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Stopping the War
with the grand old
man of the left

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VARSITY

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



Bishop Bateman Court (right), which was broken into by unknown intruders on Saturday night; students' belongings, including a laptop (top left) from ransacked rooms were discarded outside and on the roof of the building



CAMILLA TEMPLE;
RICHARD GARDNER

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 morning, my laptop was gone and my room was ransacked. I felt violated and disturbed. They had left a rolled-up ten pound note, probably for coke, on my desk. It was really upsetting.

"They also put all my knickers in a box and then left them outside in the garden. My laptop was on the

drain pipe outside and my fountain pen and medical card were also lying around in the building."

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 home on Saturday in shock.

A spokesperson for Cambridgeshire Constabulary said: "We were called at 5.50am by Julia Tilley and arrived at 6.05am. We had reports of an intruder trying doors, having got in through a window.

"We were told that the informant had not been attacked and no assaults were reported. We recorded it as a suspicious incident

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

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Don't sell your
soul to
the
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giants

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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" found in some foods and alcohol could make the body better adapted at reducing the normal injury caused by daily metabolism. He even 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 applicants, which is twice the number of the 2004 admissions cycle. The college's Senior Tutor, Matthias Dörrzapf, told Varsity: "The college has made a tremendous effort with admissions – from hosting symposiums for teachers and more 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 II diabetes. Researchers led by Ligang Zhou found that the appetite-suppressing drug mCPP improves blood sugar levels in obese and diabetic mice and hence could be used as a new treatment for diabetes. Lora Heisler, a member of the research group based at Addenbrooke's Hospital, said, "Though just a first step, this work provides a new direction in the search for novel pathways and molecules in the brain to target for the treatment of type II diabetes."

Angela Fanshawe



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, WILMINGTON

Underwater tutorials

Dr Annelise Hagan, Visiting Scholar in Cambridge University's Coastal Research Unit, is broadcasting from Aquarius, the world's only fixed underwater research station. Dr Hagan is living and working 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

another report, this time of a burglary and an assault. "Somebody has reported that they woke up with an intruder near their bed and started screaming when he put his hand over the victim's mouth. He first ran into the toilet and then escaped out of the room."

Police did not arrive till Saturday afternoon and in response to accusations that they were slow to return, Cambridgeshire Constabulary said, "We have a finite amount of resources."

"This incident was not an ongoing burglary. Grade 'A' incidents, such as ongoing 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."

"We're all really shocked - we didn't expect this to happen. The police weren't very good. People were getting really annoyed that they were being stopped for going the wrong way on their bikes outside Sainsbury's but the police didn't come for ages on Saturday."

Senior Tutor of Trinity Hall, Dr Nick Bampos, commented "It is not clear how the intruders got into College accommodation as there was no evidence of forced entry. The College Porters spent most of Saturday looking at the site for obvious security weak-spots, but it may be that entry was via an open window or door."

In response to questions about

whether the college holds students responsible because many did not lock their doors, Dr Bampos 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 Bampos 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 safe 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. College 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

CLEMMIE DOWLEY

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, a significant decrease 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

Scientists discover fat genes

SUE KIRK

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 a 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 gene is responsible for producing an enzyme which can act to modify DNA, and may act as a switch to turn on and off other genes 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 next step in the research will be to establish its exact nature.

These findings form part of a concerted effort to establish the causes of obesity, which scientists have found hard to tie 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.

career potential is limited to 'university research laboratories 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 scientists 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.

Microsoft Research is currently sponsoring an outreach event taking place 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.



CompScis hard at work CHRIS NORTHEAST



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With any cake or pastry in the restaurant

on presentation of this voucher
and proof of student status

Peterhouse students boycott bar and hall

» Ball protests continue as Petreans blame poor exam results on insufficient college support

KATHERINE FAULKNER
Chief News Editor

Peterhouse students are boycotting their hall and bar this week in the latest of a string of protests against the college's cancellation of their May Ball.

"There are a few people going to hall, but not many," said one member of the college. "The catering staff seem pretty peeved and it should be hitting the bursar financially."

The decision to boycott hall was taken after a number of measures were suggested in a JCR open meeting last Thursday, including students turning their backs to fellows in hall and giving the fellows an ultimatum of one week to reconsider the cancellation.

"Relationships between the fellows and the student body couldn't be worse"

"Boycotting hall is more to do with the problem of the fellows not listening to us," said a former member of the Peterhouse May Ball committee. "They just refuse to accept there's a problem or to talk to us about it or defend themselves. The truth is the fellows have never liked the May Ball and have made efforts in the past to sideline it or set unfeasible targets for tickets sales."

The student says he is pessimistic about the prospect of actually reinstating the ball and even fears that a ball in 2009 may be impossible. "They've said we can have one next year, but they know it's unfeasible," he said. "We've broken the biennial rhythm now and our agreements with Magdalene. Anyone who's ever planned a May ball before will have left. We rely a lot on the old boys and girls giving us money, but the college are withholding their names and addresses – information they give out freely for anything else. My opinion is, there's a good chance

there won't be a May Ball this year or at all."

The JCR is also instigating a review of teaching at the college after students claimed that the poor exam performance which prompted the Ball's cancellation was a result of a lack of effort and support on the part of teaching staff. Students were told by fellows, through the JCR President Ben Fisher, that the ball had been cancelled due to wear and tear of college fabric, disruption of the daily operation of college, "costs both visible and hidden" and, finally, the effect on the academic results of the committee. However, many remain unconvinced, claiming that the Ball was cancelled primarily as a punishment for poor exam results, and that this is unfair.

"They said in a letter sent out over the summer that in their opinion the college's poor academic performance was due to student inactivity," explained one. "They have put the fear of god into the freshers. At their matriculation dinner a fellow told them in his speech that if they got a 2.ii they would have failed their families. None of them bought tickets for the RAG pyjama pub crawl earlier this term because they'd all been told to work."

Another student claims that a fellow who was at the meeting resulting in the cancellation told him that, during the discussion of the May Ball issue, it was commented that "if we could just exclude people who got thirds, it would be OK".

Katherine Sirell, who attended Thursday's JCR open meeting, said that students at the meeting asked for "more academic guidance such as mock exams and more structured supervision times. The lack of student morale was pointed out as well as the lack of communication and support from the fellows."

It was pointed out that "if the college are taking such extreme steps affecting students in striving to improve results, they should also re-examine the state of teaching and pastoral support." The review of teaching at Peterhouse will aim to address these concerns and collect detailed stu-



RICHARD GARDNER

Peterhouse hall has been virtually deserted since the boycott

dent feedback.

"Students don't feel supported by their Directors of Studies," said one finalist. "A friend of mine who graduated last year was struggling before his finals and asked his Director of Studies if they could meet weekly to make sure his revision was on track. She completely refused. That's not really that uncommon - people at Peterhouse generally don't have

great things to say about their tutors and Directors of Studies."

The student revealed that the growing animosity between fellows and students was creating "a really nasty atmosphere" at the college. She said: "The Fellows have closed ranks completely and it feels like they're scheming and working against us. Relationships between them and the student body couldn't be worse; we don't

trust them." Ironically, she says, the cancellation of the Ball to improve results is likely to have the opposite effect.

"It can't be good for academic achievement when morale is so low. There's a general apathy to work and a lot of bad feeling, and I don't think this is going to die down quickly or quietly."

Peterhouse college authorities are still refusing to comment.

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

all ages and families with young children." After switching on the Christmas lights, the 23-year-old half sister of Jason Donovan will be performing her single, Tightrope, which was released in the UK in August of this year.

The lights will be switched on on Sunday 18 November at 5pm after an afternoon of dance, drama and music in the city centre. McIntosh will be performing at 7pm.

The Cambridge City Council will be hoping for a more positive reaction to their choice of artist than they received in 2004, when a visit from punk band "The Damned" provoked anger amongst the city's Christians.

They have announced that the celebrations will also feature Santa riding an environmentally friendly "green wheels" and a snow queen on stilts. However, reindeer will

only be allowed to attend if restrictions concerning Bluetongue a livestock disease, are lifted in time.

"This year we will be cutting the time the lights are on by an

"the twenty three year old half-sister of Jason Donovan will be performing her single"

hour and they will now go out at 10pm except in Christ's Pieces, New Square and Hobson's Passageway," added Thornton.

Talking of Karl Kennedy's impending visit to Club 22, CUSU

Ents Manager Ed Foster has called Kennedy "one of Neighbours' greatest ever characters" and has said that his visit should be a "massive night." Students are advised to arrive early however, as Q jump ran out in just four hours.

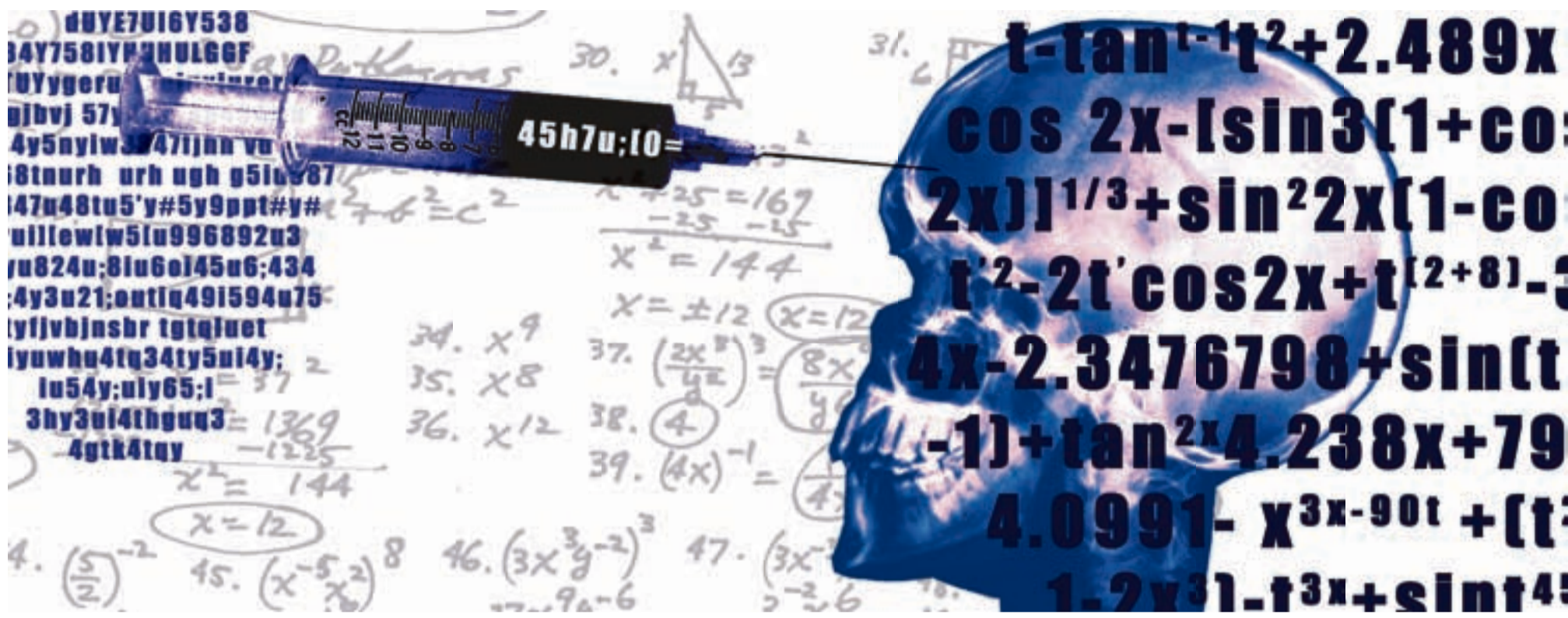
Stephanie McIntosh and Alan Fletcher have taken starring roles while acting in Neighbours, the popular Australian TV show. Sky, played by Stephanie McIntosh, was unsure of the paternity of her daughter Kerry, who was suffering from Leukaemia, while she also lost her soul mate, Stingray, to a "brain aneurism which haemorrhaged".

Karl, played by Alan Fletcher, is famed for his affairs with receptionist Sarah and later Isobel Hoyland, during his decade-long marriage to Susan.



Sky: pure talent

News Investigation



CHARLOTTE TYSON

Wired awake

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 stimulant 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 maybe two in the morning."

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

38%

Cambridge students
who buy energy drinks
twice a week or more

46%

Students who use
caffeine pills during
exam term

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. France banned Red Bull in 2000 after an 18 year old Irish athlete, Ross Cooney, died after playing a basketball game soon after consuming four cans of the drink. Britain investigated the drink, but has only issued a warning against its consumption by pregnant women.

Some research also suggests 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 at about 2am, 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 work and felt no desire 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 university students to use prescription-only drugs, designed to treat mental or neurological disorders, to increase productivity levels. A study by the University of New Hampshire last year found 16.2 per cent of American students

38%

of students would buy Ritalin if it were sold in pharmacies

had used Ritalin, a drug prescribed to patients with Attention Deficit Disorder or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Of these 15.5 per cent reported using it at least two or three times a week. Modafinil, a narcolepsy drug, and Adderall, used to treat both narcolepsy and ADHD, are also popular among healthy American students attempting to improve alertness and concentration.

“Our research has confirmed that Ritalin and modafinil drugs can improve cognition amongst healthy individuals,” said Professor Robbins. Studies by Robbins and his colleagues in 1997 found Ritalin had significant effects on healthy volunteers’ spatial memory and ability to plan. “It is very good for improving selective attention – in other words, improving concentration – especially in the sleep deprived,” said Robbins. But it did not have an impact on verbal fluency, suggesting students taking the drug in the hope that it will improve their essays might not see a marked improvement in their work.

In a different study, researchers found volunteers who took modafinil performed better than those who took a placebo in tasks that tested memory of numerical sequences and visual patterns. Participants also said they felt more alert and attentive. “Volunteers that took modafinil also worked with greater accuracy, because the drug slowed the time before initial response. This reduction in impulsiveness meant people had more time to consider their response,” said Robbins.

Of the eight students we spoke to who have experimented with these drugs, the majority were American students on exchange programmes. One exchange student, who admitted to using Adderall three or four times when studying, said he knew many fellow students who used the drug almost daily. “Basically what it did was make me focus really intently on whatever I was doing,” he said. “When I was studying for an exam, I was recopying all of my notes and was able to sit and do this for nine hours straight without thinking about it.”

The student suggested use of the drug is more widespread at American universities because ADHD is diagnosed more frequently in the USA. “Since more kids are diagnosed, more people have access to their prescriptions. Everyone I know knows someone with a prescription and gets it off of them, or even goes into the university medical centre to “test for ADD” to get themselves a prescription. It is real easy to get a hold of, so that makes it prevalent.”

But the drug does not seem to improve concentration in all cases. One student from Clare College, who obtained Ritalin through a friend with ADHD, told Varsity: “I noticed no effect at all. I took it because my friend guaranteed that it would make me really focused, but I felt just as unmotivated as ever.” She added, “Most people I know who’ve tried it have got it through someone with ADHD or an American friend. It’s very easy to get scammed if you

buy it on the internet.”

Barbara Sohakian, Professor of Neuropsychology at Cambridge, claimed that use of such drugs is also becoming more widespread in academic circles. “I have been offered modafinil on several occasions when I’ve been at conferences, without asking for it,” she said. Professor Robbins stated that he has had similar experiences.

A report published by the British Medical Association last week has called for public discussion on ethics of brain boosting drugs. There is something startling and potentially worrying about interventions designed to alter the healthy brain which controls such facets of personality, individuality and our sense of self,” it argued. The authors also emphasized that the long-term effects of taking such drugs are as yet unknown, and warned that “the effects of taking such drugs over a long period of time, particularly the effect on the developing brain, are still being assessed”.

Cambridge University has condemned the use of such drugs by students. “The University does not approve of any non-medicinal drug taking,” said Rob Wallach, Secretary to the Senior Tutors’ committee. “Colleges would discourage this for any students who felt it necessary to take performance enhancing stimulants to help with their studies and/or examinations, and would wish to support them in other ways.”

Professor Robbins, however, has argued that there is no intrinsic ethical difference between taking drugs such as Ritalin or Adderall, and drinking coffee or an energy drink to stay alert. “It’s a hard line to draw ethically,” he told Varsity. “If people were to use them in an exam, that would obviously be wrong. But it’s hard to see why we

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

shouldn’t be taking them in general situations. I don’t believe there’s a strong line between taking Ritalin or modafinil and drinking coffee.”

He went on to suggest that Britain should prepare for the use of “cognitive enhancers” to become much more widespread, particularly as restricting access to these drugs would be difficult.

“It’s hard to legislate against, except in a competitive situation where there would be inequalities of access – in exam situations, for example. This is currently being considered by a report by the Academy of Medical Sciences, on which I serve.” The report will be published in February 2008.

One student has suggested such drugs were unlikely to ever be used by more than a small minority of Cambridge students. “There’s this whole culture of respect in Cambridge for people who are naturally gifted,” he said. “I think most students here would feel a bit like they’re cheating themselves if they took Ritalin or Modafinil. It would be a sign that they can’t get by on natural talent like the rest of them.”

But Varsity’s poll found that although only six per cent of Cambridge students had contemplated buying Ritalin, Adderall or a similar “cognitive enhancer” on the internet, 38 per cent said they would buy them if they became freely available for sale in the UK.

THE PRO PLUS POPPER

First year Physical NatSci

“ I started using Pro Plus regularly at the beginning of this term. I’m taking about six a day at the moment, which is way more than anyone else I know – I certainly don’t consider myself a typical Cambridge case, but I have a lot of friends who use it quite a lot.

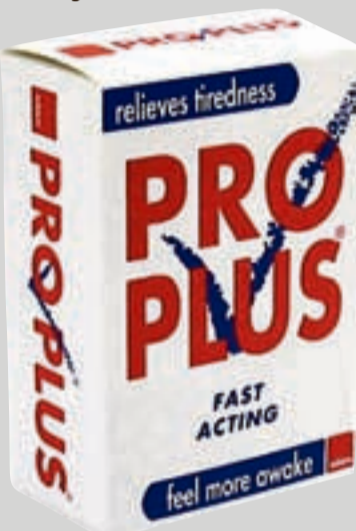
The problem with studying Natural Sciences at Cambridge is that you have to be alert 24/7. You’ve got lectures, practicals and lab supervisions all day – 31 hours of contact time in total. And when you get home in the evening you’ve got to carry on working. The workload is a massive increase on what I was used to at school.

I’m used to going out a lot and I was totally not willing to sacrifice my social life when I came to Cambridge, so I just decided to sleep less and take something to help me feel more awake. Ultimately it’s a lifestyle decision – I could quite easily devote the hours I spend on going out to sleeping, but I can’t really see any alternative if I’m not prepared to do that.

I’m not really concerned about whether or not I’m going over the recommended dose. If I’m feeling sleepy and I’ve got more than one supervision that day, I’ll take a few in the morning. I’ll also drink three or four cups of coffee every day, and I occasionally used powdered guarana extract – it’s a natural source of caffeine that you can buy from health food shops.

I’m getting about six hours of sleep each night at the moment. If I wasn’t so competitive things would be a bit easier, but I like being able to contribute in supervisions and you need to be really alert because the course requires constant active thought.

A lot of the time I feel pretty frazzled – too tired to sleep but not awake enough to work – but for the first few hours after I’ve taken a large caffeine dose I feel alert and able to work well. I don’t think I could get by without extra caffeine at the moment. I’ll catch up on sleep once term’s finished. I’m just doing my best to stay on top of things while I’m still here.”



THE RITALIN DABBLER

Music graduate

“ 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 something to help me concentrate. I only had one or two pills each time, 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 to the next bar of music, rather than focusing on the previous, tinkering with it, wondering how it could be improved and reflecting upon the piece as a whole.

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 re-assess 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.”



THE SU DOKU STIMULANT CHALLENGE



Ben Grainger is a second year mathematics student at St John’s. Ben is finding that his challenging academic work and busy social life as a Cambridge mathmo are cutting into the time available for sleep. In a completely unscientific test, Varsity tried to discern which of a variety of stimulants available from high street shops was most effective in approving his concentration and speed at solving problems.

DAY 1: THE CONTROL

We sat Ben, who had not taken any stimulants, in a quiet room and set him the task of completing a “medium difficulty” su doku puzzle in the shortest time possible. Completion time: 17 min 57 sec

DAY 2: RED BULL

Ben consumed one can of Red Bull and, after half an hour, completed another “medium” su doku. Completion time: 16 min 27 sec

DAY 3: GUARANA

Westirred one teaspoon of guarana powder into Ben’s orange juice. After half an hour, he completed another “medium” su doku. Completion time: 14 min 10 sec

DAY 4: PRO PLUS

Ben swallowed two Pro Plus pills and after half an hour he started the puzzle. Completion time: 17 mins 29 sec

Ben said: “I will be sticking to coffee after these fairly unilluminating results. However, I would like to thank Varsity for introducing me to the joy of su doku.”

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 the 200-foot wall was not appropriately fixed to the main building.

There were also cracks in the brickwork and a nearby fire escape staircase was almost detached from the wall.

The wall faces onto Fisher

Square, where Soul Tree Nightclub is located, and also faces one side of the Corn Exchange.

Students shopping in the vicinity were shocked by the revelations. "It's unbelievable that no one noticed this earlier," said one. "I go to Soul Tree all the time."

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

MARIANNA XENOPHONTOS

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

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Caius scholars banned from their own feast

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

"The college, as usual, neither consulted nor informed us"

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 longstanding 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.



Homerton

These boots were made for weeing

A brunette singleton, dressed to kill outside Cindies this week in brand new ankle boots, was thrilled to notice the Casanova she had drooled over in lectures approaching with a suggestive smile. As they chatted, however, the minx realised that her bladder capacity had peaked and she was in serious need of release. The queue stretching mercilessly ahead, our heroine, refusing to abandon sexual prospects for any mere bodily fluid, took the painful but necessary step of trickling her urine into her new £80 Office boots. Her decision paid off, and the two enjoyed mutual pleasure in Senate House Passage. And the boots? They have since been deposited at a local leather specialist for a clean. Spies hopes that the good people at Timpson's wear gloves to work...

London

Taxi catastrophe

A group of female students ventured out of Cambridge this week for a girly night out in London. After passing an enjoyable soiree, one of the brighter (if drunker) sparks informed her less streetwise companions that she would order a taxi to convey them home. As she bid them to file inside, her country companions wondered dimly at the lushness of the car's leather upholstery and its glistening paintwork. All became clear, however, when they loudly instructed the "taxi driver" to take them to her home quick smart. He politely explained that this was just his car, and would the scholars please vacate it, lest he be compelled to telephone the police.

St John's

Noxious Nosegay

A group of habitually modest and sober gentleman hosted a swap in a curry venue of outstanding repute at which they were led calamitously astray by their female counterparts. The young ladies behaved in such a debauchurous way that their male friends quite simply could not keep up. When one overly saturated filly disgorged the contents of her stomach onto her neighbour's curry, the boys could only pee out of a window in response. The filly in question was too drunk to return home without some chivalric aid, which was offered by one young man in the hope of some subsequent spooning action. Upon returning to her boudoir, our eager young hero realised that his damsel was in serious distress and obviously needed some water. He boldly flung some flowers out of their vase and rushed to her aid. She gulped down a toxic mix of plant food and stale water before violently retching for the rest of the night. As he nobly held her puking head, he secretly bemoaned his heroic haste in going through with what had seemed like a good idea at the time.

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 £18.1 billion, is expected to raise around £6 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 informa-

tion 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 have 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 25 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 affairs 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

"This latest trick is merely a continuation of the NUS executive's long standing hostility to democracy"

representatives will be elected, not just last-minute appointees?"

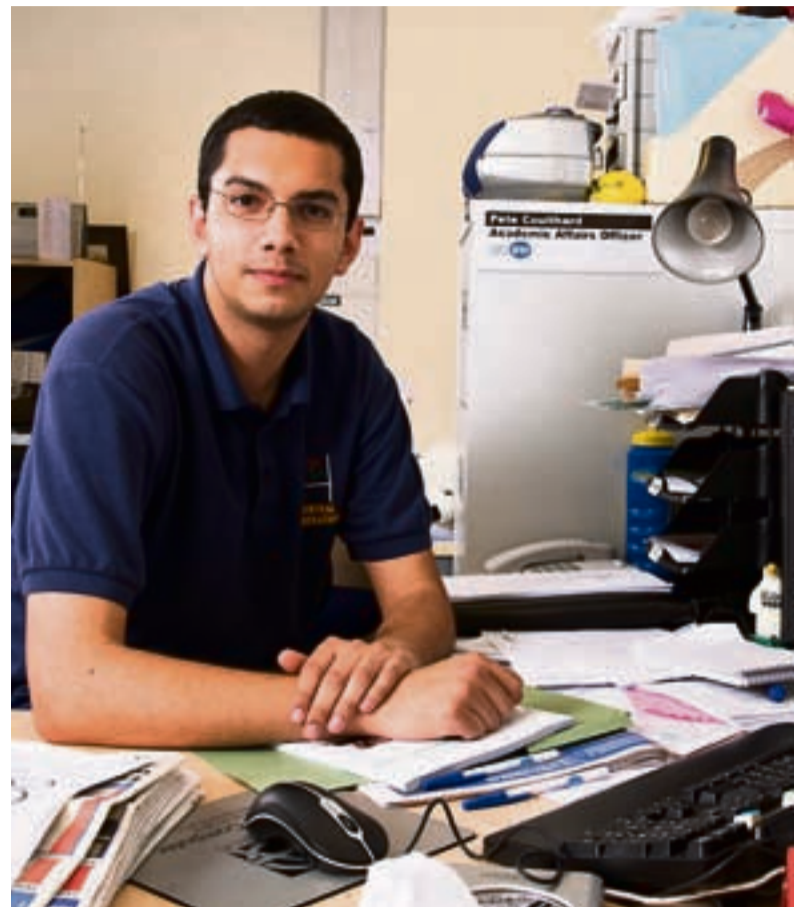
Defending the proposals, NUS vice president for Education Wes Streeting said: "I enthusiastically support these reforms. Far from happening too fast, I'd say they're long overdue. We've got democratic structures that are totally outdated."

Wes Streeting argues that the

way in which the NUS is currently functioning is unsustainable. "For the past ten years there have been annual deficits of between £250,000 and £1 million," he says. "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 "rag-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."



Coulthard supports the new reforms

DYLAN SPENCER-DAVIDSON

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 told Varsity that while Showunmi's contribution to Equality and Diversity initiatives has been important, "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 Walko, 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-

"Elements within the University are pushing Victoria Showunmi out of the back door"

ing 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 am worried 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 "distracted" 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 any fun at all. The last few weeks have seen the cancellation of the Peterhouse May Ball, (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 peeved Dean and then re-instated after the JCR 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 they did deserve the kind of dialogue 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 scrapped 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 said "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." Clearly the fellows are not that keen to talk. The difference here is that they cannot put this reluctance down to either a lack of respect or failing academic standards. These were the third year scholars, fresh from a shiny first in their second year. Surely these, if anyone, were the most likely candidates for that elusive "meaningful dialogue". Sadly not.

There is a culture in Cambridge colleges, probably always has been too, of officialdom rather enjoying being able to totally ignore the students over contentious issues, particularly disciplinary ones. Part of this attitude must come from the prevalence of incidents of drunken loutishness which inevitably lead to an inch or two in Cambridge Spies followed by an angry email from the Dean "to all junior members". From the japes of a few individuals, colleges feel compelled to punish entire undergraduate bodies with no regard for the difference between individual and collective responsibility. But the glaring fact is that attacking students through their JCRs and organisational bodies is never going to prevent the often isolated misdemeanours that cause so much upset. Heaven forfend that they ever do anything about drinking societies.

Varsity has been Cambridge's independent student newspaper since 1947, and distributes 10,000 free copies to every Cambridge college and to ARU each week.

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Letter of the week will receive a bottle of wine from our friends at Cambridge Wine Merchants

A Divisional Education: not just economics

In spite of his private school education, Ed Cumming does not seem to have opened his horizon towards a comparative view of educational systems outside of the UK. Most European countries do not have a separation between state and private schools— and still many of us somehow manage to get a decent education and even come to the holy halls of Cambridge. So an educational system which is completely based on state-run schools does not necessarily lower the standard of education. Take the example of Germany: we have very few private schools, and almost no one would go there voluntarily as they don't have a good reputation. They are generally regarded as schools for rich kids who cannot or don't want to keep up with the academic level in state-Gymnasien, so their ambitious parents pay a lot of money to push them through to the Abitur in these private schools. Most Germans would therefore prefer a state school because the level is so much better.

That said, I would also qualify Ed Maltby's arguments by adding that a state school system isn't a guarantor for social mobility. A great problem in Germany is the segregation of pupils into the Hauptschule, Realschule and Gymnasium at the age of about 10. Once you end up in one of these school forms — which are based on your primary school teacher's assessment on your academic potential — mobility upwards is almost impossible.

Clearly, any strongly divisional system — be it based on parental income, as in Britain, or on a teacher's subjective judgment of potential, as in Germany — is extremely unfair in limiting rather than supporting ambitions in education and in perpetuating power hierarchies. It is in the interest of society as a whole that school systems provide the maximum of integration on all levels.

Lisa Jeschke

Experiencing Effective Integration

I strongly disagree with the article "Barriers from within" from issue 664 of Varsity (3/11) 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, 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 one-sided view has been taken on student parents at Cambridge. I am both a single parent and a student parent and I find that the provisions the university, and indeed my college, are excellent. You do not have the social life



or money that you had as a single person, but you are a parent with responsibilities, and so need to adjust to them, 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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@varsity.co.uk

money is tight, it is easier than it was before I was a student.

My supervisions have been arranged so that I am able to pick up my daughter from nursery, my lectures are all during the week between 9 and 5, and other students are quite happy to chat with me after lectures and during meals, even though I am not able to socialise 'after hours'. It is all very well and good moaning about what you are not receiving, but you would be in a much worse situation if you were working from 8am to 6pm in an office with no career aspirations, no grant to cover some childcare costs, and were entirely unable to cover your bills - at least the university does have hardship funds.

I wish people would stop dwelling on the bad and look at the good - this university is allowing people to further themselves academically in a way other universities can only dream of, in order to provide a better and more stable future for both yourselves and your children, and if that means you have to struggle a bit while you are here financially, then so be it - at least it is only for the duration of your degree, not for the rest of your life.

Nicola Anderson
St Edmund's College

Don't let the Union pass a farcical constitution

Last week, the Cambridge Union elite told Members that they should wait and see their proposals for a new constitution before judging it. Having waited and having looked at it, their proposals make the Democratic People's Republic of Korea look democratic and accountable. As a result, I can only urge as many people as possible to turn up to the Special Members Business Meeting on 20th November at the Union and vote down the ill-thought out proposals so one day the Society can get a democratic amendment.

Robert Cumming
Girton College

CONFESS TO



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News nightmare

Newspaper sales are falling, 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 of the Financial Times, these changes offer a challenge that the media should seek to overcome.

The threats to journalism in democratic countries are not what they were. Censorship, suppression, imprisonment of editors, belong – largely – 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; not 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 problem is many-headed. It includes: The internet which produces information in huge quantities for no upfront cost; bloggers who supply opinion free; satellite and cable technology, vastly increasing TV choice; free newspapers, taking away newspapers' markets; advertisers who won't support newspapers and TV news programmes; citizens, not caring about politics and foreign affairs; consumers who are becoming accustomed to getting news for free; corporations who cut newsrooms, concentrate ownership and crowd out family companies dedicated to high news standards; editors who less often assign reporters to hard news, analysis and investigation; reporters who prefer celebrity beats to town halls; producers who put reporters on the air when they have just arrived at the site of a story.

You will notice that most of these reasons are related, in one way or another, to one particular power: consumer power. With choice, readers, listeners and viewers have chosen to migrate from news: or at least – and the distinction is an important one – to migrate from one way of taking in news to many others, many of these not yet clear.

The pessimism which now abounds in my industry is often hard to overstate. It was well summed up in a speech by John Carroll, the former editor of the Los Angeles Times, in Seattle last year. He deplored the "shrinking of newspapers' social purpose", and said that "restoring the balance between financial performance and public duty is probably impossible under present ownership". The job of journalists now was "to save journalism itself...to ensure the existence long into the future of a large, independent, principled, questioning, deep-digging cadre of journalists in America, regardless of what happens to our newspapers".

In Britain, a famous TV presenter, Jeremy Paxman of Newsnight, gave the annual lecture at the Edinburgh TV Festival last month – and echoed Carroll's blast against newspaper owners, applying it to the bosses of his medium, TV. He said that "People at the top are less concerned with content and more concerned with bottom lines. There are too many people in this industry whose answer to the question: what is TV for? is to say: 'to make money'."

It is not that there is less news: indeed, there is more. In his lecture, Paxman said that in the ten year period from 1995-5 to 2005/6, the hours of news put out by the BBC had more than doubled, from 5270 per year to 12,485 per year. At the same time, though, budgets and time of analytical programmes – like his own – were being cut. News pours out in short pieces, as in 24-hour news or business news; increasingly niched for those who want to keep up to date constantly, or who want specific kinds of news. In these niches, a good living can be made and good journalism done: The Economist is one of the most successful news magazines in the world, and the FT is unique among British papers in increasing circulation over the past year. Busy and committed people will be able increasingly to tailor their news to their specific needs, receiving constant updates on the issues about which they wish to keep informed.

The people who don't constantly want a lot of information on current affairs, or business, or foreign affairs are now served – free. They are, of course, a great threat to the established press – especially the remaining city evening papers. The

"The great newspapers will survive – if they face the future intelligently – as electronic products, by developing a mix of professional and amateur journalism"

sales of the Evening Standard, the long-established and (before the free sheets) monopoly London evening paper, have fallen by almost a half in the past year.

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 round a common agenda. It reached its apogee first 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

who are alarmed by these trends is to make sure a journalism survives which is "large, independent, principled, questioning, deep-digging".

News is now not handed down, but is material to be shaped by the consumer, by the reader and the viewer. In part this is what I have called niche news; in part it is a preference for entertainment, celebrity and fun which drives the popular media; and in increasing part it is people engaged on that practically infinite resource, the Net – putting out their life on YouTube and MySpace, challenging received wisdom in blogs, creating received wisdom in Wikipedia.

On that resource, serious journalism will have to find its own niches. I use the plural because clearly there will be more than one. Already, a good deal of innovative documentary making is done for the web – often incubated in universities, paid for by not for profit institutions. Newspapers are developing websites which include the journalism done for the papers – and increasingly, journalism done for the web. And above all, people are able to put together their universe of news from the vast libraries of material available within seconds. It is of course confusing: as far ahead as can be seen, society will need that cadre of people called journalists who are paid to interpret events. In another decade, serious journalism will look something like this.

Magazines containing serious journalism, essays, investigations and analysis will continue to survive: Die Zeit, the Economist and the New Yorker will all still be publishing, and others may have joined them. Some of these will not make money: the British monthly Prospect, one of the best recent (in the last decade) new serious titles, may continue to need funding by private investors – as does the US Atlantic and the Italian MegaMedia. Some, like The Economist, will be very profitable. New niche magazines will continue to pop up, as in the past – though some of these may have a web presence, and some will be aggregating sites, as signandsite and Arts and Letters Daily – both immensely useful reference points.

Newspapers may survive as global products, as the FT, Wall Street Journal and Herald Tribune, or as local noticeboards, or as free sheets. It's hard to see the appetite for a daily roundup of events which you can hold in your hand disappearing: though if a portable "scroll" on which newspapers can be downloaded is brought to the market successfully, then paper copies may more or less disappear. The great newspapers will survive – if they face the future intelligently – as electronic products, by developing the mix of professional and amateur journalism described above – and produce websites which



publish this journalism, and amplify it by aggregation of material on the same subject, so that the reader can go more deeply into areas s/he wishes to know thoroughly.

Radio is often the forgotten medium in journalism: though it is ideally suited for analytical journalism, and many channels – as BBC Radio 4 – are distinguished in that regard. The public service model of state-backed support, or the subscriber/supporter backed network, as the US National Public Radio. Both public service and subscriber radio will continue – and the latter may even expand, as it has in recent years in the US.

Television will virtually cease to do serious current affairs as a routine matter on mass channels. These will go to niche channels, as they already have: the Discovery Channel has taken in the old 60 Minute show and is developing it for its worldwide viewership. Or they will go to internet production: much documentary and investigative material is now available online – everything from amateur analysis and investigations on YouTube through to foreign reporting subsidised by not-for-profits and/or university journalism departments.

The Net will continue to develop hugely, and will be the biggest driver of and innovator in serious journalism. When – as will soon be the case – the TV screen and the computer screen merge into one, and the modern home will have screens which are active sites of discovery and creation as well as passive receivers of programming, the line between producer and consumer of media will become ever fainter.

Technology is creating a new present and foreshadows a new future for the news media. It is right to reflect on this with some foreboding: we have lost some precious things in journalism – as fine TV current affairs programmes, as many foreign correspondents networks on big city papers – and may lose more. But in the end, if we are to preserve serious journalism, we must now have faith that those who are its object – the readers, listeners and viewers – will wish to become its creators, and in doing so will open a new chapter. This will remove the ability of journalists, in any medium, to have the last word: to say, as Walter Cronkite, the CBS news anchorman, famously did, "that's the way it is". There is no one "way" of how it is: there is never a last word. If the net can make that into a reality – and more, into a way of doing journalism – then it will be a blessing, not a curse.

John Lloyd is Director of Journalism at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at Oxford University and is a Contributing Editor to the Financial Times. He gives a lecture on "The End of Serious Journalism" at Wolfson College on November 20 at 5.45pm



Why do socialists make so much noise about the working class? Why, in all of what we say and 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 against the rich, and prejudiced against people who happen to have more than we do? Well, no. Is it a romantic fascination with the wretched of the earth, just because they are wretched? Do 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 like them more than anyone else, or consider them to be, person for person, morally superior people. An individual worker is no more inherently given to generosity or bravery 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 of all, capitalism teaches 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, mutual support, collective discipline – in a word, solidarity.

Secondly, workers are driven towards struggle. As much as timid union bureaucrats would like to smooth over class conflict and replace strikes with cosy conferences, no amount of fine words or grand conferences can dissuade workers of the material reality of class struggle. What I mean is, you can't talk your way out of hunger, you can't reason with an industrial injury, after a 10-hour day, rhetoric can't convince someone that they aren't tired. Nothing but material struggle in defence of material interests can ultimately satisfy them. They are bodily driven towards struggle.

In every strike, in every union negotiation, underlying the specifics, one principle is always at work: the demand that private property be submitted to the dictates of social responsibility: that the wealth produced by industry be poured into wages, pensions, improved working conditions, greater free time and public service: and not private coffers. Taken to its logical conclusion, this demand inherent in any union dispute points towards a vision of a new society, in which all wealth, all property, all economic activity be directed by the needs of society as a whole. Worker struggle doesn't explicitly espouse a revolutionary programme: but its logic points in that direction.

And finally, only the working class has the physical strength to make the changes we want to see. Everything that we eat, see and touch was manufactured and transported by someone working for a wage. Every simple process in daily life relies upon the labour of the working class, from a telephone call, to turning on a light-bulb, to eating a burger. This class has only to fold its arms to bring the world to a halt. It has only to organise its labours in a different way to solve the world's ills.

Natalie Woolman



A poor investment

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

Mummy, when I grow up I want to be an investment-strategy-management-financier-consultant-man-thing. I want to keep my portfolio diverse and have some real estate interests on the side. I want my bonus to exceed my salary and I want my secretary to buy Daddy's Christmas socks every year." The Caves of Adventure is tossed to the floor with Teddy in favour of the climactic end to the Shanghai Nokia merger in the pink pages. These are the wants and desires of a five-year old at bedtime.

Or at least that's what the graduate recruiters circling town would have you believe. Offices with sleeping pods, annual employee IQ tests and enormous post-graduate-scheme drop-out statistics seem like the dream you never knew you always had. If only you *had* known. Auntie Anne could have made an office-block cake so much more easily than a pink princess castle.

For those of us who had less forward-thinking childhoods, it is all getting a touch confusing. We must bolt dreams of Saddlers' Wells, NASA and Number Ten into the dressing up box once and for all and ponder instead whether or not the Marks and Spencer's suit would do us better in grey or navy. And the source of this sudden determined stride towards suitsville? A prickly red panic that is currently consuming the finalists as they prepare to face the Unknown. The swollen student overdraft and the call of the London lights doesn't make this Unknown any easier, but when there's a free glass of something

sparkling waiting for you from someone who has come all the way to Cambridge to cosy up for a chat about college football, suddenly the Unknown evaporates. These people were you five years ago. And now they are happy, stable and comfortably well off. Lovely. But that doesn't mean that they are doing the job you want to do.

According to statistics compiled by the Cambridge Careers Service, just three per cent of Cambridge students are still looking for employment or opportunities

told" and another who has tried to work out the logistics of repaying her golden handshake and muttering something suitably convincing to her new employers about needing to "find herself" in Asia, the picture looks less rosy than those River Bar canapés would have you believe.

This is probably the point at which I should offer a hasty disclaimer: I am not saying these jobs are crap, nor am I saying that there aren't people out there who do actually want to do them. What I

seem to be the Cantabrigian favourites. Then you spot the guy with the starred first, the girl who directed in Edinburgh and the chair of that politics talk you once went to see, all of whom are blithely allowing themselves to be smooched as they are walked through the two-stage interview procedure. Herein, violent passions have been rolled up safely in a blanket of "hobbies", dreams have been cast aside as embarrassing accoutrements and talents have been confused with numerical reasoning scores.

How nice it is to get a note in your pigeon-hole asking you, specifically *you*, to consider a multinational company. It gives an illusion of the world being in need of you – it may be the Unknown, but you are certainly not unknown. But maybe the job you want won't send you a letter. Maybe they don't even know who you are and if they did would think you were an Oxbridge shrimp with so much to prove that trusting the coffee machine to you would be a bad idea. Should these jobs be disregarded because they are more frightening, more competitive and more difficult? Cambridge, where have your dreams gone?

I worry that my fury at the state of the world in the last six weeks is just me growing up, albeit rather painfully, and that soon I will realise London rents can only be met by joining the rat race. Soon I too will argue that a job is only a job and whinge that spreadsheets don't define me. I might pop into the Careers Service before my time runs out. I don't know what degree class a pirate needs.



LAUREN HILL

for further study six months after graduation. That fact is so good that they put it in the prospectus. So, that means 97 percent found the job they were after, right? But when I hear of one friend refusing to come back and recruit us fresh-faced finalists because he "simply couldn't feed anyone else the lies he was

am suggesting is that the number of graduates who embark on these careers is far higher than the number who actually enjoy the jobs they end up in. The figures just don't add up. It is not credible that the diversity of interests at this University is entirely represented in the tiny pool of companies and careers that

Michael Hilton



Embracing the enemy

Despite its hazardous past, nuclear power works

It is high time the British embraced a dangerous, waste-producing, genetically-mutating killer. Global warming must be tackled now, even if it requires allying with the nuclear enemy.

The British continue to look for any alternative. The fear is as prevalent amongst Cambridge undergraduates as it is throughout the country. Faith in nuclear power was fatally undermined twenty five years ago by the crises at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl and has never recovered. In 1970, British spending on new nuclear power was £500m in today's terms. Now it is virtually non-existent.

Yet the fear is out of proportion to the danger. The damage in the USSR was largely the result of the system – the initial problem was caused by authoritarian demands for performance over safety; the fact that the reactor remained open for days afterwards (producing radioactive sheep in Wales) was the product of Soviet denial. In America, the situation was much better handled. It is easy to forget that Three Mile Island has over one hundred brothers who have never grabbed a headline and still provide 20% of America's electrical output. I have friends who lived within range of Sizewell B and as far as I know none of them have developed X-men

superpowers or even a second head.

The disasters were tragic but it is time we moved out of their shadow. Nuclear power is our best prospect for reducing carbon emissions regardless of the continued danger and lethal waste. Indeed, it is the very fact that it is carbon neutral once built that has led to its rapid international rehabilitation. Electricity generation is the single greatest contributor to British carbon emissions and coal-burning power plants are the worst offenders. Some greens have accepted this, others have not.

At this moment nuclear power is the only viable alternative to the fossil fuel guzzlers. Whether eventual salvation will come in the shape of carbon capture, green revolution, or scientific innovation, the messiah is still many years in the making. Current renewable technology is simply not up to the task and the recent shift to biofuels threatens to create more problems than it will solve. As for hydroelectricity, the immense environmental costs are well documented. No matter how much propaganda the visitor centre at the Itaipu Dam can produce, Paraguay has forever lost a huge number of indigenous villages and a set of waterfalls that was said to be one of the most beautiful in the world. Emissions must be cut now

in order to give us time to develop better alternatives.

It is important to remember that although Britain has built no new nuclear power plants in decades, others have. France and Norway have taken the lead with China, India, Japan, Russia, Bulgaria and Romania starting to follow suit. Even America is waking up, with the first attempt to gain a licence

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

in twenty seven years submitted in September by NRG – a move praised by both Democrats and Republicans in Congress.

As with every technology, it has improved drastically in the years since the British lost interest. By 2012, both France and Norway will have new generation Evolutionary Power Reactors which are

safer and more powerful than ever before. Indeed, were we to replace all of our old power plants with new ones, they would produce a tenth of their current waste. There is no denying that drawbacks remain but there have been substantial improvements. With international interest on the rise, things are only going to get better.

Having gained international backing in October, the first fusion power plant is to be constructed in the south of France. This is great news for the future, but little more than that – its operational successor will not come online until 2035.

The world's population is expected to rise to 10bn in the next fifty years and electrical demand is going to soar. With the true costs of coal and oil becoming clear, nuclear power no longer feels like such a pariah subject.

It is high time that the loudest voices in the nuclear power debate were not those environmentalists who are unable to see the bigger picture. The government must take the lead in rehabilitating this former criminal with the British people. Better solutions may well surface in the twenty first century but for the moment there are none. Nuclear power may not be the future, but it is undoubtedly the present.



Until yesterday, I regarded myself as being of a sturdy disposition. Yet as I squatted on my seat on the C1 bus, seasonally turning the yellowy-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 Boutique' again. If Cilla Black personally commanded the entire magpie population of America, it would take all the years between now and the Nativity for them to amass a comparably revolting mound of distastefully shiny trinkets.

Just as nausea had propelled a clammy hand in the direction of the window latch, the ejaculation of a fellow passenger brought me to the brink of explosion. "Can't wait for Crimbow this year, can I?" Thankfully, a combination of incredulity at the penetration of her voice through a two-inch wall of Superdrug's finest replacement face and being slightly sick in my mouth restricted my response to a vague wheeze. "You know rates of divorce," I had been tempted to inform her "are up to 50% higher after the Christmas period. You'll probably be fuelling the statisticians, wench."

It's easy to see why. I reckon Orwell derived his inspiration for Room 101 from festive living rooms, as cold, darkness and politeness combine cruelly to prohibit escape from awkward proximity. My prodigiously bearded Auntie Gertrude, who had previously borne the tag of my worst nightmare, paled in comparison, both literally and figuratively, with the spray-tanned joviality of this merciless festive fiend. Her presence under my Christmas tree would drive me to shepherd a flock of frosty, Christmas-tree-wielding merry gentlemen into her room and club her into a silent night.

In bed that night, my mind turned to presents. Instinctively I mentally rehearsed my "thank you so much, relative-whose-name-I-forget, how did you know this shitty present was just what I wanted?" expression. I cast a retrospective glance back through the hole in my wallet at last year's generosity. The policeman's helmet with a flashing siren for Cousin Bertie had not only been set to win me more Brownie points than a year of dedicated knot tying, but was also genuinely cool. Cool, that is, until I remembered that he's epileptic. As his Grandfather berated my thoughtlessness in Bertie's be-tinselled hospital ward, I realised that the only thing worse than giving rubbish presents is receiving them. It probably didn't help that the old bastard has Tourette's.

Sleepily my brain jumped from the dreadful to the fantastic. What if the government were to introduce a moratorium on Christmas presents for anyone old enough to no longer believe in Father Christmas? Surely our Raith Rovers supporting Prime Minister must hate to see so much go to waste every year. Cromwell enforced a ban on festive revelry, you know, Gordon, and he was voted tenth "Greatest Briton of all time". "A moratorium on Christmas presents," I murmured dreamily, dribbling ever so slightly. "Hark, a moratorium."

Lindsey Kennedy



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 despondency, 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 messing around for an hour or so during PSHE on a computer programme that generated a list of jobs options 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 having suggested "leather worker" (I'm a vegetarian), and the counsellor having 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 were never mentioned again.

This was in a particularly militant grammar school, where the student response to such uncertainties was the academic equivalent of the fish that chants "Just keep swimming... Just keep swimming" in Finding Nemo. Not all schools are like this. Not all students have the security of knowing that whatever else, they will probably get decent GCSEs and A Levels. Many, for whatever reason, have given up trying by the time they start secondary school, and spend the ensuing five years engaged in unproductive warfare with teachers and attendance officers until they are finally released from compulsory education with little or nothing

to show for it. In such cases, it is difficult to see how the government's latest proposal to extend the legal leaving age to eighteen by 2013 will produce anything other than two more years of struggle and inevitable failure.

With youth unemployment on the rise, and the increasingly high expectations of employers, the arguments for keeping pupils in school longer are theoretically sound. Equivalent schemes elsewhere have proved effective - Poland, in particular, has enjoyed a soar in the number of skilled workers since introducing similar legislation. Education is doubtless something to be encouraged, in terms of both its intrinsic worth, and the wider career opportunities available to better qualified school leavers. But the intended

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

methods for enforcing these laws are dubious, with college-aged children facing legal action, such as hefty fines, for truancy. The plans have been criticised by various organisations, 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, be "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. And it exposes a fundamental hypocrisy in the government's handling of this age group in general: either sixteen- and seven-

teen-year-olds are too young to make their own decisions, in which case they should be viewed as children and treated accordingly; or they are old enough to be legally accountable for their own actions, in which case they are surely capable of judging for themselves 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 academically 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 compulsory education for another two years is the government's frustratingly prescriptive attitude - the individual needs of students are often ignored, while 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.

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VIEW



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The cult comic legend
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MICHAEL DERRINGER

Political Hero

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 drollly 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 driv-

ing 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

One Question

Why should we take finals?

ORLANDO READE

A supervisor recently railed against the tripos examination system, saying that the exams were in danger of being marked by fuckwits.

The concerns of many students, however, suggest another motivation. The opportunity to continue decadent, frivolous and even idolatrous practices well into the Easter term presents an attractive alternative. In one's last term at Cambridge, before the onslaught of corporate cocaine, Cristal champagne or papier mache masterclasses at the Cherry Hinton Village Hall, there is a general consensus that partying and not studying is the healthy option.

Graduation is, in many ways, similar to crossing roads. Although it may present a rather immediate threat to one's continual habitation of our fair earth, it may as well be executed with panache. Keeping one's centre of gravity low, head down, hands either in pockets or (preferably) flailing like a rag-time dancer to avert the accelerating motorist, one's facial expression a mixture of glee and stoic terror, makes it much less of a chore.

Unlike those charlatans who are shipped regularly into Cambridge to pose in front of Senate House with a mortarboard and garish borrowed gown, graduation should not be treated ceremoniously. Instead, the knowledge that one has already started to make the mistakes which will condemn one's future career (and first two marriages), coupled with the Sauvignon Blanc so generously supplied by the university, the completion of one's final exams ought to prompt the social and emotional equivalent of Potter's Bar.

The alternatives for the University are clear: either prevent the student body from taking their final exams and in doing so let us remain in the comfortable University accommodation (of St. John's and Trinity) until we disintegrate into the pews of our college chapel, or simply post diplomas in our pigeon holes in late June in return for a small payment (and a slightly larger payment for international students). Given that the MA costs less than an evening at the Cambridge nightclub Ballare, surely the BA should present less considerable strain, financial or no, to the impecunious student. No?

Political Hero... Continued from p13

is "a moment of pleasure and a lifetime of embarrassment" - and complimenting my old fashioned cloche hat. "I'm a sucker for this stuff", he says as he pours himself a cup of tea.

The incredibly gentle demeanor does not at any point get in the way of hard-headed activism and argument. This is the man who is head of the Anti-war Coalition and who organised the 2002 Stop the War demonstration in London. He is also the most prolific consumer of chocolate chip cookies I have ever come across. But over the course of the interview, the many parts of Tony Benn seem to sit incredibly comfortably together.

"I was very pleased that the young people came in such numbers to the march. I don't think young people are apathetic, but they don't think anyone listens to them and they don't believe a word they're told. Anger and mistrust are highly political but they don't fit into the game between Cameron and Brown.

"Your generation has got the biggest choice that any generation has ever had; your generation is the first to have the technology to destroy the human race. It is also the first generation in history that has the technology to solve the problems."

The students of today are coming from a very different place to those of Benn's generation, and he has noticed the difference. "All we did was discuss politics, all the time. When I go back to Oxbridge now, I feel it is a bit remote. When I was there, everyone had been a colonel in the army; one man had lost a leg and an arm, and he was blind. Sidney Squaggy, he was called." He begins munching on the first of the chocolate chip cookies, dwelling with delight on the tragicomic figure he has conjured up.

He deals with our repeated questions about the comparative failings of modern students with the subtle avoidance of a skilled politician. "I don't want to criticise the students of today, they've had a different experience. The younger generation know more than their parents, which has never been true before. When my laptop crashes I ring up a grandchild and they can come and rescue me. They understand the world much better. Two of my little granddaughters went to a primary school in London

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. If you 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

He begins munching on the first of the cookies, dwelling with delight on the tragicomic figure he has conjured up

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 bombers 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 Afghanistan. As far as I'm concerned 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 no such thing as a war on terror, but they've found a word that makes it a bit more respectable to kill people."

At the time of the Iraq controversy, Benn did what pretty much no one else had considered 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. "At the time I didn'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 because Osama bin Laden hated Saddam because Saddam was secular. It was an attempt to try at a late stage to show that the argument for the war was a phoney argument. The war was nothing to do with weapons at all."

He is clear and outspoken on the war in a way which is still relatively uncommon amongst senior political voices. "Blair lied to us; he said there were weapons 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 democracy fighting against terror, which 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 controversial policy of invading Iraq, sent 160,000 American insurgents into Iraq to launch terrorist attacks on Baghdad.' That is what we hear about Ahmadinejad, but that is actually true about Bush. If you're killed by an American, 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 exactitude 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 Parliament, 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.

Statistic of the week

The Virgin Devil



Branson



Cartoon baddie

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 his famous 'Necker', in the British Virgin Islands (where else) for a mere £60,000. 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 scramble around to find his island, but rather what he could do with the rather greater wealth he has bumped into subsequently. According to Wikipedia, this is a subsequently-acquired pile which currently stands at approximately £4 billion. By this stage it scarcely needs me to describe to you the ramifications of this pile on 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 \$350,000 a week, but were he to go on a spree, and land himself some more lands, he would be able to buy a pretty large number of them. And this is where it gets weird. Divide £4 billion by 60,000 (not a piece of household 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 able to buy exactly 666 Necker 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, it would seem, is not the likeable rogue everyone wants to believe, but in fact a seafaring merchant of Mammon, sworn to buy plots of land surrounded by ocean and build luxury villas on them. A very scary development, indeed. And once again, you heard it here first.

Adrian Dangerhands

Profile of the Week

You've put it online, we've taken it off

Gwilym Henry Thomas Evans

Gardener of St John's College, Cambridge)

St John's, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. "Which year am I in? Good question. Officially third, I think."

"I had not done much work, but I had done some. Had I known I was only to get a third I would not have wasted my time." (Evelyn Waugh)

Dashing profile picture:



Recent Status:

Gwilym is singing, "Christus vincit! Christus regnat!".

Religious views:

Traditional Catholic

Activities:

Carlton, East India; jobs ... ? (This heading used to read 'Clubs/Jobs', I think.) (As for 'Activities', I am fairly inactive.)

Favourite quotes:

Er ... quotations, dear ...

"All alteration is awful." (Mr Thoday, sometime Head



Tony Benn: a politician at all times

MICHAEL DERRINGER

This is You Sporting Horror

Lycra vest, explained ironically, worn with furious pride

Anti-fog, anti-glare, anti-light, anti-conversational "shades" £400

Lip balm, worn on twine around neck

"Gun", oiled extensively and revealed before pudding

Jockstrap, gumguard, carb-gel, lucozade, 400 tickets for the Varsity game you're not playing in

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)

TOM WRIGHT

Cantabulous/ Oxfordire

Scotland

- According to Alex Ferguson "the master race is back".
- Having already crushed France, expect more of the same against the Italians at Hampden on Saturday.



Scots: dominant

Winter

- Warm clothes are much baggier than summer clothes, and reveal much less breast.
- This is good news for everyone, particularly the unfortunate souls forced to spend time naked in the name of crude social empathy.

Loneliness

- Not nearly as bad as everyone makes out. No phone calls to make, no meals to buy, no washing to do, no lies to tell, day in, day out.
- Although your enthusiasm under the mistletoe will, eventually, betray you.

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. Oh good. I'm absolutely delighted.

Pets

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

England

- Definitely going down (and out), 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, despite the painful contractions of your WKD-filled 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 ProEvo, and too lazy to throw satsumas 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 promised 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 attention to the always-amusing theatre section of this paper, or read on and gloat at our more plebeian 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-limitation and suicide aversion. Indeed, televised Poker (which your erstwhile correspondent reckons the most edifying of post-midnight TV treats) is almost exactly analogous to a "night out" at Club TwentyTwo. Both take place in seedily-lit, underground rooms, and involve a cast of vomit-spattered, spuriously 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 example 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 deathly taste). TwentyTwo, it has emerged after painstaking research, is the number of limp cadavers with which the bouncers hope to fill the trade bins down that fateful passageway before 2am every Sunday night.

But to return to our subject, such staples of the freeview diet as TMF and The Hits occupy a unique place in the hearts of those who don't like News 24 or BBC comedies set in Runcorn, and haven't discovered Asterix books as superior post-pub entertainment. Although on The Hits "Umbrella" is still played every other song, and on TMF they show programmes about Hulk Hogan's incestuous relationship with his weird-ass kids, they make you realise how relative 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 KT Tunstall, 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 only two 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 staggeringly unselective Murdoch media empire. This leads us onto the more profound question: why is Freeview in general so shit, leaving us either to find something else to do after midnight or watch some blokes in a dark room, pretending to be asleep, masturbating under their duvets (Big Brother Live)? Freeview is so bad because we don't pay for it, in the same way that Sky is good because it costs money. But any discussion of this will bring us painfully close to the debate about the merits of private education. And as last week's Varsity demonstrated, that only takes place between complete, and utter, tossers. **John Reicher**



Hogan: Hurling

The man it's impo

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 up 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 embarrassed 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 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 scratch 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 fuel, 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 Sceptical 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 reasonable 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 keep 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 help being offered to Africa, but I think it is commonly accepted that Africa is not going to get out of its poverty situation without actually 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.

"I have one of the most exciting lives I possible could have. I meet thousands of people. I love learning, I'm learning all the time. I'm in quite a unique position and I don't want to waste that position"



ssible to hate



The Elders, left to right: Graça Machel, Mary Robinson, Jimmy Carter, Nelson Mandela, Richard Branson, Peter Gabriel, Li Zhaoxing, 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 entrepreneurs. 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 has 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 commitment. 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...

I would agree. Particularly at Cambridge, where there is a conveyor belt running straight from here to the centre of the City of London.

That may be a happy life, but if, at age 17, you wanted to be an entrepreneur, there is a danger that that spirit will be knocked out of you (at university) simply because there is a cushy alternative. What university students need to do is realise that they have a lot of advantages, but they have got to shake off that conservatism. Give it a go, because the worst that can happen is that you fall flat on your face!

You are obviously a radical person, and some might say quite reckless, with you flying balloons around the world, or trying to fly them round the world! Have any plans to try anything similar in the future? The balloons are behind me. I go for

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

60, 70, 80 years of enormous global respect. If Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Dalai Lama collectively say they want to see you, you are not going to turn them down! Last week they went to see the Presidents of Southern and Northern Sudan, for example. They are spending a lot of time and energy trying to deal with problems like this.

It is very refreshing to hear somebody of your age being so optimistic. Lots of people of your age are cynical, because they have, perhaps, lost their radical teenage spirit. The message that the media portrays is always one of doom...

I am certainly not cynical.

There are some leaders who have made some ghastly 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 alternative ways.

I notice that you often have very beautiful women alongside 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 understanding wife. All of us men are susceptible to good looking women. Advertising should be fun. One of the most fun promotions 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 got 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!"

cabinet of 12 respected people will have the impact that you hope that they will have?

We certainly don't want to over-promise. The advantage they have over a nation state is that they have had

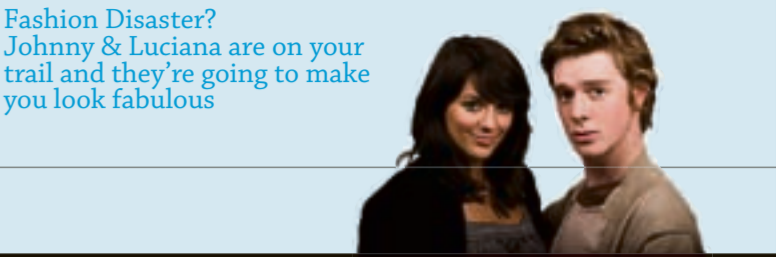


weekend balloon rides, and think it is a wonderful thing to do, but having been pulled out of the sea seven times by helicopter, I have decided that enough is enough on that front. The very excit-



secret garden

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.



Johnny & Luciana

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, that's right - you're in Club 22. You are just having a little chassé to the new Spicegirls song, when your ears are suddenly subjected to a painfully high-pitched assault. Has Victoria finally been given that solo she's been so desperate for all these years? Have the other girls finally realised just how scary Mel B actually is? Oh no, it's just James Trafford's screamingly gay outfit. Makeover Victim No. 4.

it on better, or just more, clothes. If nothing else, you'll save your date the embarrassment of getting more than he bargained for upon ordering a vodka and orange...

Even Johnny and Luciana have to admit that they can't find much wrong with the jeans and shoes, but there's always a little room for improvement. We swapped Trafford's baggy, faded blues for these slinkier, 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). Cambridge 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 on his way to 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 Trafformation, 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.

before



after



First things first, there is no light in Club 22 (which is a bonus if you've ever actually 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

Fresh of face and curly of hair, James looks ready to face anything. Even Club 22.

The French (Stude

This month France has seen some of the biggest student protests in years, in the wake of controversial changes in university law proposed by the new President Nicholas Sarkozy. **Ed Maltby**, in Paris for his year abroad, has witnessed first-hand the chaos caused by students. Here he examines the causes and likely outcome of a brand of protest all but dead in Britain.

French students are currently engaged in the biggest mass movement the country has seen since the massive mobilisation of 2005.

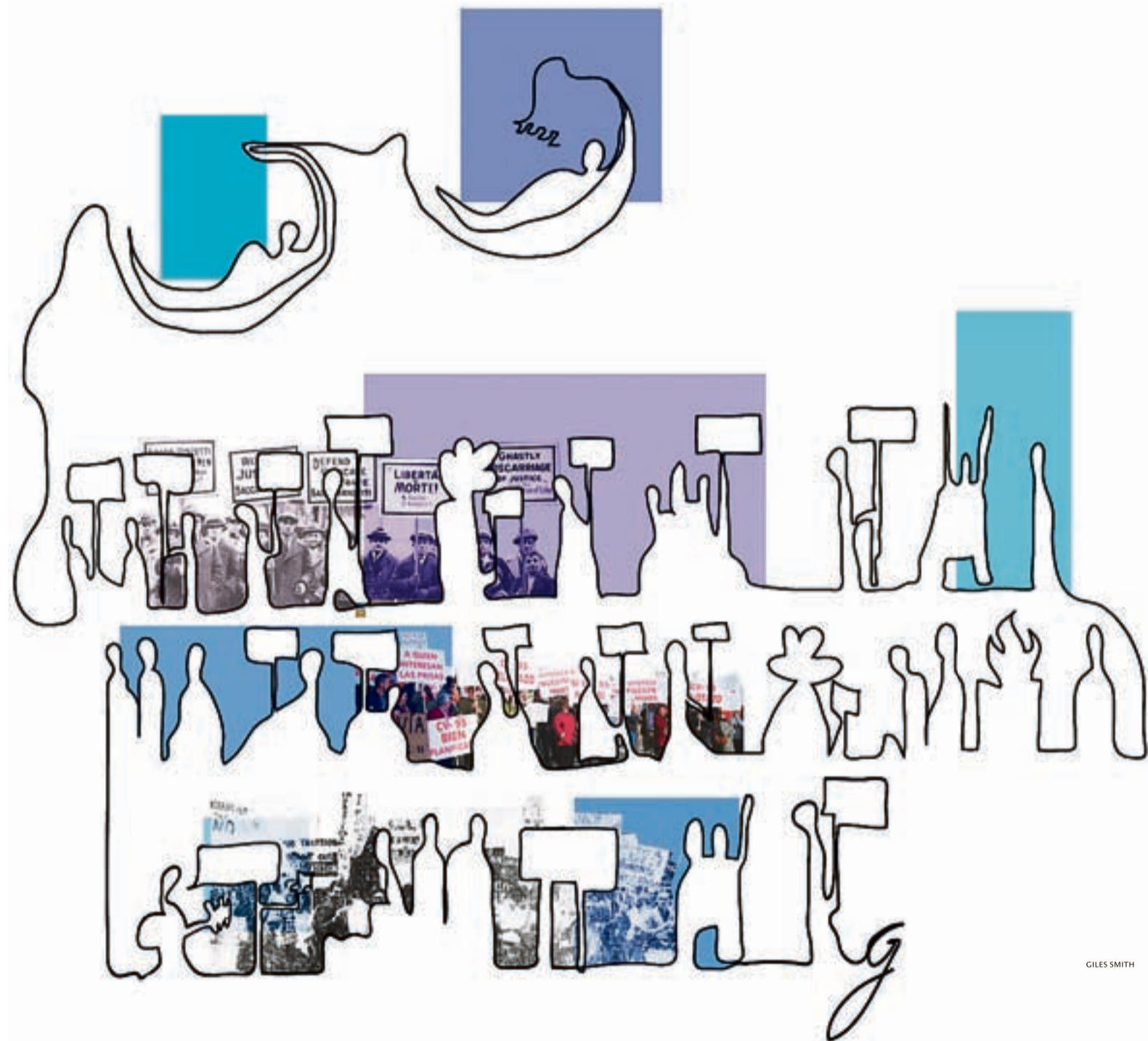
In response to a raft of government attacks on public service, education, workers' rights and immigrants, and in the teeth of massive betrayal by the major students' union, UNEF (the French Student Union) and the Lycées, alongside other public sector employees, are in the process of an unprecedented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

"Minimum Service" legislation attacks workers' right to strike, requiring workers taking part in a strike to identify themselves individually to their bosses 48 hours before industrial action. A proposed end to the special pension regimes of railway workers, miners and



"I'm not talking about martyring ourselves. But we need to move now, and unfortunately, strike is our only means of defending ourselves."

fishermen, which allow them to retire at 50, comes alongside an attempt to cut state pension provision for everyone in France. As a further cost-cutting measure, Sarkozy has also announced that 22,000 public service posts will be cut, half from public education. The Pécresse Law, or Law on the Autonomy of Universities (LRU) grants greater powers to university directors to hire and fire staff, and encourages universities to seek private funding, while giving the government free rein to cut spending on Higher Education.

The initial union response to these moves was feeble. The CGT complained that the laws had been rushed through "without proper negotiation".

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 tough-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

nt) Revolution



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 they’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

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

across the French rail network. These assemblies put major pressure on the union bureaucrats to call strikes and demonstrations.

Frantic 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 Pécresse 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

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 at 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 effected the blockade of the Sorbonne, carefully piling 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 chairman, 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, craning to see, while a tall woman scribbled motions up on the blackboard at the front.

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. Gales 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 retrace the old arguments about the necessity of strike and opposition to the LRU before the meeting could discuss 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 law to pass, conditions of study for this and future generations of students would deteriorate permanently.

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!”

“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 what 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

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

against the strikers.

Three days later, at Rennes, in a freezing lecture theatre whose walls were crowded with slogans, the meeting of the national co-ordination crawled



Students crammed into lecture halls to protest

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 mattresses 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 to 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 succeed in driving back the government.”

We call for students to go on strike immediately, and 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

“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 what he likes with our universities”

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 and his workmate grinned and gave me the thumbs up through the glass as I passed the barrier. “You too, man!”

It is all so different to our Cambridge concept of protest, and yet it is so hard not to sympathise with their drive, and their unquenched belief, in the power of protest.

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 enquires; 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 Ashcroft 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 choice 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 secretary, teacher, nurse. Stewardesses and actresses were the glamorous professions." The daunting precision with which she speaks means she probably would have made a formidable stewardess, but her talent for long vowels has instead been channelled into some of the most memorable comedic parts for women of her generation – namely as Margo in *The Good Life*, and Audrey in *To the Manor Born* (a surprise BBC hit whose one-off episode with Keith will be aired this Christmas). More recently, she worked with rising director Thea Sharrock (the woman who persuaded Daniel Radcliffe to take his clothes off in *Equus* this year) in *Blithe Spirit*.

What was it like working with a director at the forefront of a new generation? "Marvellous! It was amazing to see someone



Keith has played some of the most memorable comedic parts of her generation

of her generation tackling Noel Coward, who some view as old hat. The wonderful thing about my profession is that it's asexual and not ageist. You're all in the boat together, and to be an actor you have to have a very open mind, no preconceptions. We laughed a lot together."

Indeed, it is for comedy that Keith is most famous and two of the role models she cites are legendary actresses Coral Browne and Irene Worth – little known by our generation, perhaps, but two of the most respected women in theatre, particularly comedy. What is it about comedy that brings out the best in an actress? "I stick by the old saying that you can fool the town with tragedy but comedy will find you

out. In the 50s and 60s there was lots of light comedies which people pooh-pooh now – but if you can play light comedy you can play anything. The joy of playing comedy is that old cliché: every audience is different. With a comedy it's always a surprise – each night you can learn different ways of expressing a single line. I find audiences totally absorbing, and I like telling stories, which is the actor's profession."

Keith looks back fondly on the camaraderie of the old days of terrible digs, spear carrying at the RSC, watching every play that was on in London for a few shillings while she worked in the evenings 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 predicament 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." Experience on the job is something she views as key; acting is 'a craft more than an art, and crafts you learn by doing. You learn a lot by doing it with greater experience.' She also laments that nowadays "being famous is a priority,

whatever that means. That's the depressing difference. Young actors rather than focussing on their vocal prowess – which 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

"The wonderful thing about my profession is that it's asexual and not ageist. you're all in the same boat together, and you have to have a very open mind"

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

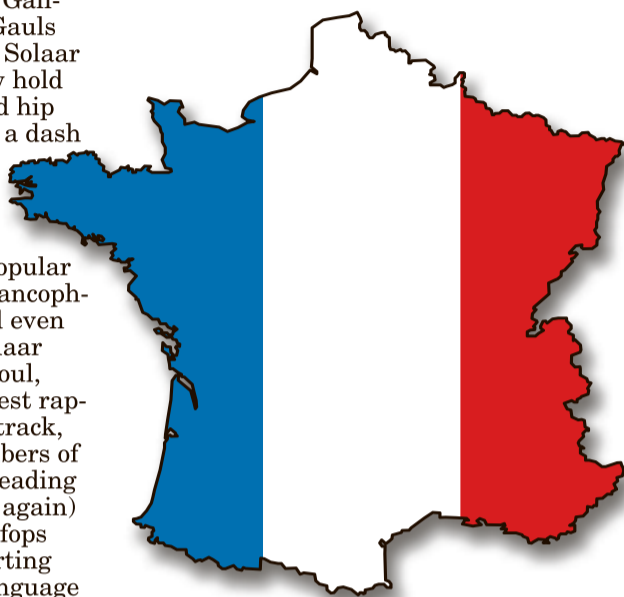
Varsity goes continental and checks out the pick of European music

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 'Sparrow,' Edith Piaf, and Plastic Bertrand (although, technically he's Belgian, but let's overlook that for now since he does sing in French). You probably haven't heard of Phoenix, but you'll almost certainly have heard their music. If you've seen The Virgin Suicides, Shallow Hal or Lost in Translation the dulcet tones of Thomas Mars will have enveloped you in 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 Galician. And these talented Gauls don't stop there, as MC Solaar and Saïan Supa Crew hold the torch for rap and hip hop, mixed in with a dash of dance hall and reggae. Eccentric isn't even the word, but they are immensely popular throughout all francophone countries and even beyond, as MC Solaar supported De La Soul, collaborated as a guest rapper on a Missy Elliot track, and recorded with members of Gangstarr. But currently leading the invasion (it's 1066 all over again) are the Teenagers, a trio of French fops who think nothing of casually inserting what is probably the most taboo language throughout their single Homecoming. But that's ok, because a) they're French and b) they're typically blasé about, well, everything. Vive la France.

Verity Simpson

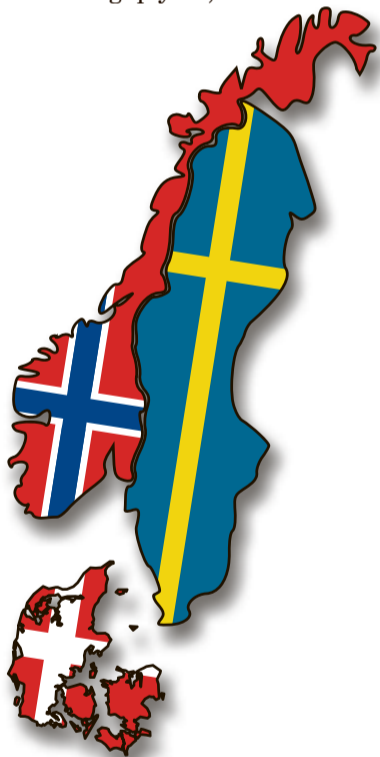


Scandinavian music has moved on from the three As – Abba, A-Ha and Aqua – who blighted its reputation in successive generations. The turn of the decade saw an unexpected garage-rock revival, with bands such as Turbonegro, a faux-gay death-metal-pop collective whose signature tune I Got Erection spawned a literal army of devoted followers, the Turbøjungend; girl group Sahara Hotnights; and a host of somewhat derivative shouty bands such as Gluecifer, the Hellacopters [sic] and The Soundtrack Of Our Lives. This tradition has faded, but lives on in such bands as the (once seminal, now very much not, but still surprisingly good) Hives and the wonderfully punsome Danish duo the Raveonettes. Another Danish duo, Junior Senior, had a massive hit a few years ago with Move Your Feet, and their strain of Scandi-pop is echoed by bands such as the Concretes (blissfully chilled es-



say music) and Peter, Bjorn and John, whose 'Young Folks' has been hanging around the mainstream for a year but who could be far more than one-hit wonders. The more eccentric side of Scandinavian music is most easily found in Iceland, which has produced both Björk – arguably insane, and all the better for it – and Sigur Rós, whose biggest album so far was simply entitled (.). The latter are one of the few bands to sing in their own language rather than in English; another are the really rather wonderful Dungen, whose lyrics in Swedish have such an aural resonance that the English listener feels he can understand every word. Scandinavian music has passed its peak of a few years ago, but there is still treasure to be found. Just don't mention 'Dancing Queen'.

Hugo Gye



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 king and queen. 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 BPitch 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's 2006 release, Fizheuer Zieheuer stretching over 37 minutes. Two recent albums on Berlin labels, Isolée's 'We Are Monster' and Booka Shade's Movements, won widespread acclaim, and contributed to the genre's growing popularity.

Cologne, home to the Kompakt label, has brought melancholy (and the indie kids) to the dancefloor. Its trademark tracks, like Jurgen Paape's So Weit Wie 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 producer, 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
Franck



★★★★★

What happy men Asterix and Obelix are. They have the Romans on their doorstep, one of them is congenitally obese and the other has the worst facial hair arrangement since an ex-teacher of mine called Mrs MacUmbereanga. But they still maintain a robust British sense of humour about the whole affair. Remember that time when they went to Egypt? 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 Brittany, magnifying the tiny corner holding out against the occupation and showing the Roman camp and the Gaulish village. This ranks with ATMs among childhood head-fucks. 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 the hand really big? Is it 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 lice? Is what 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 French 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 geish every time I take a peek. Nowadays copies of Asterix and Obelix are harder to come across. So is it with French restaurants in this town. Le Gros Franck prides itself as the only authentic French restaurant in Cambridge, and the exquisite Camembert au four starter inclined us to agree. The stuffed aubergine may have worked better had the aubergine been done a little dryer or the mozzarella added a little later, but I enjoyed it in a sloppy sort of way. The lamb shank was the finest in Cambridge so far. Though we weren't introduced to the eponymous and self-deprecating Franck, he has had this restaurant for seven years and will doubtless hold out for many more. Go and try the Christmas Menu.

Me, Myself and I

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 nationalistic, 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

"While having 'celebrity' status can do wonders for your commercial success, it can nevertheless have a damning effect on perceptions of the work itself."

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 the emptiness 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 damning 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, effervescent 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

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 Quebecan immigrants, who lived with his mom, read comic books and drank too much beer, was transformed into a dope-smoking, jazz-worshipping prophet for an America still naïve 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 the notorious 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

didn't bring 'real-life' into art, but injected a warped artificiality into real-life, where a fairly run-of-the-mill journalistic report could become an epic,



Kerouac: not as hip as Moriarty

drug-hazy 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 'attorney', 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 bestowed upon him, to the point where it was unclear who he 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 be without 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' doth not an artist make), 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 himself would have loved), part of a brand along with his silk screens of celebrities he adored.

Less sellable is the Andy Warhol that neither the artist, nor consumer culture, were

quick to market: the sickly child whose Byzantine Rite Catholicism 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

"In response to the commodification of culture, artists begin to sell themselves."

see quite how profoundly that mantra can be taken.

Cult characters like Thompson and Warhol shouldn't be judged simply on their cool factor. The fact that they are says 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' it is that gets put on the market. Roland Barthes writes that, in committing a work to paper, the creator loses control over its reception: the consumer-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

"We had to write an essay and the only thing I could think of to draw a comparison with was Withnail and I"

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 pistake, 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

talk about anal sex.”

As well as his radio, Buxton has had roles in the highly-acclaimed offerings, both with a more-than-distinct nod to British comedy. The Heat reader in me wants to know the dirty celebrity goss, but Buxton typically and affably tells both sides of the story. “Rupert Everett started out being unpleasant and rude. He had a hard time in our scenes [they both played ghosts alongside David Williams, Julian Rhind-Tutt and Mark Heap] because he took so long to get made up every day. I felt sorry for him. But by the

“You come off stage and don’t really like yourself. You think, ‘Wow, I’m a dick. Why did I do that?’”

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 new album In Rainbows. “I got to know them through Travis [the band]. When we were doing the Adam 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, untouchable quality, I’m intrigued to know how Bux-

ton 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’s Tobias Fünke. “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 TV reappearance, but Buxton is equivocal. “There’s such a huge number of different pressures when you’re doing a TV show. And it’d seem like a throwback; people would think they’d have seen it all 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’re pretty old and yucky looking now. It’s hard enough for me seeing my stupid face on the TV for the MeeBox 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.

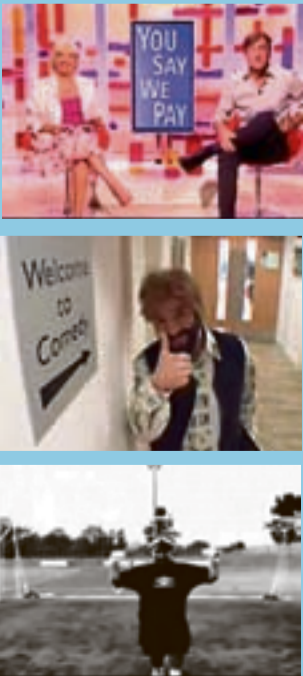
The Best of Buxton

YouTube favourites

You Say We Pay:
A “mashed” caller dials up for Richard and Judy’s popular day-time cash prize quiz. “It’s a falcon, Richard.”

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

The Footie Song:
Adam and Joe’s take on the fan sing-along. “G-L-E-N-H-O-D-D-L-E-I-S-H-A-V-I-N-G-A-G-O-A-L Glen Hoddle is having a goal!”



Lions for Lambs

Film
★★★★★

It takes a special brand of arrogance for Hollywood to believe that they can defeat the evils of the modern world with films about war, of corrupt oil-mongering, and all that Michael Moore peddles. We’ve seen the same old stories again and again about the same old issues, repeated to such an extent that such appeals have lost any kind of real impact.

Robert Redford’s latest directorial offering, *Lions for Lambs*, centres around a new initiative in Afghanistan, brainchild of ambitiously optimistic republican senator Jasper Irving (Tom Cruise), and the subsequent cost of that conflict when two ex-students of politics professor Stephen Malley (Robert Redford) are shot down behind enemy lines.

Over the course of an hour in film-time, the audience is then treated to three conversations attempting to explore relevant debates at the heart of modern society – of how an individual could or should serve the people, the nature of a just war, and of responsibility. It is like screenwriter Matthew Carnahan (*The Kingdom*) ripped a page out of Plato and rewrote it to exude from the mouths of the men and women of today. Professor Malley meets with his disillusioned yet promising student Todd Hayes (Andrew Garfield) to try and raise him from his apathy; jaded journalist Janine Roth (Meryl Streep) meets with the senator whose career she helped create, only to be struck by conscience over the direction the war is headed; and injured soldiers Arrian Finch (Derek Luke) and Todd Hayes (Michael Pena) attempt to make a stand in the midst of flashbacks to their previously



promising political careers, waiting for rescue to come. Although there is the constant promise of action, particularly in this last plot-line, the film boils down to people talking about people – any actual events therein are mere set-pieces to demonstrate points of an argument.

Tom Cruise is utterly convincing and beguiling as a senator with more supposed power than the Secretary of Defence, and on the whole he walks a tightrope well in what could have been a very one-note performance. Sadly, the same cannot be said of Meryl Streep, whose average performance would, for any other actor, be the highlight of their careers. Her role alongside Cruise as a conscience-stricken journalist never allows her to show any depth beyond acting as a microphone for the presumed doubts of a nation.

As a metaphor for all the dead and dying in the Middle Eastern conflict, the vulnerability of Luke and Pena seems force fed down the throats of viewers. The most promising performance of the production arrives with British newcomer Andrew Garfield as an apathetic student. In a deceptively nuanced piece of acting,

Dir: Robert Redford

he lends a cynical perspective to current events and government that most students will probably share.

Yet the question an audience is faced with is whether or not this is really what they are looking for in a movie – whether this meditation on modern warfare and politics is really necessary or even entertaining to any degree. Cinema is a spectacle, one that can invoke a wide range of emotions throughout its course, but what do we get here? Audiences that go to see *Lions for Lambs*, unless grossly misinformed, would know that it was a political film – and most audiences going to see such a film would probably have at least a rudimentary understanding of the issues at hand. There is little beyond such an understanding here.

It boils down to six people talking for an hour and a half. Never will many audiences have seen such a star-studded cast featured in such a tame plot, and if there is any spirit of a “lion” in this film, then it is most certainly caged – and all we are left with is a film that asks a lot of vague questions.

Greg Buchanan

Sons and Daughters

The Barfly

Live Review
★★★★★

The Victorian English Gentlemen Club [sic] were the support at the new Barfly, posing as an exciting new take on post punk - how many of those have we seen in the last few years? – with the right guitars 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 her lacklustre band mates, beating out a few twitchy and tense rhythms.

Unfortunately, their singer looked like Boris Johnson who had followed the sign to the Gentlemen Club, noticed the grammatical mistake with an annoying chuckle, only to discover that the other members of the band wanted him to pretend he was in Sonic Youth and slip into a tight black t-shirt. His faux American

accent and high pitched yelps were cringe worthy.

To play the kind of edgy, scratchy punk that this band so badly wanted to you have to put some kind of energy and excitement into your playing, and no, 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 back. 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.

Each song was interspersed with lengthy periods of what they joked was ‘crap chat’ while the guitarist re-tuned his precious instrument ready for the next chord sequence.

Perhaps in an attempt to confuse us all that their music was not actually as dingy as it seemed, the band wore sparkling outfits (except for the confused drummer who was in breeches) as they followed through a handful of well-rehearsed rock gestures and contorted their faces for the high parts which they never really could reach. Never mind; at least the Barfly played a really good sequence of sixties psychedelic stuff in between the bands.

Tom Hamilton

view from the gods



A play with far too many exclamation marks in its blurb is always a bad sign, and this coming week's theatre seems to be leaning towards the over-enthusiastic. That may be a stupid thing to say about theatre, which is by nature energetic and, judging by Samuel Becket's wrinkles, pretty stressful. But Week Seven is threatening to turn out like one of those girls that use emoticons on MSN to talk about lip gloss or guinea pigs.

Having said that, Ibsen's monolithic shadow will be cast over Cambridge, as *A Doll's House* and *Peer Gynt* resurface uncannily on the Cambridge drama scene, whilst Moliere's more sophisticated brand of comedy lurks on the outskirts, showing at Homer-ton Auditorium.

Apart from the bid from 'I Scream... Scoop!', which is vying with *Fame* for the most-obnoxiously-punctuated-play award (2007), one only hopes that the title bears some thematic significance, thereby managing to transcend the dreariness of the central pun. Despite the promise of some of the ideas in the blurb, the nine exclamation marks (which I'm told to take as ironic) belie a certain lack of humorousness. To demonstrate this, I will make a joke (at some point) with an exclamation mark.

As far as insider information is concerned, the uglier of the two ugly sisters tells me "I think it will be very very good". This exciting news will no doubt stimulate a mass-stampede for the ADC box-office. I will not talk of *Fame!* The Musical, that staunch resident of the View from the Gods column, nor of how one of the most beautiful sights was wasted upon it. A rare thing: a full theatre, the audience in expectation of entertainment not Shakespeare or duty, the words "a great night out" seem more likely to describe a Friday night at 'Vodka Revs' (the Wetherspoons of the petit bourgeoisie), than to grace the theatre section's disarmingly well-written reviews.

If the Footlights team can't produce a pantomime – a medium which occupies that spot just above *Fame!* The Musical in the relegation zone of the Conference League of artistic merit – which is passably entertaining, then what chance does anyone else have? A pertinent way to conclude the unsatisfactory title, "Once Upon a Time..." would be "Once Upon a Time People Enjoyed Theatre!"

And there you have it – just because you use an exclamation mark, it doesn't make it a joke and it certainly doesn't make it funny.

The Visit ADC

Dir: James Lewis
and Lauren Cooney

Theatre
★★★★★

Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *The Visit* is a tragi-comedy that sets justice against revenge; moral integrity versus the corruptive allure of money. It is a darkly humorous exploration of how the destitute might behave when bribed by their impoverished town's most prosperous alumnus: an old lady, the wealthiest in the world, whose offer proves irresistibly seductive.

James Lewis and Lauren Cooney's production as the ADC Freshers' Mainshow was visually striking, carefully choreographed and certainly competent. However, whilst this is unquestionably a play that is at times surreal, sometimes almost ridiculous, it is not just a comedy and at times it felt that this production simplistically ignored the play's tragic notes in favour of exaggerating the comedy into something often resembling slapstick.

Particularly in the first act, the characters were stiffly arranged into caricatured tableaux-vivants, with overstated physicality and a tendency to deliver too many lines 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 understatement 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- actors



RICHARD GARDNER

sitting on invisible chairs, was really meant to add to the production. Similarly incongruous were the abrupt music changes and occasional frenzied German interludes. This some-

what confusing inconsistency was problematic. And: Verfremdungseffekt by all means, but not because actors keep peering out of the wings.

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 unfortunate 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 Roisin Kiberd surely captured a certain languid malice, but an odd casting decision nonetheless. Some of the play's more surreal moments 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 very funny: it is a classic play and this is a committed cast. Certainly not an evening wasted.

Alex Reza

Accepting the responsibility for performing Shakespeare one will either be re-igniting an audience's passion for the Bard's drama, or plunging them into flashbacks of adolescent strutting and stammering. Deciding upon *Othello* is not a decision that should be taken lightly.

This performance filtered down the cast and was set to a bitter black-and-white minimum. Initially the use of masks provided an effective method of racial distinction, yet one felt that the potential symbolism could have been explored further, or perhaps have helped clarify the somewhat cloudy doubling. Similarly the monochrome domestic-lamp-simplicity of the stage, rather than re-

ducing *Othello* to its essentials, became a rather forgotten and inadequate backdrop to events, compounding the earnest tone which stifled the exciting variety that the play should promise. The Corpus Playroom is an unappealing venue for the majority of shows, against which the unfortunately blocked actors were fighting or fumbling. Thus staging and blocking seemed not careful but rather too casual.

Ollie Evans as *Othello* compromised his vocal sincerity and charisma with a suffocated physicality that sometimes veered towards parody. His foil of Iago (James Morris), whilst demonstrating a crafty control of the stage, managed neither the sinister nor the comic ele-

ments of his character, reducing the master Machiavellian schemer into a rather irritating trickster. Both Anna Hobbiss and Imogen Begg struggled to establish convincing relationships with their prospective partners, and though clearly strong actors, were diluted by their spread of parts.

Much of the performance was a perfectly adequate enactment of the play, but given the endless proliferation of Shakespeare performances a director needs to justify the decision to choose so popular a tragedy as *Othello* beyond mere enjoyment of the play. Whilst the play itself may leave us with a gagging sense of violent irresolution, no production should. **Monty Stagg**

Othello Corpus Playroom

Dir: Ian Burrows

Theatre
★★★★★

The After Dinner Joke ADC

Dir: David Ward

Theatre
★★★★★

The After Dinner Joke attempts to provoke the audience into reflecting upon our approaches to charity as the season of goodwill approaches. Yet the main question the play had us asking was why the ADC committee chose such a difficult play for the Freshers' Lateshow?

They made a brave effort with thin 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 take a step back from the comedy and question why we are laughing. Yet at the same time, this style does not allow for character development or drama. The changes between the multiple scenes were 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 charita-

ble deeds, but finds herself disillusioned 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 contortion of his fabulously expressive eyebrows, he injected some Pythonesque humour into Churchill's peculiar brand of satire.

The audience was slow to react to the running joke of the 'pacifist' thief, a modern day Robin Hood who skulking 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 charity is inseparable from the dirty dealings of political spin, was well-expressed in the set design – a bold display of red, yellow and blue, representing the three main political parties. A sad parade of coloured flags strewn 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 awkward post-modern structure, explains why *The After Dinner Joke* is under-performed. Although there are some 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
★★★★★



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 warm bass. We always feel safe.

His new outing Untrue is a similar affair. We are still on the same solitary journey through London but the tempo has picked up now, as if we now know for sure that we are being chased, but by someone who is thankfully about to give up. The reclusive producer (for Burial has yet to show his face) has laid more reliance on vocal samples to help us on the way. We have lost the deathly summoning of the MC Spaceape and instead we are hollered at by a chorus of transvestite prostitutes at daybreak.

The emotion has reached an ethereal level not quite managed by the debut which was very much focused at ground level. The end result is ambiguous. Our protagonist, the listener, can take two routes home: down one last corrugated-iron-lined shortcut which by this time of the morning surely will be rid of the pushers, or the long but open way round the Gas Tower which slowly rises with the sun. The choice is yours; be accosted by that desperate junkie who missed out last night because he dropped a 50p and couldn't see it no matter how hard he squinted, trip over him, split your skull open and drift to the heavens; or take the scenic route, enter the front gate, notice the uncollected black bag – they haven't been yet – flowerpot rummage, liminal transition, Timberlands off, one flight ascension, feel the central heating, listen to the plumbing accompanied by three sets of snoring/breathing and slide onto your bed and float into dream.

Andrew Spyrou

Juju Factory

Dir: Balufu Bakupa-Kanyinda

Film
★★★★★

"Jay-Z, didn't he retire?" This frequently asked question demonstrates the failure of his previous comeback album, 2006's Kingdom Come. It marked his return from retirement and was massively anticipated, yet it left very little imprint. For the first time, he sounded old; he couldn't translate his business power into the swagger that defined his best work. Then he saw American Gangster. Rappers have long adored gangster mythology, and Jay was at the vanguard of 'mafioso rap' in the 90s. He decided to record a concept album, with tracks based on scenes from the film. Samples of dialogue serve as interludes, and references are made to Frank Lucas, the film's lead character. More importantly, this marks a return to the lyrical territory of Jay's classic debut, Reasonable Doubt – he's back to bragging about crime, specifically drug dealing. He's in fine form, spinning funny boasts: "I lift weight like I'm using 'roids." It's strange to hear a man who hobnobs with Kofi Annan "toast to the crime", but it's exhilarating for him to do it with renewed exuberance. His flow occasionally grates – on Party Life and Say Hello he stretches out vowels in a style better suited to Southern rappers. His rapping is, on the whole, controlled, and he sounds playful again, enjoying the fun that can be had with rhymes and

The new film from Congolese director Balufu Bakupa-Kanyinda takes place in Matonge Village, an African neighbourhood in Brussels. It follows Kongo (Dieudonné Kabongo), a writer commissioned to write a travel guide to the area by his publisher, Joseph Desiré – a Congolese man who prefers to identify with Belgium, and refuses to share Kongo's interest in the traumas of Congolese history. As Kongo's book mutates into a broader examination of Africa and colonialism, he faces a number of pressures: bailiffs, his adulterous brother and Desiré'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 Matonge 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. Interesting parallels with Africa are hinted at – Desiré brings to mind Joseph Desiré Mobutu, the dictator of Zaire, particularly in his unwillingness to pay Kongo – but the film suffers from being too heavy-handed. Desiré's role as a traitor is over-stressed, notably when he addresses a statue of Leopold II, the notorious coloniser of the Congo, as "my lord". Juju Factory makes a compelling case against ahistoricism, and highlights the lingering traumas of colonialism, but it does so at the expense of characterisation, and a gripping storyline.

Daniel Cohen

punchlines. The production thankfully looks to The Blueprint, one of Jay's seminal albums, for inspiration. The producers, led by Diddy's Hitmen, mostly shun the synths for 70s inspired instrumentation. American Dreamin features a wonderful Marvin Gaye sample; Say Hello has the kind of soaring strings found on Curtis Mayfield records. There are lively tracks, like Success, where Jay trades fierce verses with Nas over a blazing organ, and album standout Roc Boys (and the Winner is)... is carried along by stunning horns. These beats give the album a musical unity that complements its lyrical coherence. In a genre where bloated, unfocused albums are the norm, American Gangster is remarkably consistent. It doesn't match Jay's past heights, but it's far better than anyone expected after Kingdom Come.

DC



Jay-Z
American Gangster

Album
★★★★★

Krafty Kuts
Soul Tree

Album
★★★★★

DJs are a bit like drummers: they 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 turn them into idols: you just stick your head down and try and keep up with them. Like I was saying, apart from maybe Justice's Xavier and the less skinny brother in 2manydjs, 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, he could have looked like Animal from the Muppet 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 and barely let up anytime to catch your breath, let alone a glimpse of the demure man making it happen. As often with some of the biggest Shut Up And Dance! nights, the club seems to go from grave-

yard to rave-up in the time it takes to go to the toilet and back. After a pretty standard support set, peppered with enough breaks and jumped-up hip-hop to keep the over-keen and already-fucked happy, things took off. Krafty Kuts brought heavy, heavy beats to the decks and sweaty, sweaty people to the dancefloor, and didn't let up. You know you're having a good night when the distant squelch of Waters of Nazareth is loud enough to reach the outer reaches of the club when you were thinking of having a cheeky cigarette, and 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 playing it fairly cool. And all I can say is, thank fuck enough of Cambridge's nighttime population has turned away from the Cindies grope-fest to dance like utter twats to quiet men who drop unbelievable beats whilst looking like indie drummers.

Lowri Jenkins

albums
every right-minded person
should own



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

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 dwelled 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 revolving 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 or Harper Lee ever wrote. Dylan may have now become some kind of high-literature critical sacred cow, but trust me, Oberst can say in a couplet what it took Bob a decade to come up with. Every Bright Eyes album has its breath-taking moments, but it's this one that comes closest to perfection, a synthesis of the political and the personal, the twilight and the sunlight, embracing a heritage of heartfelt country music, and making it resonate with the ennui of the new Lost Generation, abandoned, aimless, but determinedly beautiful. The centrepiece 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 exquisite, as fragile and perfect as a new-born child. I believe that true literary genius occurs when a writer accepts the two limitations that forbid true transcendence – language, which can only say 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 this sounds like surrender, it isn't. For all the darkness, there is always hope in beauty and love. "She took a small silver reef 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 else.

Philip Rack

	film	theatre	music	other	going out
pick of the week	Federico Fellini's 8 1/2 Thurs 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 Tue 20 Nov - Sat 1 Dec (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 panto 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 panto experience, but with the Footlights at the helm...	Bonde de Role Sat 17 Nov, The Junction, 10.00, £10  Taking part in the Junction's Kill Em All club night, the Brazilian party-starters bring gay slang and louche slum posturings to the wilds of Cambridge. Expect sheer day-glo madness.	Psychovertical - An Evening with Andy Kirkpatrick Thur 22 Nov, , Cambridge Guildhall, 19.30, £10 - £12 Andy Kirkpatrick, one of the country's most famous mountain climbers, brings his gripping-yet-comic tales of hanging for dear life off a vertical wall of ice 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 Touching 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 Fez website that Nick Bridges of Bodyrox 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 Tit 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 16 American Gangster Vue, 13.40, 17.10, 20.40 Lions for Lambs Vue, 18.40, 20.50 Spinal Tap Arts Picturehouse, 23.10	Xerxes Fitzwilliam College Auditorium, 19.30 The Visit ADC Theatre, 19.45 The After-Dinner Joke ADC Theatre, 19.30	Junction Fiver The Junction, 18.30, £5 Lucky dip of local acts featuring The Running Mayfairs. The Raveonettes Barfly @ the Graduate, 19.30, £8.50	From Reason to Revolution: Art and Society in 18th Century Britain Fitwilliam Museum, 10.00 - 17.00	Friday Fez Fez, 22.00-03.30, £5 - £7 Generator Kambar, 22.00-03.30, £3 It's indie, so expect skinny jeans galore.
	saturday 17 The Band's Visit Arts Picturehouse, 19.10 Fucking Amal Old Labs, Newnham Gardens, 20.00	The Visit ADC Theatre, 19.45 The After-Dinner Joke ADC Theatre, 19.30 Good Pill Hunting Mumford Theatre, 19.30	Bonde de Role The Junction, 22.00, £10 Favella funk is so right now. Look See Proof Barfly @ The Graduate, 19.30, £5	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 They really vary it at Kambar, don't they?
	sunday 18 Good Luck Chuck Vue, 13.00, 15.30, 18.00, 20.30 Brick Lane Arts Picturehouse, 12.00, 16.20, 18.40, 21.00	Xerxes Fitzwilliam College Auditorium, 19.30	Good Shoes The Junction, 19.30, £9 Support from Operator Please and the up-and-coming Ida Maria	Private Pleasures: Illuminated Manuscripts from Persia to Paris Fitzwilliam Museum, 10.00 - 17.00	The Sunday Service Club 22, 22.00-03.00, £4 - £5 Cindies is closed, so this is really your only option.
	monday 19 Beowulf Vue, 14.50, 17.30, 20.30 Helvetica Arts Picturehouse, 14.30	There's no business like showbusiness 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 After Schubert, Keats, and Richard Strauss, apparently.	Fat Poppadaddy's Fez, 22.00-03.30 £3 - £4 Renacimiento Soul Tree, free before 23.00, £3 -£4 after 00.00
	tuesday 20 3.10 To Yuma Vue, 14.20 Brick Lane Arts Picturehouse, 14.10, 16.20, 21.00	Once Upon a Time... Peer Gynt Corpus Playrooms, 19.30 A Doll's House Fitzpatrick Hall, Queen's College, 19.30	Captain Barfly @ The Graduate, 19.00	Choi Jin Kayagum Clare Hall, 20.30 Recital on a 12-string half-tubed zither dating back to the 6th century.	The Calling Kambar, 21.00 - 02.00 £3 - £4 Ebonics Fez, 22.00-03.00, £2 - £4
	wednesday 21 Saw IV Vue, 21.35 Artists and Icons Arts Picturehouse, 14.30	Once Upon a Time... Peer Gynt Corpus Playrooms, 19.30 I Scream... Scoop! ADC Theatre, 11.00	New Model Army The Junction, 19.30, £15	Beyond Baskets - Weaving with rush and other garden materials Botanic Gardens, 10.00 - 16.00, £85 That much, and it doesn't even have a loom? Outrageous.	Melamondo Fez, 22.00-03.00, free before 22.00, £3 after 00.00 Rumboogie Ballare, 21.00-02.00, £4 - £5 Punks Jump Up Emma Bar, 21.00-12.00, £5
	thursday 22 American Gangster Vue, 13.40, 17.10, 20.40 Federico Fellini's 8 1/2 Arts Picturehouse, 17.00	Once Upon a Time... Peer Gynt Corpus Playrooms, 19.30 I Scream... Scoop! ADC Theatre, 11.00	The Zico Chain / Cat the Dog Barfly @ The Graduate, 19.30, £6 The Food Fighters The Junction, 19.00	Psychovertical - Andrew Kirkpatrick Cambridge Guildhall, 19.30, £10 - £12 Revelation Rock Gospel Choir Christmas Concert West Road, 19.30, £4 - £6	

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Episode 7
Street

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KIM IS ENJOYING HER ROCK 'N' ROLL LIFESTYLE...

CAL, THIS ISN'T WORKING. YOU'RE DUMPED.

HELLO, IS THAT DR AMICUS? I REALLY NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE.

SURE, CAL-COME OVER LATER.

CAL DECIDES TO RING HIS TUTORIAL ADVISOR...

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

EVERYTHING! MY GIRLFRIEND'S JUST DUMPED ME, AND I'M IN LOVE WITH MY BEST FRIEND... WHO

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

YOU'VE GOT TO FOLLOW YOUR HEART!


COME TO THINK OF IT, I KNOW HE'S GONE OFF JEN...

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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 (15) (1h50) (NFT) Daily
18.40 (Not Tues) 20.50 (Not Tues) 21.15
(Tues Only) Sat Late 23.10
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)
(2h15) (NFT) Daily 14.40 17.20 20.00

Friday 16 Nov – Thursday 22 Nov

30 DAYS OF NIGHT (15) (2h15) (NFT) Daily
18.10 21.00 Sat Late 23.40

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Sun Only 10.50

SAW IV (18) (1h55) Daily 21.35 Sat Late
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RENDITION (15) (2h25) Sat Late 23.20

RUN FAT BOY RUN (12a) (2h) Daily 13.50
16.15

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Results

Football

College League 1:
Jesus 2-0 St Catharine's
Christ's 1-4 Trinity
Fitzwilliam 4-2 St John's
Christ's 2-3 ARU
Churchill 2-0 Caius
St John's 4-1 Darwin

	P	W	D	L	GFGAGD	Pts		
JESUS	4	3	1	0	6	2	4	10
TRINITY	4	3	0	1	9	3	6	9
FITZWILLIAM	4	2	1	1	6	5	1	7
ST CATHARINE'S	4	2	0	2	10	4	6	6
ARU	2	2	0	0	6	3	3	6
CHRIST'S	4	2	1	2	9	8	1	6
ST JOHN'S	4	2	0	2	10	10	0	6
CHURCHILL	3	1	0	2	4	12	-8	3
DARWIN	3	0	0	3	1	7	-6	0
CAIUS	4	0	0	4	2	9	-7	0

Hockey
Women's Blues 10-1 Coventry

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

	P	W	D	L	GFGAGD	Pts		
JESUS	4	3	1	0	11	6	5	10
ST JOHN'S	6	3	1	2	16	15	1	10
CAMBRIDGE CITY	5	3	0	2	24	9	15	9
ST CATHARINE'S	4	2	0	2	10	6	4	6
CORPUS CHRISTI	3	2	0	1	8	16	-8	6
CAIUS	4	1	0	3	14	14	0	3
EMMANUEL	4	0	0	4	2	19	-17	0

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 20-17 Downing

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
JESUS	6	4	1	1	178	20	19
ST JOHN'S	5	4	1	0	74	16	18
MAGDALENE	6	3	1	2	52	103	16
DOWNING	6	2	1	3	107	94	13
GIRTON	6	2	0	4	151	109	12
HOMERTON	5	0	0	5	15	235	5

College League 2:
St Catharine's 20-7 Trinity Hall
Trinity 27-0 Peterhouse
Caius 20-12 Pembroke

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ST CATHARINE'S	4	4	0	0	110	22	16
TRINITY HALL	5	3	1	1	95	66	15
TRINITY	4	3	0	1	104	35	13
PETERHOUSE	4	1	1	2	57	66	8
CAIUS	5	1	0	4	44	160	8
PEMBROKE	4	0	0	4	46	107	4

Badminton

Men's Blues 5-3 Oxford
Women's Blues 6-2 Exeter

Tennis

Men's Blues 10-0 Oxford Brookes

Basketball

Men's Blues 51-49 Wolverhampton
Men's II 64-55 Northampton

Fencing

Men's II 128-116 Staffordshire

Table Tennis

Men's Blues 10-7 Bath
Women's Blues 3-2 Nottingham

Volleyball

Men's Blues 2-3 Loughborough
Women's Blues 0-3 Loughborough

Fixtures

Badminton

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 Oxford Brookes, away.
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.

Hockey

17/11 Men's Blues v Ipswich, away.
17/11 Women's Blues v Tunbridge Wells, home.
21/11 Women's Blues v Nottingham, home, 14:00, Wilberforce Road.
21/11 Women's II v Loughborough IV, away, 15:30.

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

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

Lacrosse

21/11 Women's Blues v Bristol, away, 14:00.
21/11 Women's II v Oxford II, away, 13:00.

Netball

21/11 Women's Blues v Birmingham III, home, 16:00, Cherry Hinton Village Centre.
21/11 Women's II v East Anglia, away.

Rugby League

21/11 Men's Blues v Oxford, away, 14:00.

Rugby Union

21/11 Men's Blues v Steele Bodger XV, home, 15:00, Grange Road.

College League 1:
20/11 Magdalene v St John's, 14:15.
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
22/11 Caius v Peterhouse, 14:15.

Table Tennis

21/11 Men's Blues v Brighton, home, 16:00, Fenners 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, 19:00, Manor Community College.
21/11 Women's Blues v Birmingham, away, 19:15.

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.

Games & puzzles

Varsity crossword no. 475

1		2		3				4		5		6
7				8								
9							10					
			11									
12								13				
15										16		
							17					
18		19								20		21
23				24						25		
26										27		

Across

7 Everyone do needlework, apparently, as well! (4)
8 Began confused Nordic duet. (10)
9 Low army officer returns, concealing unauthorised absence? (4)
10 Produce French in sex. (8)
11 Hurt, lose head or limb. (3)

12 A fluid appeared without delay. (4)
13 Speared after beginner messed up tango, for example. (6)
14 Trap held a number back. (3)
15 Letter one confused with drink, we hear. (4)
16 Swindle – coats returned. (4)
17 Audibly question river? (3)
18 Eastern flower marks religious

celebration. (6)
20 Flower grew... (4)
22 ... plus genetic material turned around. (3)
23 Oddly hire weaving machine that's been in the family for ages? (8)
25 Bess's musical sidekick lost his head in sex party. (4)
26 Strangely rip some air for showman. (10)
27 Cut up into pieces, not dead initially but cold. (4)

Down

1 Feeling sad, trapped by loveless cheats – these guys will cheer you up! (6)
2 Close pal changed in breakdown. (8)
3 Ref moshing around food salesman. (10)
4 Rim of polished gemstone. (4)
5 Tart had two eyes, we hear, in rock band. (6)
6 Made rod airy, loved hiding inside though twisted. (6)
10 Small creature dissipated more wrath. (9)
13 Cut cloth allowance. (10)
16 Scornful about Di's acorn. (8)
18 Alternatively eat thin zinc of a race. (6)
19 Revealing one politician in heaven. (6)
21 Breathed deeply, having ridden on sled without the French. (6)
24 German song was inaccurate? (4)

Set by Leah Holroyd

rotations

COMPETITION

Win a bottle of wine from our friends at Cambridge Wine Merchants.
Re-arrange the letters by rotating the discs to create six separate six-letter words leading in to the centre. Email your answer to competitions@varsity.co.uk

???

Sudoku

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

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

Kakuro

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

	20	11		18	8		14
4				24			
10				13			
				19			
20						12	22
	11	17					
14					6		
23					17		

Hitori

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

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

Last week's solutions

Gamblers
Unanimous

ED PEACE &
NIALL RAFFERTY



Our situation of late has become precariously similar to that of England boss Steve Maclaren. After a worrying dip in form we both find ourselves under pressure in a make or break situation. However, whilst a bad performance from us this week will leave our running total hovering dangerously above the red, any mistakes by Maclaren in England's final Euro 2008 qualifier will entitle him to the whopping great pay-off that will accompany his inevitable sacking.

England's hopes of qualifying for the Championships hang by a thread, and the nation's eyes will be fixed upon the match between Israel and Russia on Saturday. After triumphing over England on a plastic pitch in Moscow, you might think that Russia have this one in the bag. However, Israel are no joke on their own patch, where they've lost just once in nearly seven years, and don't forget that the Three Lions could only draw 0-0 in Tel Aviv last March. Though Russia travel to Tel Aviv in good heart, in the back of their minds they will recall that they couldn't overcome Israel in their first meeting. For the sake of English football and our wallets, we'll be hoping for a repeat of this result.

If England fail to qualify, Scotland will be the only remaining home nation with a chance of reaching the tournament proper. The recent revival of Scottish football faces its toughest challenge this Saturday, with Scotland needing to claim a win over World Champions Italy to progress. Scotland, despite succumbing to a 2-0 defeat in their last match with Italy, will feel a reversal is possible: they have a win and two draws to show from Italy's three previous competitive visits. The visitors will be using every trick in the book to disrupt or slow down the play, and a 0-0 will suit them just fine, so despite the high stakes don't expect this to be a classic. We'll be backing under 2.5 goals for this week's banker.

Osana looks capable of giving us a winner on the track in the Greatwood Hurdle on Sunday. The five year old will be returning from a long summer recess, so his trainer should have had plenty of time to get him ready for this show down. Last year he didn't finish any worse than fourth in all but one of his starts, and even on that occasion he was unlucky. There are some dangerous horses lurking in the line-up, but if Osana reproduces anything like last season's form he shouldn't have any trouble holding them off. With thirty runners expected to take part in the race, it's worth taking the precaution of backing him each way.

THE BANKER	5/6
SCOTLAND V ITALY	
UNDER 2.5 GOALS	£4
PREDICTION	16/5
ISRAEL TO DRAW WITH	
RUSSIA	£3
THE LONG SHOT	7/1
OSANA TO WIN	
GREATWOOD HURDLE	£1.5e.w.
RUNNING TOTAL	£24.12

Coventry crushed in style

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

CAMBRIDGE	10
CLOSE, STEVENS, STANLEY (3), NOBLE, BLACKEY, GOATER, RICKMAN, WORKMAN	
COVENTRY	1
MASON	

Sports Reporter

In a match that was only ever going to go one way, the women's Blues, currently top of the table, faced mid-table Coventry.

Right from the start the Blues dominated play; within the first few minutes Tash Close scored their opening goal from the first short corner of the game. Cambridge completely dictated the pace of the match, playing almost entirely in the Coventry half. With their second short corner, Cambridge sent a flick wide, missing the first of several opportunities that could have given them an even wider winning margin.

Coventry were ravaged by injury and humiliated by the scoreline

After another missed short corner, Jenny Stevens scored from a well struck shot from the top of the D. Despite the dominance of the Cambridge side, Coventry were saved from excessive embarrassment by their goalkeeper who repeatedly put in dramatic saves. However her efforts weren't enough to stem the Cambridge onslaught.

Sixteen minutes into the match, Anna Stanley scored the first of her hat-trick of goals, which came from a scrambled patch of play just outside Coventry's D. Moments later Stanley combined with Jenny Stevens who drew the keeper wide, putting Stanley through for her second goal of the day.



Cambridge rolled over Coventry despite several missed opportunities during the match

JOE GOSDEN

In a freak breakaway, during a lapse in Cambridge possession, Coventry's Charleen Mason scored her side's only goal of the match. Cambridge responded with a goal from Izzie Blakey, which was her first 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 goal-line, a goal that was quickly followed by one from Lisa Noble who fired a rocket shot into the top

left hand corner of the net.

With the score at 7-1 Hannah Rickman poached a goal with a cheeky slap, 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.

Busa Hockey - Midlands Conference												
Women's 1A 2007/08												
	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pt				
CAMBRIDGE	5	5	0	0	20	4	16	15				
NOTTINGHAM	4	3	0	1	14	6	8	9				
LOUGHBOROUGH II	4	2	1	1	8	4	4	7				
COVENTRY	5	2	0	3	8	21	-13	6				
BIRMINGHAM II	5	1	1	3	8	12	-4	4				
BIRMINGHAM III	5	0	0	5	5	16	-11	0				

College Rugby

CONTINUED FROM BACK PAGE

A sustained piece of defensive excellence by John's forced Jesus to concede a scrum on their five metre line. A kamikaze charge-down and a well-contested line-out led to a crunching tackle on Tambara inside his own goal area. A resulting penalty was kicked by Sonenfeld to level the scores at 3-3.

Both teams then became very cagey, aware that a mistake by either side could lead to disaster. Jesus still felt that they had the momentum and a lightening break started by captain Ed White charging bull-like across his own 22 could well have wrapped the game up for the home team were it not for a superb try-saving and penalty-winning tackle by Gibson. Jesus, supercharged by the now frenzied White, kept coming and with five minutes remaining won a penalty right in front of the posts. Inexplicably, however, the decision was taken to tap and go and the Red Boys were able to turn over possession in the resulting ruck. It was the moment upon which the match hinged, for all of Jesus' historical commitment to attractive rugby, three points there would have almost certainly won them the game, with John's skipper Will Mayne calling the decision "utter foolishness."

Despite this, Jesus continued to throw absolutely everything at their adversaries, aided by the sin-binning of Alex Torrens, but were unable to make the telling breakthrough. A line-out steal on the very last play led to a drop goal opportunity for Tambara, which looked on target before being hit down by the flailing limb of a rampaging prop.

When the final whistle went the Jesus players sank to the floor in disappointment. They had drawn a match they had absolutely dominated territorially, and now must rely on another team toppling John's to allow them to win the division. Despite the result, they should be proud of putting on an utterly compelling display of attacking rugby that must surely bode well for cuppers and next season.

Ed White, speaking after the game, claimed that "John's know they're lucky to come away from here with a draw, apart from a dip either side of half time we dominated them today." Mayne, on the other hand, maintained that his side fully deserved the point from "an exceptional defensive display showing massive mental strength". In reality, Jesus have only themselves to blame for refusing to take the points on offer from penalties in good positions throughout the game, as they could now, and perhaps should, be topping the table.

Captain's Corner

Dancesport
Alex Marsh and
Paoliina Markkula



Alex is at Darwin and is doing a PhD in physics and Paoliina is at Jesus and is doing a PhD in gluco-sensing.

Dancesport
Dancesport is the competitive side of dance and is split into two disciplines: ballroom and latin. It combines aesthetics with athleticism and involves performing set-piece moves that are integrated into an overall routine,

which is akin to gymnastics.

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 dancesport and the Cambridge Dancers 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 got a clean sweep! We came home victorious in both friendlies, 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

BLUES TRIES: BROADFOOT, LEWIS, BROADFOOT: 4 PENS, 2 CONS	26
CRAWSHAYS WELSH XV	24

GEORGE TOWERS
Chief Sports Editor

On the coldest night of the year so far, the Blues met Crawshays Welsh XV in a hard fought match, where both sides put on some flowing rugby despite the freezing conditions.

Early Cambridge possession was rewarded with the first of Ross Broadfoot's four successful penalties. Minutes later, some ill-disciplined Welsh rucking gave Broadfoot his second opportunity for three points, but he sent it wide.

The Crawshays pride themselves on playing an expansive style of rugby, not afraid to run it from their own 22. Their monotonous battering of the Blues' defensive line allowed their outside centre to scythe through, putting full-back Christian Phillips in to score a textbook try.

Despite their class as individuals, the Crawshays suffered from inexperience as a team and allowed the Blues to frequently turnover cheap ball. Building from a period of possession deep in the Welsh 22, the Blues built several phases of play and eventually put Broadfoot in for Cambridge's first try, which he successfully converted bringing the score to 10-5.

Two penalties in succession extended the home side's lead to 16 points to five. Not happy with a converted try and three penalties, Broadfoot went for a drop goal late in the first half, but he couldn't complete the full bag.

If the first half saw the Blues on top, then the second half witnessed an impressive Welsh fight back. Right from the start they probed



In a competitive game, the Blues held on for a good win despite a fierce Welsh fight back

SOPHIE PICKFORD

the Blues relentlessly, eventually giving the ball to Alan Hughes who powered his way through several 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 backline. 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 insurmountable 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

JESUS	3
CAMBRIDGE CITY	2

GEORGE TOWERS
Chief Sports Editor

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 were on top during the initial exchanges, dominating possession and taking the game to the City side. A few minutes in Jesus converted off their first short corner, following several scrambled shots at the inexperienced goalkeeper (usually a defender). Jesus' early command of the game continued as they

maintained pressure with several probing attacks up their favoured right wing.

Despite the early offense from Jesus, Cambridge City proved dangerous on the counterattack, creating several close opportunities putting pressure on the Jesuit keeper. Overall City were creating more scoring opportunities from open play, whilst Jesus won several short corners and came close to scoring several times. Twenty minutes in, only some desperate scrambled defence saved Cambridge City from going two goals down.

Minutes before the halftime whistle Jesus scored from a beautifully crafted attack, which saw the ball spread from left to right before being powered home to bring the 2-0 lead that everyone believed was coming.

However, right from the restart Cambridge City fought back and during the euphoric celebrations of just scoring, Jesus lost their concentration 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 end to end play, Cam-



The victorious Jesus side after a close fought match

GEORGE TOWERS

bridge 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.

News from the River



This week, in an attempt to employ one of the benefits of living in communal housing, I turned to my roommate, Trevor (who just so happened to be sitting on my bed as I sat down to write) for inspiration. After posing the question, he seemed to ponder my request for no more than a moment before suggesting "humility". Now, in retrospect, I believe his response was more of an underhanded way of poking fun at the club, and its fracas that graced last week's news briefs, rather than an admission of hard-earned lessons entrenched from his experience playing for, and captaining, various rugby sides.

Yet I was too enthused with what I thought would be a perfect focal point for an insightful article that I cut off any further suggestions from Trevor, and pushed forward with all the hubris I had just been urged to rally against.

Our team is often criticized for being arrogant. Many outside observers have the impression that the Boat Club is composed of old foreigners with artificially inflated egos. I can only speak for the years I have been a member of the team in claiming that the reality couldn't be further from the myth, and hope sincerely that our reputation will only improve in years to come.

And while I trust that the external impression of arrogance will not persist, I will also be the first to admit that internal to the club, individual will does play a large roll in team dynamics.

So perhaps a more relevant challenge any successful team must tackle is achieving humility amongst its members. Despite the camaraderie implied by the façade of a team, it is often easier to be humble to those external to one's group. Competition can both foster and inhibit the cooperation essential to any organization. When many athletes are pooled together, each with significant experience training at a very high level in a particular style, egos are bound to clash. Everyone is confident he or she knows how the program should be run and the requisite changes that must be made.

And confidence is vital. I am not debating that. But confidence without humility seems quite like having the fastest train in the world without the tracks necessary to guide it.

We are consequently faced with the task of matching two oft mutually exclusive traits; each athlete must take on the formidable challenge of trying to break down the components of ego that run contrary to the good of the team, while bolstering those that provide the confidence necessary to look Oxford in the eyes on the starting line in five months.

Continued next week
Spencer Griffin Hunsberger

SPORT



Rugby p39
Blues notch up another solid win

‘Utter foolishness’

» John’s skipper Mayne blasts Jesus decision to squander penalty

JESUS
 PENS: JOHANSEN

3

ST JOHN’S
 PENS: SONENFELD

3

HENRY STANNARD
 Sports Reporter

For weeks this game had been trumpeted as a title decider. Jesus, having recovered from their opening day 6-0 defeat in torrential rain, had swept aside all-comers to sit proudly atop the first division. John’s came into the game undefeated in second, just one point behind and with a game in hand against struggling Homerton. The home team in black and red were out for an hour before the game furiously practising forwards set pieces and backs moves, deliberately ignoring the primordial roars of the John’s huddle. An enormous crowd was attracted to this massive college match.

The game started in a whirlwind manner, with a ferocious hit from John’s number 8 Rob Wells almost scything his opposite number in half. The Jesus pack, however, despite being physically smaller than John’s were determined to prove that they were more than a match for their opponents. The John’s forwards looked shell-shocked when an early line-out from a penalty resulted in them being driven back ten yards into their own 22 by a front five that was so frail last year they were unable to contest scrums.

Furthermore, with the RFU law labs representatives in attendance, the referee seemed very keen to penalise any infringement at the breakdown by St John’s, which led to a string of penalties either taken quickly or kicked to touch by a Jesus team keen to establish a substantial early lead over their rivals. Despite the impact they have had on the season, one RFU delegate admitted after the match that the new laws had been superseded by the sweeping changes to be brought in from the southern hemisphere next season, and were therefore in the context of the wider game “completely

meaningless.”

John’s were fearsome in defence throughout the match, with the back division employing an awesome blitz move, led by barnstorming fly-half Aaron Sonenfeld, that put enormous pressure on the Jesus half-back partnership of Jon Cross and Kouj Tambara. 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, Jesus finally decided to let centre Tim Johanson take the three points.

Again, Jesus 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 Jesus players sank to the floor in disappointment

the touchline. From the resulting miss John’s broke out and, for the first time, got the ball in space to paceman Ovufe 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.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38



Jesus forwards led the charge against St John’s

JAMIE GUNDY

Churchill edge out Caius

CHURCHILL TENSEL (2)	2
CAIUS	0

ED WILLIS
 Football Correspondent

Joint bottom of the table Churchill and Caius met at Churchill pitches last weekend, with both sides still looking for their first win of the season. A full blooded encounter was expected and the teams did not disappoint.

After a lively opening period, in which the away side enjoyed much of the possession, it was Churchill who made the first breakthrough. A hopeful punt forward from the back was not dealt with by the Caius back four and Wes Tensel stole in behind to coolly guide the ball beyond Phil Maton. The goal owed a lot to the swirling wind, which was beginning to exert more and more of an influence as the half progressed. To their credit Churchill took advantage of the conditions, pinning their opponents back with a barrage of long balls. Injury-hit Caius were clearly determined to play attractive football though, and produced some neat interplay down both flanks through Marcel Gordon and Niall Rafferty, but just lacked the precision required to find the necessary final ball.

Half time came and went with the score at 1-0. Midway through the second half, Churchill were awarded a very dubious looking penalty and Tensel stepped up to slot his second of the game. An entertaining last quarter ensued in which Caius searched desperately for a lifeline, and Churchill looked to hit them on the break.

The score remained at 2-0 though, a tough result for Caius to take and probably not quite a fair reflection of an even game. Both sides displayed unquestioning commitment throughout and will take heart from the way they played. Caius certainly don’t look like a team deserving of bottom place in the division while champions Churchill will hope to build on this and return to the loftier echelons of the league, where they will feel they belong.

S.U.A.D. PRESENTS...

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