guido Anselmi, a film director, who is torn in threefold directions, between his new project, his wife and his mistress (by the way, it's autobiographical!). All in all, it will be beautiful, elegant and self indulgent, so everything you could expect from an Italian man then.

**Once Upon a Time... The 2007 ADC/ Footlights Panto**
Saturday 20 Nov - Sat 1 Dee (Except 25th), ADC Theatre, 19.45, £6 - £8

One of the highlights of the theatrical year finally comes into being, as the Footlights’ annual twisted take on the traditional pantos brings its mayhem to the ADC. The past couple of years have seen some of the finest dames this transvestite-fan has ever seen, and hopefully this one won't let the side down. It promises to be a back to basics pantos experience, but with the Footlights at the helm...

**Bonde de Role**
Saturday 17 Nov, The Junction, 19.00, £10

Taking part in the Junction’s Kill Em All club night, the Brazilian party starters bring gay slang and loosey-goosey posturings to the wilds of Cambridge. Expect sheer day-go madness.

**Psychovertical - An Evening with Andy Kirkpatrick**
Saturday 22 Nov, Cambridge Guildhall, 19.30, £10 - £12

Andy Kirkpatrick, one of the country’s most famous mountain climbers, brings his gripping-yet-comical tales of hanging on for dear life off a vertical wall of feet to the Cambridge Guildhall. It’s a one-man show that covers life, death, chocolate and gravity, from a man described as Peter Kay meets Teaching the Void. He’s also been described as making Ray Mears look like Paris Hilton, which sounds pretty fucking hardcore to me.

**Various College Ents**

We were told by the Felix website that Nick Bridges of Bodrogy fame was playing this week, but the fact that his own website says he’s in Rio de Janeiro precludes his presence in cold Cambridge somewhat. So instead, spend Saturday evening going to college ents. I know Th Hall has an open Viva this week, so maybe try it. You’ve probably got a better chance of pulling, let’s be honest. Or then again, there is Clare Cellars on Friday, with Fat Poppadaddy’s, just watch out for the sweat dripping from the cavernous ceilings.

**Friday**

**American Gangster**
Vue, 13.40, 17.10, 20.40

**Lions for Lambs**
Vue, 18.40, 20.50

**Spinal Tap**
Arts Picturehouse, 23.10

**The Visit**
ADC Theatre, 19.45

**The After-Dinner Joke**
ADC Theatre, 19.30

**Junction Fever**
Junction, 18.30, £5

**Bonde de Role**
Junction, 22.00, £10

**The Gentle Art: Friends and Strangers in Whistler’s Prints**
Fitzwilliam Museum, 10.00 - 17.00

**The Indie Thing**
Kambar, 22.00-03.30, £2 before 22.30, £3 with NUS, £5

**The Sunday Service**
Club 22, 22.00-03.00, £4 - £5

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**Various College Ents**

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Vue, 13.40, 17.10, 20.40

**Lions for Lambs**
Vue, 18.40, 20.50

**Spinal Tap**
Arts Picturehouse, 23.10

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ADC Theatre, 19.45

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**Sunday**

**Good Luck Chuck**
Vue, 13.00, 15.30, 18.00, 20.30

**Brick Lane**
Arts Picturehouse, 12.00, 16.20, 18.40, 21.00

**Becowolf**
Vue, 14.50, 17.30, 20.30

**Helvetia**
Arts Picturehouse, 14.30

**There’s no business like shoebusiness like no business**
I know thank God.

**If music be the food of love, play on.**

**Michael Wilson, Lyric Paintings**
Clare Hall, 9.00 - 17.00

**Fat Poppadaddy’s**
Fex, 22.00-03.30 £3 - £4

**The Calling**
Kambar, 21.00 - 02.00 £3 - £4

**Ebonics**
Fex, 22.00-03.00, £2 - £4

**Various College Ents**

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**Monday**

**10 To Yuma**
Vue, 14.20

**Brick Lane**
Arts Picturehouse, 14.10, 16.20, 21.00

**Once Upon a Time...**
ADC Theatre, 19.45

**Peer Gynt**
Corpus Playrooms, 19.30

**A Doll’s House**
Fitzwilliam Hall, Queen’s College, 18.30

**Captain**
Bardy @ The Graduate, 19.00

**Choi Jin Kayagum**
Clare Hall, 20.30

**Psychovertical - An Evening with Andy Kirkpatrick**
Tuesday 26th, ADC Theatre, 19.30, £10 - £12

**等各种 College Ents**

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**Tuesday**

**Saw IV**
Vue, 21.35

**Artists and Icons**
Arts Picturehouse, 14.30

**Once Upon a Time...**
ADC Theatre, 19.45

**Peer Gynt**
Corpus Playrooms, 19.30

**I Scream... Scoop!**
The Junction, 19.00

**New Model Army**
The Junction, 19.30, £5

**Beyond Baskets - Weaving with rush and other garden materials**
Botanic Gardens, 10.00 - 16.00, £5

**That much, and it doesn’t even have a lom! Outragens.**

**Various College Ents**

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**Wednesday**

**American Gangster**
Vue, 13.40, 17.10, 20.40

**Federico Fellini’s 8 1/2**
Arts Picturehouse, 17.00

**Once Upon a Time...**
ADC Theatre, 19.45

**Peer Gynt**
Corpus Playrooms, 19.30

**I Scream... Scoop!**
ADC Theatre, 11.00

**The Zico Chain / Cat the Dog**
The Junction, 19.00

**The Food Fighters**
The Junction, 19.00

**Psychovertical - Andrew Kirkpatrick**
Cambridge Guildhall, 19.30, £10 - £12

**Various College Ents**

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We’ll be at the Cambridge Internships Event at the University Centre on Friday 30th November, between 1pm-6pm, so come along and talk to us there.

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How was your day?

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(18) (3h05) (NFT) Daily 10.15 (Sat/Sun Only) 13.40 17.10 20.40
LIONS FOR LAMBS
(10) (1h50) (Sat/Sun Only) 18.40 (Not Tues) 20.50 (Not Tues) 21.15 (Tues Only) Sat Late 23.10
ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE
(15) (1h50) (NFT) Daily 14.40 17.20 20.00
GOOD LUCK CHUCK
(15) (2h) (NFT) Daily 13.00 (Sat/Sun Only) 15.30 18.00 20.30 Sat Late 23.30
ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE
(15) (2h) (NFT) Daily 14.40 17.20 20.00
30 DAYS OF NIGHT
(15) (2h15) (NFT) Daily 18.10 21.00 Sat Late 23.40
DEATH AT A FUNERAL
(15) (1h30) Sat/Sun Only 16.00 19.00
SAW V
(18) (1h50) Daily 21.30 Sat Late 23.40
RATATOUILLE
(U) (2h15) Sat/Sun Only 10.30 13.40 15.20 (Not Tues) 16.00 19.00 (Not Tues)
SAW IV
(18) (1h55) Daily 21.30 Sat Late 23.40
THE DARK IS RISING
(12a) (2h) Sat/Sun Only 12.00
RENDITION
(15) (2h) Sat Late 22.45
RUN FAT BOY RUN
(12a) (2h) Daily 13.50 16.15
THE DARK IS RISING
(12a) (2h) Sat/Sun Only 12.00
EASTERN PROMISES
(18) (2h) Sat Late 22.45
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Friday 16 Nov – Thursday 22 Nov
BEOWULF
(12a) (2h15) (NFT) Daily 12.10 (Sat/Sun Only) 14.50 17.30 20.20 Sat Late 23.00
AMERICAN GANGSTER
(18) (3h05) (NFT) Daily 10.15 (Sat/Sun Only) 13.40 17.10 20.40
LIONS FOR LAMBS
(10) (1h50) (Sat/Sun Only) 18.40 (Not Tues) 20.50 (Not Tues) 21.15 (Tues Only) Sat Late 23.10
LUVU LUCK UNLUCK
(10) (1h) Daily 13.00 (Sat/Sun Only) 15.30 18.00 20.30 Sat Late 23.30
ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE
(15) (2h) (NFT) Daily 14.40 17.20 20.00

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Lacrosse
Women's Blues 10-1 Oxford
Women's II 24-5 Northampton
Netball
Women's Blues 28-25 Oxford
Women's II 6-79 Nottingham Trent
Rugby League
Men's Blues 66-26 Coventry
Rugby Union
Men's Blues 26 - Crawshays Welsh XV
Women's Blues 10-0 Nottingham

College League 1:
Girton 40-0 Homerton
Jesus 3-3 St John's
Magdalene 19-7 Darwin
Magdalen College 2:
Trinity 53-2 St John's
Downing 28-10 Darwin
Cheltenham 8-0 Peterhouse
Darwin 3 0 0 1 7 6 8
Cambridge 4 0 0 0 2 9 7 8
Jesus 3-3 St John's
Darwin 3 0 0 1 7 6 8

Hockey
Women's Blues 10-4 Coventry

College League 1:
Corpus Christi 2-12 Cambridge City
Caius 2-8 St John's
St Catharine's 6-0 St John's
Jesus 3-2 Cambridge City

Lacrosse
Women's Blues 10-0 Oxford Blues
Women's Blues 6-2 Exeter

Tennis
Men's Blues 10-0 Oxford Brookes
Basketball
Men's Blues 14-49 Wolverhampton
Women's Blues 8-45 Northampton
Fencing
Men's II 128-116 Staffordshire
Table Tennis
Women's Blues 10-7 Bath
Women's Blues 3-2 Nottingham
Volleyball
Men's Blues 2-3 Loughborough
Women's Blues 8-4 Loughborough

Badminton
Cambridge 20-17 Downing
Magdalen College 2:
Trinity 53-2 St John's
Downing 28-10 Darwin
Cheltenham 8-0 Peterhouse
Darwin 3 0 0 1 7 6 8

Kakuro

ACROSS: 7 ALSO, 8 INTRODUCED, 9 AWOL, 10 ENGENDER, 12 ASAP, 13 LANCED, 14 NET, 15 NOTE, 16 SCAM, 17 WYE, 18 EASTER, 20 ROSE, 22 AND, 23 HEIR-

Redouble the letters by rotating the discs to create six

For the grid at the top, use a square of the same row in a separate run.
Use only numbers 1-9, and never

The object is to insert the numbers in the boxes to satisfy only

Sudoku

Write for this section:
sport@varsity.co.uk | SPORT | 37

Cambridge's comprehensive fixtures, tables and results service with Noel Cochrane

Games & puzzles

Varsity crossword no. 475

Across
7 Everyone do needlework, apparently, as well! (4)
8 I began confused Nordic duet. (10)
9 Low army officer returns, concealing authorised presence? (4)
10 Produce French in sex. (8)
11 Hurt, lose head or limb. (3)
12 A fluid appeared without delay. (4)
13 Sperated after beginner messed up tango, for example. (6)
14 Trap held a number back. (5)
15 Letter one confused with drink, we hear. (4)
16 Swindle – coats returned. (4)
17 Audibly question river? (3)
18 Eastern flower marks religious

Hockey
17/11 Men’s Blues v Ipswich, away.
17/11 Women’s Blues v Trinity Wells, home.
21/11 Women’s Blues v Nottingham, home.
21/11 Women’s II v Loughborough IV, away, 15:30.

College League 1:
18/11 Corpus Christi v St Catharine’s, 13:00, Casto Astro.
18/11 Caius v Cambridge City, 15:00, Leys School.
21/11 Corpus Christi v Jesus, 14:30, Casto Astro.

College League 2:
22/11 Churchill v Robinson, 13:00, Wilberforce Road.
16/11 Clare v Queens, 14:30, Wilberforce Road.
19/11 Downing v Robinson, 14:30, Casto Astro.

Lacrosse
21/11 Men’s Blues v Bristol, away, 13:30, Bristol Indoor Sports Centre.
21/11 Women’s Blues v Imperial, away, Ethos London.

Basketball
21/11 Men’s Blues v Brocoliv, away, 14:00.
21/11 Men’s II v Lincoln II, home, 12:00, Kelsey Kerridge.
21/11 Women’s Blues v Wolverhampton, away.

Football.
21/11 Men’s Blues v Loughborough III, away, 14:00.
21/11 Men’s II v Northampton IV, home, 14:00, Emmanuel Sports Ground.

Rugby League
21/11 Men’s Blues v Oxford, away, 14:00.

Rugby Union
21/11 Men’s Blues v Steele Bogder XV, home, 15:00, Grange Road.

College League 1:
20/11 St Peter’s v Trinity, 13:00, Casto Astro.
20/11 Downing v Homerton, 14:15.
20/11 Jesus v Girton, 14:15.

College League 2:
22/11 Pembroke v Trinity Hall, 14:15.
22/11 St Catharine’s v Trinity, 14:15.
21/11 Caius v Peterhouse, 14:15.

Table Tennis
21/11 Men’s Blues v Brighton, home, 16:00, Fenner Gym.
21/11 Women’s Blues v Loughborough, away, 14:00.

Tennis
21/11 Men’s Blues v Loughborough III, home, 14:00, Next Generation Club.
21/11 Women’s Blues v London Metropolitan, away, 11:30.

Volleyball.
14/11 Men’s Blues v Warwick, home, 19:15, Manor Community College.
17/11 Women’s Blues v Birmingham, away, 18:15.

Fencing
17/11 Men’s Blues v Bristol, Oxford, UCL, Bath (weekend tournament) home.
21/11 Men’s II v Oxford II, home.
17/11 Women’s Blues v Bristol, Oxford, UCL, Bath (weekend tournament) home.

I made the squares in that no number occurs more than once in any row or column. Squares may be located horizontally or vertically adjacent. Unshaded squares must form a single area.
Coventry crushed in style

Hat-trick hero Stanley leads Cambridge women to double figure rout

Cambridge rolled over Coventry despite several missed opportunities during the match

The race, it's worth taking the pre-qualifiers don't expect this to be a walkover. With England travel to Tel Aviv in good company, will feel a reversal is possible. However, Israel are no joke on their own patch, where the nation's eyes will rest. Izzie Blakey, which was her first for Cambridge side, Coventry were unable to make the telling breakthrough. A sustained piece of defensive excellence by John's forced Jesus to concede a scrum on their five metre line. A kamikaze charge-down led to a drop goal opportunity for the Blues, bringing the score to 5-1 on the stroke of half time.

The Blues were still firing going into the second half. Emma Goater scored after a good dribble up the left hand corner of the net. With the score at 7-1 Hannah Rickman poached a goal with a cheeky slapping, extending Cambridge's lead yet again. By this stage Coventry looked thoroughly dejected, they were ravaged by injury and humiliated by the scoreline and their heads began to drop significantly. Alex Workman and the final goal from Anna Stanley brought the winning scoreline to 10-1.

Despite absolutely dominating play throughout the match, the Blues were frustrated with several missed opportunities, however they still pulled off an impressive victory.

Bona Hockey - Midlands Conference
Women's 1A 2007/08
COVENTRY 5 1 3 1 12 8 4
NOTTINGHAM 6 0 2 1 8 4 7
LOUGHBOROUGH II 4 0 2 1 8 4 7
COVENTRY II 5 2 0 1 8 7 1 8
BIRMINGHAM II 5 1 3 1 12 8 4
BIRMINGHAM III 5 0 0 5 1 6 0 1

What is the training schedule like?
We have one team run per week, but on top of that everyone takes private lessons at Parkside Gym. Overall we spend about 6 to 20 hours training at any venue we can find.

How did you get into dancing?
Alex: I started during the fourth year of my masters course, I was bored and wanted a new activity and a new set of friends. After browsing the freshers' fair dance section and the Cambridge Dance Club caught my eye and I've never looked back.

Season so far
Alex: Our season is only just getting started, but last year we had a clean sweep! We came home victorious in both friendly and varsity matches, the South of England university championship and the national university championship. We also won the Varsity Match against Oxford, as well as the second team match. Of course, we hope to retain all of these titles this year.
Blues hold on for win

Broadfoot's brilliant boot inspires Cambridge to victory

On the coldest night of the year so far, the Blues met Crawshays Welsh XV in a hard fought match, where both sides were creating more scoring opportunities than they were able to convert into points. However, right from the restart the Blues built several phases of play and eventually put Broadfoot in for Cambridge's first try, which he used to extend their lead at the top of the pile, ball in hand, and claimed the score.

As the end of the Michaelmas season approached, Cambridge City proved dangerous. If the first half saw the Blues on top, then the second half witnessed an impressive Welsh fight back. The Blues were on top during the initial exchanges, dominating possession for the first twenty minutes. Cambridge City proved dangerous. With ten minutes to go Ross Broadfoot, who played a large roll in team dynamics, began a move that eventually put Chris Lewis through under the posts, bringing the score to an unsurmountable 26-17. However, yet again the Welsh fought back, scoring a try in the dying seconds and leaving the score at 26-24.

Blues defenders before storming into the left corner to score. Cambridge replied by establishing some territory, but a silly chip through allowed the Welsh to clear their lines. The Blues eventually came away with another Broadfoot penalty, but they really should have been looking for a try.

Despite the score at 19-10, Crawshays Welsh XV dug in and took the game to the Blues. They were physical throughout, but never more so than during their third try of the match, which came from an awesome twenty metre rolling maul. Having executed a perfect backs try earlier in the game, the Welsh forwards demonstrated that there was more to their side than just a drilled backbone. The long haired replacement hooker, Craig Hawkins, emerged from the bottom of the pile, ball in hand, and claimed the score.

The Welsh weren't the only ones playing running rugby. With ten minutes to go Ross Broadfoot, who put in an impressive performance, began a move that eventually put Chris Lewis through under the posts, bringing the score to an unsurmountable 26-17. However, yet again the Welsh fought back, scoring a try in the dying seconds and leaving the score at 26-24.

Building on their victory against London Irish last week, the Blues are finally beginning to build some winning momentum with just two games left until the Varsity Match. The team is beginning to gel and things are looking up in the Cambridge camp leading into the Steele-Bodger Match next week.

Jesus beat City in tight match

Reigning champions edge closer to title triumph after smash-and-grab

As the end of the Michaelmas season draws ever closer, things are heating up at the top of the hockey first division. Last Sunday Jesus and Cambridge City met in a match that may well decide who finishes on top when things finally draw to a close. Both sides fielded weakened sides due to injury or absenteeism, but that didn't hinder the standard of play.

Despite the freezing conditions, the match started at a blistering pace. Jesus, sensing the opportunity, opened up a 2 goal lead in the first five minutes. Cambridge City fought back and during the euphoric celebrations of just scoring, Jesus lost their composure and let City sneak a goal just before the interval.

The second half opened at frantic pace as both teams sensed a win. After a period of time to end play, Cambridge City attacked up the right wing, catching Jesus napping at the back, bringing them the equalizer. The rest of the half saw tensions run high as both sides were frustrated by the tied scoreline.

In the final ten minutes of a long half, Jesus won a short corner that should have brought them the win. However, they put the ball wide, wasting what should have been at least a shot on goal. Luckily for the Jesus team, a last minute tap in from their striker edged them into the lead with just seconds to go. Cambridge City were visibly disappointed with the loss after such a close match; Jesus, on the other hand, were ecstatic to extend their lead at the top of League One.
‘Utter foolishness’

John’s skipper Mayne blasts Jesus decision to squander penalty

John’s were fearsome in defence throughout the match, with the back division employing an awesome blitz move, led by barn-storming fly-half Sonnenfeld, that put enormous pressure on the Jesus half-back partnership of Jon Cross and Kenji Tamba. John’s were also able to disrupt the attacking line-outs, with stand-in captain Rupert Walter stealing plenty of ball to relieve the pressure on his side. Eventually, having gained a penalty in front of the posts, John’s finally decided to let centre Tim Johanson take the three points.

Again, John’s didn’t take long to firmly entrench themselves inside the John’s 22, and seemed desperate for a try, spurning many opportunities to kick at goal presented by a John’s pack rapidly losing their cool under sustained pressure. With wave upon wave having been repulsed, it was perhaps in desperation not to finish the half with a lead of only three points that Johanson, despite the blustery conditions, was given another chance to score from a penalty 35 yards out and almost on the touchline. From the resulting miss John’s broke out and, for the first time, got the ball in space to pareman Ovuede Efeotor, who was tackled just before the try line to set up an almighty battle on the Jesus line for the last remaining minutes of the half, which Jesus managed to defend.

The second half was a much more even affair, with the Jesus kicking game frequently disrupted by some excellent charge-downs and the tactical awareness and cool head of full back Ben Gibson.

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John's forwards led the charge against St John's