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Intruder caught at Fitzwilliam

- » Trespasser found asleep in student's bed and arrested
- » Trinity Hall break in replicated within ten days

KATY LEE
Chief News Editor

A man has been arrested on suspicion of burglary after taking two laptops from students' rooms in Fitzwilliam College and falling asleep in one undergraduate's bed on Wednesday evening.

Police and University Security were called to the college at 8.20pm after one student reported the theft of her laptop to the college porters and another, from a different accommodation block, informed porters that a man he had never seen before was asleep in his bed. Porters locked the intruder in the room until the police's arrival, when they arrested the man and escorted him from the premises.

The burglar had a second laptop on his person but appeared to have

dumped the first. Students who saw him as he was taken away have described him as a medium-build white man in his thirties with dark hair who was wearing a dark blue hoodie.

A police spokeswoman said: "We were called at 8.20pm to reports that someone had found an intruder in their room at Fitzwilliam College. They tried to steal a laptop. The first officer got to the scene at 8.31pm. Four officers arrived in total and arrested a man on suspicion of burglary."

"We then got a further report that someone else's room had been broken into and a laptop had been stolen. A 32 year old man has been arrested and is currently in custody."

The police were unable to comment on rumours that the man may have been involved in the break-in at a Trinity Hall accommodation block on November 10, when several students were attacked and one had her laptop taken.

One student, who lives on the same corridor as the girl from whom the first laptop was taken, was with the victim when the theft occurred. "The laptop must have been stolen from her room between about 6pm and 7.30pm," she told Varsity. "We'd all been chatting in the kitchen and when she went back upstairs she found her room in a state and her laptop gone. Nothing else was missing, but her things had been disturbed and her top drawer was open."

"Someone who had been on our floor earlier said that they'd seen a bloke standing outside someone's room - they hadn't recognized him but just assumed he was someone else's friend. We then went to the Porter's Lodge and, as we were reporting it, a third year student was reporting that he'd gone back to his room after dinner and found this man asleep in his bed."

"This was in S block - on the other side of the building from A block, where the first laptop was taken. He said, 'This is a completely random guy - I've no idea who he is and he

doesn't look like a student.'"

The student said the police arrived and locked the intruder in the room. "They were in there for about ten or fifteen minutes talking to him. Then they escorted him from the premises and threw him into the police van."

According to the student, the laptop stolen from A block was then found "dumped in the rain" outside the accommodation block. The police have confirmed that the intruder has been charged with burglary after he was found with another laptop on his person.

Several students have reported on the similarities between this case and that which occurred at Trinity Hall last week, when students' possessions were moved around the building by intruders, one of whom was reported to have fallen asleep in a bush after the break-in.

One eye-witness said, "My assumption would be that he was on something. There was definitely something weird going on." She added, "It's made us a lot more aware of how insecure our rooms are. I leave my room unlocked a lot - it's all quite disturbing. You also just assume that the college provides a certain amount of security itself. I think we'll all be a bit more cautious from now on."

The college's Senior Tutor sent an email to students yesterday reassuring students that the incident had been resolved. "Nobody was hurt in the incident, and we believe that the property taken has been recovered. Thanks to the actions of the students and porters yesterday evening, and the intervention of the police and university security service, this incident was successfully contained."

In a further message to undergraduates, JCR President Adrian Pascu-Tulbure said: "I'd like to stress how important it is that we keep College, and College houses, as secure as possible. Lock your rooms, even if you're just popping out for a few minutes." He added, "Although last night was very well-controlled and handled, we definitely don't want a repeat."

Nick Clegg
The Lib Dem leadership candidate on the dangers of ID cards

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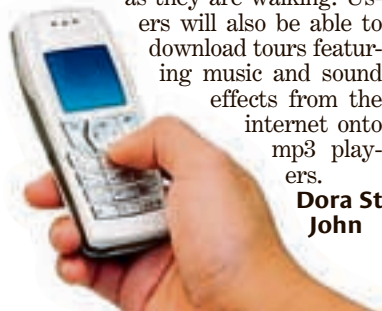
Scientists survey Arctic ice

Cambridge scientists have been given the go-ahead for a pioneering arctic survey into the effects of global warming on the North Pole ice cap. Ice trials led by Dr Joao Rodrigues of the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics successfully tested equipment in northern Canada at temperatures of below minus 30 degrees Celsius. His team members will tow this equipment 2000 kilometres from the north coast of Alaska to the North Pole in February. **Hannah Price**

In Brief

Tourism

An “electronic guidebook” scheme for technologically minded tourists is to be launched in Cambridge at Easter next year. “Pocket Cambridge” will allow tourists to download audio tours and information to mobile phones that have a wi-fi function. 3G mobiles will also be able to access the service. The inventor, Mark Oakden, hopes that GPS technology will soon enable users to download information relevant to their exact location as they are walking. Users will also be able to download tours featuring music and sound effects from the internet onto mp3 players.



Dora St John

Oxford Vice-Chancellor steps down

Oxford’s Vice-Chancellor will be leaving the university, it was announced last weekend. Dr John Hood started his tenure in 2004 and has said that he does not wish to continue after he has completed his five year term in September 2009.

He has had a notoriously difficult time in the position. He is the first vice-chancellor in the university’s history who has come from outside of the university’s academic base. He was brought in to solve the university’s financial problems, but has had trouble maintaining support for his proposed reforms. Last year Hood made a proposal to introduce a number of external members to Oxford’s council and to separate academic and financial boards. This was defeated in the university’s Congregation by 730 votes to 456.

Alex Glasner

New uni ranking

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development is planning to produce the first international comparison of how successfully universities teach. The new scheme will test students when they leave university to discover how much they have learnt during their course. Shanghai’s Jiao Tong University began to rank universities in 2003 and the Times Higher Education Supplement began their study in 2004. The difference is that these studies both reflect ‘inputs’, such as the quality of the staff and the amount of research taking place. The OECD’s league table will be the first one to concentrate on how much students are actually being taught.

Kathryn Maude



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GUARDIAN UNLIMITED

Varsity scoops Guardian Student Media Award

Ex-Varsity Editors Joe Gosden and Jonny Ensall collect the award for Student Publication Design of the Year with Adam Edelshain, Business Manager for 2006-2007. The award was presented by writer and broadcaster Hardeep Singh Kohli

Security professor slams ID cards

CLEMENTINE DOWLEY

The UK’s leading expert on electronic security has said that plans to introduce ID cards “will make no difference at all”.

Professor Ross Anderson, Professor of Security Engineering at Cambridge University’s Computer Laboratory and leading Government advisor on banking and internet security, said that ID cards are “not relevant to terrorism at all”, but rather the result of a “long-standing human tendency to indulge in displacement activities”.

Anderson called the scheme a response to increasingly “press-orientated politics”. He said that the introduction of ID cards is an example of “security theatre” and that it was a governmental attempt to establish the appearance of security without the reality.

He argued that replacing passports with ID cards is pointless. “To insist on new documents of a new kind will make no difference at all. Money would be better spent elsewhere. People die on roads all the time, whilst the number of people saved by security measures is unquantifiable.”

Daniel Zeichner, Labour Parliamentary spokesperson for Cambridge, admits that ID cards will not be 100 per cent efficient. But he claims that “the new biometric

“To insist on new documents of a new kind will make no difference at all”

system will make identification much easier” and constitute a significant improvement on the current passport system.

Zeichner said, “ID cards will help to dismiss a genuine worry about illegal workers in Britain.” Anderson said that there were much more efficient ways with dealing with this. “Foreign illegal workers have been a crime since forever.”

Richard Howitt, Labour MEP for Cambridge, said, “We should learn from other European countries. I am maintaining an open mind on the ID cards issue.”

Postgrad funding is slashed by government

MIKE KIELTY

Students and University officials have reacted with concern to the news that the government is diverting £100m a year away from the funding of postgraduate students.

The new arrangement means that funding for students taking postgraduate degrees in Cambridge and other British Universities will be reduced by £100m a year over the next four years.

Bill Rammell, the Higher Education Minister, argued that it would be difficult to justify spending taxpayers’ money on supporting students who are studying for a second degree. He said, “I believe that that is the right priority in public policy terms.”

The government’s stated aim is to shift this funding from postgraduate students, who already have an undergraduate qualification, to those who do not have yet have one degree. Opposition politicians and student representatives nationwide have expressed their concern that this money will be lost entirely from University budgets. Rob Wilson, Conservative MP for Reading East, accused the govern-

ment of having “sneaked out” the news of the funding changes over the summer.

Cambridge University authorities have reacted with concern to the news. Professor Richard Taylor, the University’s Director of Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning, welcomed the government’s focus on getting more students from non-academic backgrounds to take degrees. But he also said that these cuts would “pose a real challenge” to the government’s own stated commitment to providing education for part-time and mature students.

The move has also sparked anger amongst student representatives in Cambridge. CUSU Access Officer Charlotte Richer stressed that active financial support should be provided to all students, whether graduate or undergraduate. “It seems strange that a government that values a flexible and trained workforce is discouraging students from retraining,” she said.

An estimated 45,000 British students will be affected by the cuts, although those studying medicine, dentistry and veterinary science will be exempt because they are considered crucial to the national economy.

Public funds for 'Oxbridge Applications' interview tuition company

» Controversial company encouraging state schools to buy its services with Aimhigher access money

KATY LEE
Chief News Editor

The government has confirmed that schools can spend money from the national Aimhigher access programme on the interview technique courses offered by the controversial tuition company Oxbridge Applications.

The announcement comes after the company wrote to state schools drawing attention to the fact that there are no restrictions on spending Aimhigher funding, which is set aside for helping disadvantaged pupils enter higher education, in the private sector. Cambridge University has condemned the company's strategy.

Oxbridge Applications, which charges £180 for admittance to one of its interview preparation days and £850 for a full weekend of practise interviews and workshops, sent a letter to state schools across the country last week stating that they were "looking to greatly expand the number of students who receive our services free at the point of delivery. We aim to do this by working with schools and LEAs to use Aimhigher funding to purchase our services."

"The letter was sent to all state schools, as all state schools get Aimhigher funding," confirmed James Uffindell, who founded Oxbridge Applications in his final year at Oxford in 1999.

A spokesman for the Higher Education Funding Council for England, which funds Aimhigher, said, "Aimhigher partnerships can use companies such as Oxbridge Applications, but they need to be fully satisfied that such organizations can deliver fair access to bright young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in a cost-effective and targeted way."

"If they do decide to use their services, we would expect this to be in accordance with Aimhigher partnership plans and for the service to be monitored and evaluated after a year."

But Dr Geoff Parks, Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Cambridge University, said that the quality of the services offered by the Oxbridge Applications was "open to question".

He argued that the mock interviews provided for applicants were "delivered almost entirely by recent graduates who are given minimal training and in many cases are being asked to conduct mock interviews in subjects well outside their own expertise." He described a case at a recent Oxbridge Applications event where an applicant for Physics was given their mock interviews by a PPE graduate and a History graduate.

Dr Parks added, "It is very questionable whether the spending of Aimhigher money on services offered by commercial companies represents good value for money, given that the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford and their Colleges offer expert advice about preparing for our admissions processes for free." He has suggested that Aimhigher funding would be better spent on the Young Gifted and Talented Programme.

Uffindell has defended his strategy of encouraging state schools to buy its services with public money. The company has argued that although it already offers some of its services for free to pupils whose parents receive government financial assistance, most of its customers are those who can afford to pay its high prices. Funding more courses through public money will widen access to those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

"Aimhigher is about encouraging students from a poorer background to apply to universities that are the most appropriate for them," Uffindell told Varsity. "If the most appropriate for them happens to be Oxford or Cambridge, then they should have all the support they need to access those institutions."

CUSU Access Officer Charlotte Richer told Varsity, "CUSU is appalled at this shocking waste of public money. The service that is provided by Oxbridge Applications is fundamentally flawed. It is based on often inaccurate information about admissions procedures and relies upon recent graduates with no experience and no training in performing interviews, sometimes in a subject of which they have no knowledge."

She added, "Oxbridge Applications are taking advantage of the



The company claims to work with 10 per cent of applicants

TIM JOHNS

insecurities of University applicants for their own profit. Given the tremendous costs and inherent inadequacies involved in this service, it is incredible that Aimhigher are able to justify their financial support of this private company."

Uffindell response to Richer's comments was that the benefits of the company's services are evident from the fact that some schools send students on the courses every year. "I would welcome this student politician to come to one of our events and actually find out what happens on them rather than going on speculation," he said.

Oxbridge Applications claim to work with approximately ten per cent of Oxbridge candidates every year. Its website argues that the company "does not believe that candidates can in any way be coached, trained or rehearsed for success, but that they should be aware of what admissions tutors are really looking for."

One Cambridge student whose parents paid £850 for an interview preparation weekend last year said of her experience: "Most of it was crap. The first day comprised of things like 'body language lessons' which were the biggest waste of money. But it was good in that by the time I got to my interview here I wasn't nervous at all." The company claims that unsatisfied customers are in the minority, with 97 per cent of applicants who completed its one-day course in 2006 rating the service as "good" or "excellent".

The company also employs over 400 recent Oxbridge graduates and current undergraduates as tutors and interviewers. Victoria Andrenkova, a Classics student at Christ Church College, Oxford and an Oxbridge Applications tutor, defended the company's activities.

"We must remember that the advice Oxbridge Applications provide is just that - advice. It isn't a winning ticket," she said. "Ultimately, it all depends on the individual - their passion, commitment and dedication." She added that she found the work rewarding. "It's wonderful to see candidates get encouragement and self-confidence from the process."

King's students reimbursed £10,000 for hob removal

CAMILLA TEMPLE
Chief News Editor

King's College has reimbursed students whose cooking facilities were removed earlier this term due to concerns over health and safety. The college is offering a fund of £10,000 to compensate students who currently have no cooking facilities.

The college has come to an arrangement with the council whereby as many as possible of the cookers will be re-instated with alternatives to the original hotplates, which are the most dangerous form of cooker. The compensation would amount to £3 a day for all days until alternative facilities are installed.

One King's student commented,

"It's good that we're getting recompensed and I'm really pleased that college has decided to do this. But it has been badly coordinated. I'm still really unclear about whether the cookers are coming back. There were also some people who weren't even provided with microwaves."

Yvonne O'Donnell, Housing Standards Manager at Cambridge City Council, said: "It isn't council policy to remove cooking facilities. I have met with student representatives and the college's bursar and have come to an arrangement with them. The college health and safety officers will carry out risk assessments on the college kitchens and we will try and arrange to install alternative cooking facilities."

"In some kitchens it is unsafe

to have cooking facilities because of the size or layout but where it is possible we will find alternatives to hotplates. These are dangerous for two reasons: firstly because hot rings don't

"The compensation would amount to £3 a day"

light up and so they get left on, then students leave the kitchen and go back to their rooms. We have been called out to a number of fire alarms as a result.

"Secondly, because the hotplates are portable, students take them

back to their rooms which can be dangerous. We have said to the college that we can replace the hotplates with devices on timers. That way the heat goes off after ten minutes and there is no fire risk."

King's removed hobs and ovens from all gyp rooms over the summer and replaced them with combination microwaves. One student commented, "King's did this in the summer without consulting any part of the student body, without replacing anything and without re-adjusting rent bands."

King's College Student Union has been campaigning throughout the term to re-instate cooking facilities and to get compensation for those affected.

Izzy Finkel, who holds the position of Domus on KCSU, described the student campaigns: "There

were even people forming working party committees to survey everyone's eating habits in the college. They were going round and measuring the size of each gyp room with tape measures and stuff. I suppose it's not so much down to college wanting to listen to us but more that we had really good people working on our behalf and making the college listen."

"Everyone's been putting lots of effort into this, and it turns out to have paid off. We started off with talks of a rent strike, and indeed most people wrote to their tutors requesting to see the outcome of the cooker issue before they paid their bill."

KCSU have plans to lobby for compensation for all those affected. This will be discussed at their next council meeting.

Varsityprofile

»John Byatt

KATHERINE FAULKNER
Chief News Editor

"I got interested in charity when I was 17 or 18," says John Byatt, 59, a Cambridge cab driver. "I organised a pram race over 56 miles for the lifeboats, and that's where it all started really. I've always needed something to do, something to organise."

John Byatt is no ordinary cabbie. He is a prolific fundraiser, having dedicated much of his life to organising charity challenges and events around the world. At the moment, in a bid to raise money for a helipad for Addenbrooke's hospital, he spends much of his working day disguised as Tommy Cooper, the iconic fez-wearing comedian.

"I began to realise that I do a pretty good Tommy Cooper impression, so I started doing 20-30 minutes of comedy in old people's homes and things like that, for a donation to charity," he explained. He hopes that entertaining customers in his taxi, too, will encourage them to donate to his collection tin.

Although Byatt insists he "does it for the fun of it" the passion behind his endeavours is undeniable. "At the moment the Adenbrooke's helicopters have to land at the golf club, and it takes about 20 minutes for a patient to get to the hospital from there," he tells us. "By that time they're almost always in a critical condition and those twenty minutes can be crucial."

"With a helipad the turnaround would be reduced to about 2 minutes. It's a good cause. I fancied doing something for it."

Amongst his weird and wonderful adventures for charity, Byatt has cycled 250 miles across India in 6 days to raise money for Men-cap.

He and his fellow cyclists were followed by BBC documentary makers as they braved the extreme heat and distance. "I wanted my five minutes of fame, so I told them to film me at the front of the pack, but I'm a big boy and the others kept zooming ahead of me," he laughed.

Byatt, who was 50 years of age when he completed the ride, singles it out as his most memorable fundraising mission. "At the end, we were given garlands and blessings by priests," he told us. "We stood in the Ganges and they put candles for each of us on leaves on the water and watched them sail down. It was very moving."

Byatt lives in Saffron Walden with his wife, to whom he has been married for 35 years. "We spent our first date collecting jumble for a scouts' jumble sale," he laughs, adding: "She's always been very supportive."

Byatt's next plan is to complete a 6 day trek through the Thai and Burmese jungle next February. "Not everyone can say they've trekked through the jungle and rode an elephant," he says. "It's the adrenalin. I can't explain why I do it. I suppose I do it because it's there."

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»59years
OF AGE

»35years
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»17years
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MICHAEL DERRINGER

Archbishop charms Cambridge

CLAIRE SOUTHWORTH

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rt Rvd Rowan Williams, spoke on Thursday evening in Lady Mitchell Hall. Cambridge staff and students gathered to hear his talk entitled "The Icon and the Mouse: Sacrilege and Revelation in Dostoevsky".

The works of Dostoevsky provide many subjects for religious debate, but Williams chose to focus upon an image from his novel 'Besy' (usually translated as 'Demons' or 'Devils') of a mouse in an empty icon case, exploring the subversion of religious imagery in relation to human loss of faith.

Dr Williams, a graduate of Christ's and former university lecturer, also served as chaplain of Clare College from 1984 to 1986.

The talk, given after Williams dedicated his summer sabbatical to the study of Dostoevsky's works, was well-received by both staff and students, who particularly enjoyed the chance to meet and talk to the Archbishop after his lecture. Katyuli Lloyd, a fourth year MML student from Clare, who discussed the concept of the modern icon with Williams, described him as "really charming". Another undergraduate student added that it was "just so exciting to have someone that famous speak in our department".

The talk, organised by the Department of Slavonic Studies, was the Fifth Dame Elizabeth Hill Lecture, given in memory of the former university lecturer and professor who died in December 1996.



Students described the Archbishop as "really charming"

ANGLICAN CLERGY

Some science is off limits, says Minister

ANGELA FANSHAWE

A government minister has provoked anger within the scientific community by claiming that academics must accept that public disapproval will render some areas of scientific research off-limits in the future.

Ian Pearson, the Minister for Science and Innovation, told an audience at the Science Council that there would always be differences of opinion between scientists and the general public as to what scientific research is considered acceptable. "It isn't just about talking longer and louder and believing that if you explain more then people will always agree with you, because they won't always agree with you," he said.

Speaking at a lecture held in honour of Sir Gareth Roberts, the founding president of the Science Council, Pearson called for a debate on a new vision for science in the UK and for the development of "a new consensus around science and society".

Roland Jackson, chief executive for the British Association for the Advancement of Science, praised Pearson's views. He said that the government's new vision will transform a society that is "confident about the development, regulation and use of science" into one with a "well-qualified science workforce that is representative of the society it serves."

However, other scientists have reacted with consternation to the MP's speech. Dr Roger Carpenter, Reader in oculomotor physiology at Gonville

and Caius, told Varsity: "There's a big difference between saying that a certain kind of science should not be done, and saying that the public should not pay for it. Science is only systematic thinking, checked by observing how things actually are."

"That is the beginning of tyranny"

He added, "If the observing part turns out to be costly, and the public think their taxes would be better spent on something else, fair enough. But a ban on the scientific enquiry itself is in effect a ban on certain thoughts, or on certain kinds of question: and that is the beginning of tyranny."

Sir Tom McKillop, President of the Science Council, also warned against allowing the public too much control over research, saying that if the UK was held back compared to other countries, it would "create a bigger problem for society to deal with."

Although Mr Pearson recognised the "real dangers" of restricting research, he maintained that the direction of research should be decided consensually. He went on to express a desire for debate to excite the nation about science and encourage more young people to take up careers in scientific fields.

CUR1350 makes all the right noises

» Student radio station scoops three prizes at the national Student Radio Awards

ALEX CLYMO

Cambridge University's student radio station, CUR1350, has been named best station in the Student Radio Awards. The station, run by students from Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin Universities, received three awards at the ceremony last Thursday.

The station was awarded first place in the Student Station of the Year category. Michael Brooks, CUR1350's station manager said he was delighted with the verdict.

"This proves that CUR1350 is in the top tier of Student Radio in the UK," he said. "The professional outlook of the station in everything we do makes our broadcasting worthy of commercial and BBC standard radio, regardless of our relative size."

CUR1350 will be given a two hour slot on Radio 1 as a result of winning the prize.

Many previous winners have gone on to pursue careers in national broadcasting. Greg James, now the early morning presenter for Radio 1, received the Best Male award in 2006, and congratulated CUR1350 on their success.

"Winning Best Station is the biggest award of the night and the opportunity it gives is incredible," he said. "It's a fantastic team award for a team contribution."

As well as being awarded Best Station, CUR1350's Katherine Godfrey picked up gold in the Best Female section.

Godfrey, a third year History student from Churchill College, beat students from Leeds and Manchester University radio stations, who took silver and bronze awards respectively.

Godfrey presents The Revolu-



The CUR1350 team celebrate their success with Radio 1 DJs Edith Bowman and Greg James STUDENT RADIO ASSOCIATION

tion Will Not Be Televised, an hour long alternative music show that runs from 11.00pm every Tuesday. She described the show as covering genres from "grimecore" to "alternative folk".

Godfrey told Varsity she had been surprised by her victory. "It was amazing because so many of the other nominees were mainstream shows. One of the criteria for assessment is connecting with your audience, so I'm especially pleased to win since I'm coming from an alternative angle."

The station's Weekend Breakfast team also received a bronze award for Best Entertainment Programming. The show is run by students Charles Lyons, Rachel Garforth, Tanya Mercer and Martin Steers and claims to offer a variety of musical genres and features.

CUR1350 is the only radio station that is aimed specifically at students from Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin Universities, and is entirely independent of both institutions.

It is presented, engineered, and

managed exclusively by students, and is also independently financed. "The drive in the committee is huge because we're not funded," claims Godfrey. "We have to work so much harder just to keep it alive."

This is not the first year that CUR1350 has picked up awards. In 2003 the station took second place in Best Live Event for their coverage of the May Bumps.

In 2004 they received four awards, including gold in Live Events for their coverage of the Varsity Rugby match.



King's

A sinking feeling

The young cognoscenti of a highly esteemed college, pursuing their habitual insanitary practices, were caught out this week. They had unwittingly left an unpleasant surprise for the workmen who were clearing blocked sinks in their rancid rooms. The workmen reported that a considerable amount of urine was trapped in the waste water pipes.

The horrified Dean of this incontinent college later sent an email to the young impressionable minds under his care: "I don't quite know what to say other than the practice of urinating in the sink MUST stop." Hugo Rifkind of the venerable Guardian newspaper found this all very funny when he decided to take the piss in an article this week.

St Edmund's

Gym and vigour

Three supple gymnasts were accosted in their sweaty pink leotards by a lascivious admirer after practice this week. She lured the slim young athletes to a pile of pleasantly squashy crash mats in a dingy gymnasium, and proceeded to delight in their nubile physiques. When they entered the gym things quickly degenerated from straddle-jumps to good old-fashioned straddling. They bounced off her trampettes while she happily vaulted their pole in a spectacular floor routine.

She was doing backflips by the time they got to their piece de resistance: a complex formation involving arched backs, spread legs and pointed toes. At the moment of climax, the star of the troupe executed a perfect triple twist with Olympic strength.

The gymnasts flailed with graceful, synchronized abandon, springing about in ecstatic star jumps and elegant forward rolls. Our spy is sure readers will agree that this stunning performance would have received a perfect 10 had any judges been present.

Trumpington Towers

An official seeing-to

In a blast from the past, our spy has learned that some time ago two strapping lads from Cambridge's own student union were found taking their responsibility for student satisfaction rather too seriously. When a female student, allegedly follically challenged in her nether regions, wandered in for some welfare advice, she got a hands on demonstration.

Before she knew where she was (the old CUSU office, just to clarify) she found herself atop a desk, enjoying pleasure from one officer while she dispensed it to another. One hopes that the welfare lubricant was close by to avoid any undesirable chafeage to one participant's famously rosy cheeks.

Libraries destroy two million books a year

EMMA CLUTTON-BROCK

Figures released this week have revealed that university libraries across the UK are discarding over two million books a year due to the growing popularity of e-learning.

According to the Society of College, National, and University Libraries, the average number of books being disposed of was 13,600 per institute in 2006 compared to just 7,000 in 1997. Dundee University was the most prolific offender, disposing of 100,035 items and buying only 18,067 in a single year.

Toby Bainton, secretary of SCONUL, said: "the average number of e-books available per library has risen by more than 60 per cent since last year and more than half of serials acquired are now in electronic form." The organisation has predicted that rates of book disposal will continue to rise as students demand better online resources and more space to work in.

Other universities have given different reasons for discarding so many books. Aston said they needed to create more space for laptop areas, whilst Imperial College London claimed that they disposed of books which were no longer of relevance.

The Cambridge University Library and its dependent libraries, including the Medical Library and the Central Science Library, disposed of 26,950 volumes of print-

ed material in 2006, according to SCONUL's figures. But they acquired 184,529 new volumes in the same year. One of only six copyright libraries in the UK, the UL's usual policy is that all copyright material has to be kept for posterity. "Generally speaking, we do not have a weeding out policy here at the UL," said Gotthelf Wiedermann, head of the Library's Collection Development.

"The main reason for this is that going through a collection the size of ours to decide what can be discarded is hugely time-consuming and quite simply out of the question due to the limited resources available in the UL." He added that books are sometimes thrown away if the library holds a duplicate or if they are in a poor condition.

The university's independent libraries, including those associated with all faculties, departments and colleges, are not required to keep unwanted items and are free to decide their own policy on what to do with such books. Some faculty libraries constantly offer used books for sale to students.

Roland Thomas, librarian at the Marshall Library of Economics, said: "The Marshall Library sometimes offers several bays of worn duplicates and old editions to students at low prices." He added that the library makes around £2500 from these sales every year, which it uses to improve the library's



Libraries are getting rid of books to make way for technology LIZZIE ROBINSON

stock and services.

Some students have complained that such a scheme is either non-existent or poorly publicized at their faculties. Several libraries such as the SPS faculty library have a policy of offering books to the UL before offering them to students. "I think it's a real shame that old books are hardly ever offered to students at the SPS library when those studying other subjects clearly benefit from such

a scheme," said Mark Wolfson, a second year SPS student from Emmanuel College.

Other students have praised the university's attempts in recent years to improve the availability of online resources.

Several series of books are available in an online format through ebooks@cambridge, and ejournals@cambridge provides over 29,000 titles for Cambridge students online.

BALL REVIEW

Dancing with spiritual death



Revellers at the Law Society ball, held at the Newmarket Racecourse Millennium Grandstand

Law Society Annual Ball

★★★★★

LIZZIE MITCHELL

If you theme your ball on the seven deadly sins you lay open clear criteria for judgement. By your provision of possibilities for soul- and self-destroying excess you will stand or fall. And I felt as though they tried very hard, at the Cambridge Law Society Annual Ball, to persuade me to sell my own soul to Mammon, but in the end I sent it home by the first coach for vespers and an early night.

There was indeed excess. "13 per cent and it's got a bull on the front", said my dinner companion of the white wine in an auspicious start to the evening's revelry. There were more bars and alcoholic outlets than I managed to count, and the wells of acqua di vita never seemed to be on the point of running dry.

In terms of outlay per person, they'd certainly put up a good show. The food was, if not amazing, at least expensive tasting, the trio of melon set out to look like a sort of fruity corporate handshake. Elsewhere, the masseurs were excellent and the smoothie bar approaching the sublime, and the music managed to keep us going for most of the night. One definite highlight and deserving of a digression was the rather marvellous "Miss Honeyb'lush (burlesque)".

God knows why anyone would think of hiring a striptease artist as an hourly 5-minute break from the DJ set, but Miss Honeyb'lush stood the test like a trooper. At no point did she give you a chance to wonder whether she was sexy or this was a titillating routine. Fantastically gung-ho, she charged her way through the act with true wartime spirit, beaming relentlessly as she stripped herself down to nipple pads and ample girdle before strutting determinedly off through the audience with head held high and dignity still entirely intact. It was a pretty masterly performance.

In addition to masseurs and strip-tease, there were two dance-floors, a team of make-up artists, a vodka luge, a casino, a hall full of video games and two chocolate fountains. One milk chocolate, one white. What glut of luxury! After all, who'd stick at one when your sponsors can buy two? There's nothing intrinsically wrong with two chocolate fountains, but by the time I reached them I reached them I already had a strong sense that this was, at heart, not a ball but a cash-drenched corporate shindig, and that the ball committee had simply thrown money and sponsors at the problem and prayed that it would go away.

There was something very definitely missing from the Law Soc Ball. The main issue was probably the setting. The Millennium Grandstand at the Newmarket Racecourses has about as much charm as Kelsey Kerridge. Archways of balloons and film noir red neon lighting over the dinner tables did little to combat the feeling that I ought to be leaving with at the very least a secure job and pension packet at the end of the event to make the whole experience worthwhile.

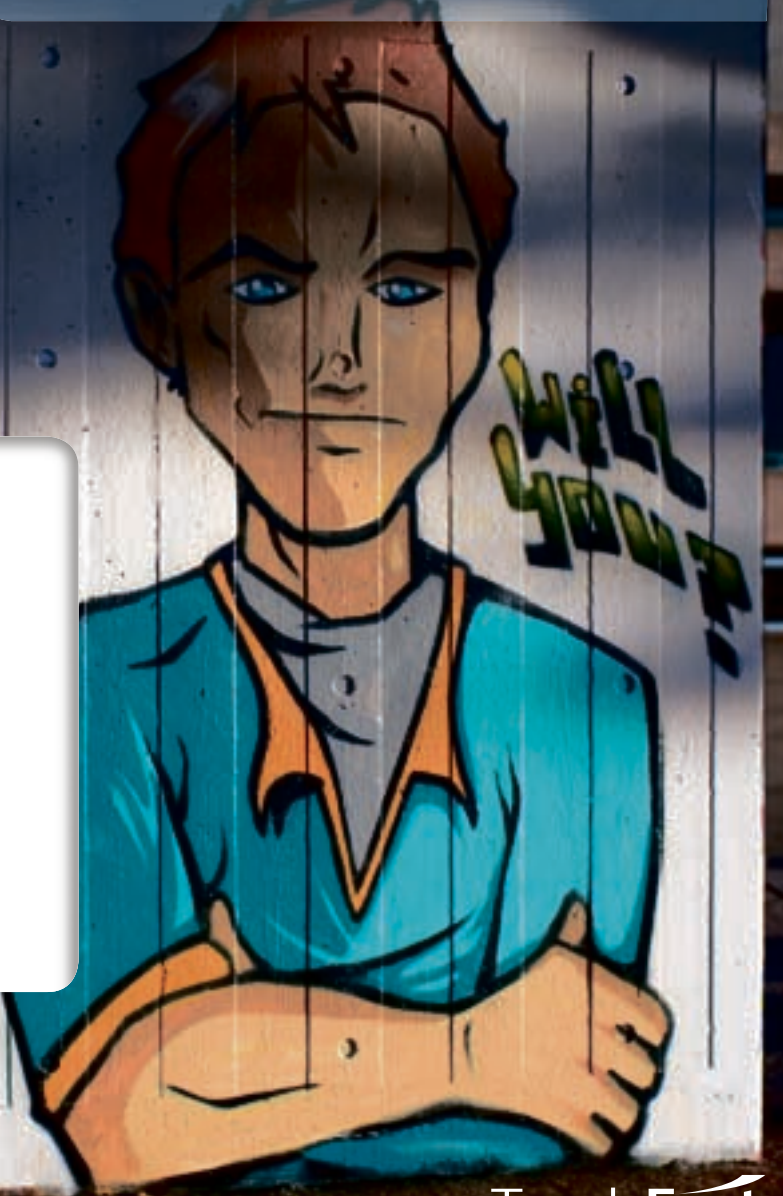
This was a night of people running round trying to work out where the party was and failing to find it. It may have been the Millennium Grandstand that brought the evening down. It may just have been the frequent reminders that we were there not by virtue of our own efforts/pockets but by the munificence of the law society and their corporate friends. The last straw certainly came as we stood waiting for the homeward coach. Even in the lonely outbuilding the loudspeaker managed to find us and ask us to raise our glasses one final time to "our sponsors, without whom none of this would have been possible". At which point we snorted into our bacon butties (kindly sponsored by Weil, Gotshal and Manges) and headed home to bed. I don't know whether I sold my soul to the devil on Saturday night, but they'd sure as hell sold theirs.

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Cancer breakthrough at Cambridge

» Researchers may revolutionise cancer treatment with new imaging techniques

JAMES SHEPHERD

Cambridge researchers this week outlined a new imaging method that could fundamentally change the ways in which we treat cancer.

Speaking at a talk organised by the Scientific Society on Tuesday, Professor Kevin Brindle from the Department of Biochemistry, said a new technique could show whether a patient with cancer has responded to their treatment before the tumour actually shrinks. This could help the medical community move towards the longer term goal of personalised drug therapies.

Chemotherapy, a common cancer treatment, works by killing the cells that make up tumours, making them shrink and disappear. Traditional methods in cancer testing, he said, rely on observing the tumours shrinking, which means that patients "don't know for weeks or months" whether or not their treatment has been successful.

This method could detect whether the drug is working before the tumour shrinks, speeding up the process of cancer treatment. Brindle be-

lieves that some new methods will eventually be able to "tell you within 12-24 hours whether treatment has been successful."

If successful, this method will improve the efficiency of drugs which treat cancer. Brindle hopes that this drug will "assist in making the concept of personalised medicine a reality... tailoring drug treatments to specific patients". He said that there is "a long way to go yet" before this drug will be available to patients, but added, "we hope that it will be tested in the clinic in the next few years. It has to go through rigorous safety testing and also evaluation. Is it indeed better in the clinic than other currently used techniques?"

Though the efficacy of the drug has only been demonstrated in one type of tumour in mice, Brindle said that this method can be applied to all tumours "in principle", adding, "it remains to be established that the technique we have developed for detecting tumour response to treatment will work in all tumours".

Speaking about the recent advances made in cancer therapy research, Brindle commented that "rather



Professor Kevin Brindle outlines his new imaging method for the treatment of cancer

TIM JOHNS

than administering a standard cocktail of drugs there are choices to be made in terms of the way to treat patients".

He argued that scanning techniques provided a good way forward versus the conventional radiation-based tracking because the methods

were able to achieve a much higher resolution adding "we are able to pick up small regions of the tumour dying."

Pakistan's martial law condemned

TOM MORIARTY

Cambridge students have called for an end to media restrictions in Pakistan and expressed concern over the viability of elections intended to be held in the country next year.

Around sixty students attended the seminar last Tuesday at the South Asian Studies Centre and took part in a discussion following short analyses of the political situation in Pakistan by speakers Dr Kamal Munir, a senior lecturer at Cambridge, and Akbar Zaidi, a leading Pakistani economist and activist.

Discussion topics included the apparent complicity of the UK and the USA in supporting President Pervez Musharraf's regime and

"There are crackdowns against any sources of opposition to Musharraf's regime"

the continued support for Benazir Bhutto, leader of the opposition Pakistan People's Party, in the Western press.

Many students voiced support for the struggles of Pakistani lawyers and activists, and demanded an end to restrictions on the nation's media. Others questioned the viability of elections scheduled to be held on January 8 2008 given the current restrictive climate of martial law.

Speaking to Varsity after the seminar, Munir criticised both Musharraf and Bhutto, who has recently returned to the country after making an agreement with the President. Munir said that Bhutto

"lost a lot of credibility when she signed that deal," which saw investigations into charges of corruption against her being dropped. He added, "She is definitely not the solution. She's helped keep the military in power."

The emergency, imposed by General Musharraf on November 3, has resulted in the suspension of Pakistan's constitution, the sacking of Supreme Court judges and crackdowns against any sources of opposition to Musharraf's regime.

Munir emphasised that the current crisis must be seen in the context of Musharraf's loss of support during his eight year rule, which has seen the government trying to gain the approval of Western powers by fighting the "war on terror" whilst failing to solve recurring problems in the provision of healthcare, education and access to clean drinking water.

When asked at the seminar about the alternatives to Musharraf and Bhutto, Munir answered, "It does not matter which one is in power, what matters is how they get into power." He strongly condemned the imposition of the state of emergency. "Democracy is the process through which civil institutions are strengthened," he said.

Heather Bedi Plumridge, a geography PhD Student who attended the seminar, said that she has been "disappointed but not surprised by how the US media have desperately clung to Bhutto as the answer to Pakistan's challenges". She urged that the world should "let the people of Pakistan decide who should lead them, not external nations with deep pockets and anti-terror agendas."

Humeira Iqtidar, an SPS graduate student who organized the seminar, has said that he may arrange another event for next year as the planned election date approaches.

Edit this.

Applications are still open for positions on the Varsity Editorial Team for Lent Term 2008

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**Application deadline:
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VARSLITY
The Independent Cambridge Student Newspaper since 1947

Designing the news

Varsity won a Guardian Student Media Award this week, for Best Design. Thrilling news, you might expect, for the throbbing egos in the editorial office. Except that none of them had anything to do with it.

An actor can be as brilliant as he likes, but if the sound and lighting is dreadful and he is wearing the wrong costume in front of a terrible set then much of the talent gets lost. Varsity’s designers work with flair and ingenuity to make sure the same doesn’t happen to our writers.

This newspaper’s design, of which we are all justly proud, is the handiwork of a tiny, highly-skilled team who never feature in by-lines and whose faces never adorn the banner. Yet their technical expertise is what makes the paper tick. The look of the pages, the fonts, the quality of the photos; without these, the spirit, and the writing, of the paper would be very different.

There is always the issue of whether design is better when it’s subliminal, whether you ought to notice the typeface or the colour of the dotted lines. In newspaper design especially, the boundaries between recognition and non-recognition are a tricky line to tread. On one level you want the design of a broadcasting medium to be as innocuous as possible, to present the news straight and plain in such a way that you don’t even notice the manner of presentation. But with news now available and updated every minute of the day, one of the main selling points of a newspaper is the fact that you can hold it in your hands. The Guardian made its own view, that the ballpark in which it was playing was no longer just about the news, clear with a radical redesign in 2005.

However subliminal and understated you like your newspaper design, there always comes a point at which tribute must be paid. Production is not just about pressing buttons and waiting for things to appear in place. Varsity would never be able to appear without the people who design it and deal with its production crises, taking headshots which never get credited, making sure that things with funny names like tracking and leading and standfirsts happen in the right way at the right time, making bad photographs look good and good photographs look better. How many people know what balancing a photo means? They never taught you that at school. For all the training in full stops and split infinitives and for all the emphasis placed on form within a piece of writing, the way in which it appears on the page goes completely ignored.

There is a common tendency to undervalue the role of design. Especially in an academic arena like Cambridge, where content over form wins, in theory, every time, we rarely think about the world full of conscious design which surrounds us, influencing the way we think and behave without our knowing it. Not just the spacing between the pictures and squiggles in a newspaper, but the typography of street signs, the shape of any printed propaganda (A3, A4, A5 A?), the countless ideas which it is impossible to transmit from brain to brain in a purely conceptual way, and for which we have to resort to old fashioned journals, papers and books. It’s very hard to isolate what’s written on the page from the fact that it’s written on the page and the way in which it’s written on the page.

There is an assumption that design ought to just happen, quietly, without impinging on the people doing the important things like writing articles. It doesn’t. We are very proud that the careful, expert hours that the Production and Design team have dedicated to the newspaper have been nationally recognised.

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.

Editors Lizzie Mitchell and Elliot Ross *editor@varsity.co.uk* **Associate Editor** Lowri Jenkins *associate@varsity.co.uk* **Chief News Editors** Katherine Faulkner, Katy Lee and Camilla Temple *news@varsity.co.uk* **Comment Editor** Tom Bird *comment@varsity.co.uk* **Features Editor** Ed Cumming *features@varsity.co.uk* **Arts Editor** George Grist *arts@varsity.co.uk* **Interviews Editor** Jossie Clayton *interviews@varsity.co.uk* **Chief Sport Editors** Simon Allen and George Towers *sporteditor@varsity.co.uk*

Senior News Reporter Emma Inkester *news@varsity.co.uk* **Letters Editor** Jo Trigg *letters@varsity.co.uk* **Science Editors** James Shepherd and Hannah Price *science@varsity.co.uk* **Fashion Editors** Iona Carter, Emma Draper and Francesca Perry *fashion@varsity.co.uk* **Visual Arts Editor** Sam Ensor-Rose *visualarts@varsity.co.uk* **Theatre Editor** Orlando Reade *theatre@varsity.co.uk* **Literature Editor** Orlando Reade *literature@varsity.co.uk* **Chief Music & Listings Editors** Joshua Farrington and Verity Simpson *music@varsity.co.uk*, *listings@varsity.co.uk* **Classical Editor** Toby Chadd *classical@varsity.co.uk* **Sports Editor** Noel Cochrane *sporteditor@varsity.co.uk* **Copy Editor** Pete Coulthard

Chief Subeditor Dylan Spencer-Davidson *production@varsity.co.uk* **Chief Photo Editor** Lizzie Robinson *photoeditor@varsity.co.uk* **Chief Photographers** Richard Gardner, Debbie Scanlan, Chris Thwaite *photos@varsity.co.uk*

Online Editor Kathryn Maude *online-editor@varsity.co.uk* **Online Team** *online@varsity.co.uk* **Technical Director** Chris Wright *technical-director@varsity.co.uk*

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

Class Warriors

Having returned to live in Cambridge after an interval of 42 years I was intrigued by the fact that controversy still rages, as it did in the 1960s, about the virtues and vices of private education. The arguments all overlook one fact: that it would not be possible to abolish private schools. Any attempt to do so would contravene human rights conventions and in the 1960s, when this nonsense was last mooted, it was no secret that private schools would have sold their very valuable properties and relocated abroad. I suppose that in such an eventuality class warriors would have been deployed in the ports of our nation arresting any child attempting to travel abroad in search of an education. The solution to the “problem” of private schools is to provide decent state-funded schools such as the one that sent me to Pembroke in 1961 and which has since



been obliged to seek refuge in the private sector.

One of the class warriors patrolling the ports would no doubt have been Tony Benn (Westminster and Oxford) with whom you published an interview last week. He is now seen as a rather cuddly old fellow, uttering platitudes by the score. It is easy to forget that in the 1970s he and his associates came close to wrecking the British Economy by providing zillions of taxpayers money to the National Enterprise Board. Their task was to “pick winners” by injecting this money into such “enterprises” as British Leyland and Inmos, which was going to set the computer world alight.

Now that he is no position to

damage the wellbeing of people less wealthy than himself it is reasonable to take a charitable view of the old buffer, but one does not expect “Varsity’s” critical faculties to be suspended altogether!
Stephen Halliday

An Education Money Can’t Buy

It was a shame that the debate about private education was conducted on almost entirely fiscal terms (‘Should we abolish private education?’, 9th Nov). Whilst I fully support Mr Maltby’s ideal of a universally high standard for state education, I fear that the money he proposes we invest would be largely wasted.

As any teacher will tell you there is only so much that can be achieved in the six school hours of each working day. Outside the school environment education ought to continue in a home environment which values learning highly. As numerous studies have shown, children starting primary school can have wildly differing abilities based largely on the educational input that has already begun in the home. Such input continues to be pivotal throughout school life.

Aside from smaller classes, better facilities and higher standards of behaviour (and the high-quality teachers attracted by such things) I would say that the real value of private education is in putting one’s child into a community which values learning both inside the classroom and in the home. As long as there are still parents that are disinterested in their children’s education no amount of money will transform state education to bring the best out in our young people. Our culture must be transformed and unfortunately that is something money cannot buy.

Michael Bigg
Wolfson College

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@varsity.co.uk

Withdrawal from Nominations

Reading ‘View from The Gods’ this week, I could not help but notice your third unfounded, unprovoked and inaccurate attack on ‘Fame the Musical.’ Your description of Fame in the ‘relegation zone of the Conference League of artistic merit’ appears to disregard and disparage any diversion in theatrical tastes aside from those of your writer. Such oversights could be forgiven if it weren’t for the fact that the basis of the article is incorrect. May I point out that ‘Fame the Musical’ is punctuated as such, as stated by Joseph Weinberger Ltd on behalf of the Musical Theatre of New York throughout the contractual obligations of the production and on every piece of publicity related to it. We are in fact not able to be nominated for Varsity’s ‘most-obnoxiously-punctuated-play award (2007).’

Tim Carlton Jones
Trinity College

Haiku for the end of term

End of Michelmas
Christmas present hastens here
Trebuchets on lawns
Ted Decomines

Apology

Our review of *Othello* (Issue 666, page 30) was misleading and Varsity apologises to everyone involved in the production. Our reviewer did not watch the second part of the play and to comment on it was unacceptable. Varsity does not condone this kind of dishonesty and always endeavours to review fairly and accurately.

Correction and clarification

In the article “University replace diversity officer with consultants” (Issue 666, page 9) we referred to Andrew Walko. In fact the CUSU Welfare Officer is Andrea Walko. In the same article we failed to make it sufficiently clear that the University is currently recruiting for a permanent Head of Equality and Diversity, and the team of consultants referred to are only an interim measure.

CONFESS TO

the Bishop of Ely



Anything to declare? Sniffed some scandal?

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Dwelling on death row

Sunny Jacobs, a young wife and mother, was convicted of murder in 1973. After seventeen years on death row, she was released. Her husband, sentenced with her, was less fortunate. She lost him to the electric chair. Later, Sunny visited Northern Ireland to make a speech for Amnesty International, where she met her second husband, **Peter Pringle**, who had been handed the death penalty for his supposed involvement in a bank robbery in 1980. They spoke to **Edith Lai** about their experiences of a justice system that failed them.

I was the first woman on the death row, sentenced for a crime I did not commit, by witnesses coerced into giving false testimonies and a judge desperate to convict.

In 1973, I was twenty-seven and the mother of two children - a son who was nine and a daughter of ten-months. I was separated from the father and met Jesse Tafero, whom I later discovered had been only recently released from prison.

One day, one of Jesse's friends gave us a lift. We were driving on a Florida freeway and took a break in a rest area. Two policemen came and checked on us. The driver was carrying an illegal firearm. When the police discovered it, he shot them both. A car chase followed and came to an end with our arrest. Even the children were taken into custody.

A prolonged interrogation ensued, followed by a four-day trial. The driver had asked for a plea bargain and avoided the death penalty. Jesse and I, though innocent, were not so lucky. The only evidence against me was the statement I made after forty-three hours of interrogation which was along the lines of, "I think I might be involved but on the advice of my solicitor I am not going to be saying that". I was convicted for murder and sentenced to death.

They put me in a tiny cell which was six steps from one end to another and as wide as my arm span. No one was allowed to communicate with me - no gesturing or eye contact - and if they did so they would be punished. I was given a number. I was locked up on my own, with no books, no letters and no visits. I could only wear those white pyjamas that they gave me. Twice a week I was allowed a ten-minute shower. It was a process of dehumanization.

Initially, I was angry, then afraid. This was followed by confusion and frustration. I felt the need to keep a journal; I needed to express myself. I somehow got a little pencil, and occasionally I would find a small piece of paper. When I ran out, I would use toilet paper. It kept me honest.

I later got a Bible. I was angry with God for letting this happen to my family. My parents were devastated. They picked up my daughter when she was released two weeks later, but my son was held in custody for two months. He was so traumatized that he had to go to a special school. But I preferred hopefulness over hopelessness, so I

chose God, and it was my belief in Him that kept me going. I realized that the authorities cannot take my life even when they come to execute me. My life belongs to me.

Then two very special events happened. The first was one day, when the food tray came, I noticed a neatly folded napkin. To me, it meant I was a human being that deserved to be treated as such. The second was that one day I was given a newspaper. I found and kept a very nice picture of food in it. I would use toothpaste to stick the picture up on the back of the door when I got my meal. I then ripped the rest of the newspaper and weaved it into two mats, one to cover up the loo, and another one to sit on. I realized that I had 'servants' who brought my meals and washed my dishes! I also started yoga meditation. I began to see myself as a spirit, not a body.

"Twice a week I was allowed a ten-minute shower. It was a process of dehumanization."

Everyone, including my guards, are also spirits, going through the journey of life. I let go of my anger and stopped judging them."

Following her release in 1992, Sunny worked for Amnesty International. She was invited to speak at an event in Northern Ireland. Here she met her second husband, Peter Pringle, whose experiences with the justice system paralleled her own:

"I was born in Dublin and I was a republican. I have been a political activist all my life and in my youth I was imprisoned. In 1980 there was a bank robbery at the place I was living. The police and the robbers exchanged fire while they were running away. Two were caught but the third man got away. The media was writing about the case speculatively, and the authorities wanted to shut them up. So they set me up. I was arrested at 3pm on a Sunday, and interrogated for over twelve hours the next day. One of the police officers refused to testify against me. When he was

asked to identify the third man of the gang of robbers, he pointed at a guy on the balcony in court. I was standing right in front of him. But his evidence was overturned. The only evidence against me was a statement I made after 43 hours of interrogation which was along the lines of "I think I might be involved but on the advice of my solicitor I am not going to be saying that." But that alone was enough to sentence me to death, in 1980.

I have two jailers with me watching me all the time. Again, similar to Sunny, no interaction with me was allowed. The worst was when I was sitting with the two jailers, who were having a conversation about my execution, as if I don't exist. They were wondering if they would get extra pay for doing it. This kind of thing dehumanizes the jailers too.

I realize they did not control my mind and spirit. I began to ignore them. My application for appeal was rejected. My lawyers tried to apply for clemency, but I refused. It was about my innocence and more importantly, my pride. To apply for clemency was to admit that I had done it.

Then ten days before my execution they commuted the sentence, so I was bought into the prison population. Now I had three options. I could spend 40 years in prison; I could kill myself, but then they would say I did it out of remorse of my 'crime'. I went for the third option: I studied law in the prison. At first my anger stopped from concentrating. So I tried to meditate, and slowly the anger began to leave me, and I discovered I have a talent for law. In 1992 I saw a snippet on the newspaper about Sunny's release which inspired me. So after 12 years, I took my case to the High Court. I was released in 1995 after 14 years and 10 months in prison.

When I was released, I had no social security number, no money, no job, and no passport. I got no apology; you have to go to court again if you want one. My family and friends helped me, though the anger was still with me. I went back to meditation. Then in 1999 I finally met Sunny and we have been living together ever since.

We do not have sufficient accountability in the society to check the legal process. Society puts too much pressure on the police for results. In my case, the police officer who arrested him was promoted, and the one who refused to testify against me was not promoted. So



everybody suffers accordingly.

Nonetheless, pain is inevitable but suffering is optional. If I had not gone through this, I wouldn't have met Sunny and become in love with her. At first I was bitter and full of resentment, but those feelings harm me in the end. They do not help me or anybody else. I decided that I couldn't judge

"When I was released, I had no social security number, no money, no job, and no passport. I got no apology; you have to go to court if you want one."

anyone of their wrong actions. It is only between that person and God. It's not my business to judge. So I choose to follow a path of healing and forgiveness. I found peace.

I believe that peace starts at an individual level. In the context of Northern Ireland, the process started in prisons where the prisoners had dialogues with the other side. They discovered that they have things in common and if they continue to fight, their children would go to prison. So they expressed their views to those outside. Then there was a referendum and the majority voted for peace. In the past 13 years young people are not brought up in hatred and segregation. They grew up with a consideration for each other. Northern Ireland is a powerful example of peace and reconciliation, used internationally as a model for peace. It shows that each little person can use their example to affect other people. They can make a difference.

We can also easily lose sight on those human rights that are earned very hardly. Many before us have struggled through many difficulties to gain those rights. And there are many people out there trying to dilute these rights. We must guard them and defend them."

Sunny and Peter are currently working on their new book about their lives together.



Another week has gone by, and we are drawing closer to the NUS Extraordinary Conference on governance reform, an antidemocratic coup by the union leadership, which Pete Coulthard shamefully championed in CUSU. The Labour Students' spin-mills are whirring faster and faster as opposition to this latest attack on NUS democracy grows: Wes Streeting recently went on record describing leftwing opponents of the reforms as "individuals with vested interests". Frankly, if we're on the look-out for "vested interests" at work within the NUS it might make more sense to examine the political record of Streeting's organisation, Labour Students.

A group of hacks who, in my opinion, never miss an opportunity to support government policy, or to smother all attempts at meaningful political campaigning, yet all the while trumpet their credentials as "radicals" and posture as "fighters for students"... Could such a group possibly be described as pursuing "vested interests"? Labour Students make little attempt to disguise the fact that their leadership is angling for high-flying jobs in Westminster, and view strict political obedience to the government as vital for their career prospects; and yet they have the gall to describe leftwing student activists as self-seeking manipulators. I admire Streeting's daring, if nothing else.

But why, in the face of such opposition from corrupt and right-wing bureaucrats, do activists continue working in the NUS? Given that Annual Conference represents nothing but an annual love-in for rightwing hacks with no more intention of organising students to fight for free education than has Margaret Thatcher, why don't we go and set something better up?

Because, although student participation in the NUS is at an all-time low, NUS is a mass student organisation, and as such has potential not merely to be extremely powerful, but also to be very radical. Why powerful? Easy: NUS is massive, and it has a very large budget. Granted, very few members of the NEC actually bother to shift out of the London office to talk to members, and the massive budget is being thrown away on useless discount cards and sky-high fees for management consultants, but if the NUS started behaving like a real union and mobilising its members, that could change rapidly. Why radical? Because, no matter how desperately the bureaucrats spin, no amount of white wine receptions for New Labour ministers can change the fact that students have certain unalterable material interests.

We don't want to pay through the nose for education and we don't want to see our universities run like private companies, clamping down on free speech and closing "unprofitable" small departments. And furthermore, these facts place students in direct opposition to the government's agenda. The weight of these economic realities is propelling students towards a fight. It must therefore be propelling our mass organisation towards a fight, if only it becomes reinvigorated, and truly mass. Only one thing can change this – if NUS is effectively destroyed as a democratic, mass organisation by these proposed rightwing governance reforms. And that's why Streeting wants them.

Josh Farrington



Pop culture

A challenge to Cambridge's cultural prejudice

I love pop culture. I love it, and I'm not afraid to admit it. It doesn't worry me that I know more about Bloc Party than I do about Beethoven. Neither am I concerned that I can quote more Simpsons than I can Shakespeare. In fact, it unsettles me to think that when people in Cambridge pubs are discussing Homer, they probably aren't talking about an overweight nuclear technician from Springfield. It disturbs me that I'm the odd one out.

Pop culture is a much-maligned thing these days, and to be fair, it's as just as much the fault of people who claim to support it as those who insistently deride it. The problem is one of irony. In Cambridge especially, our supreme smugness about the fact we've just read some Kierkegaard, or written an essay on theoretical cosmology, means that when we come to something unashamedly pop-cultural, we treat it with contempt, like a tawdry piece of junk food compared to proper, Michelin-starred fare. Sure, you might surreptitiously have a Big Mac now and again, and maybe you'll really like it, but you don't take it seriously, and if you do admit to liking it, it'll only be in a patronising, vaguely post-modern kind of way.

These are the worst kind of people – too snobbish to truly admit their predilections for pop culture, but too cowardly to renounce their dalliances with it, and limit themselves only to the rarefied pleasures of the pompous intellectual. Please. Either own up, and say you own the

Spice Girls entire back catalogue (Spice, Spiceworld, Forever, and now the new Greatest Hits) and admit that you like it, or buzz off back up your ivory tower with your Miles Davis and your brie. You're not doing anyone any good with all your ineffectual pretending, least of all pop culture itself.

Pop culture deserves to be rescued from this shallow middle ground of faux-nostalgic pretension, because it has an inherent value of its own. I wouldn't want to dramatically overstate

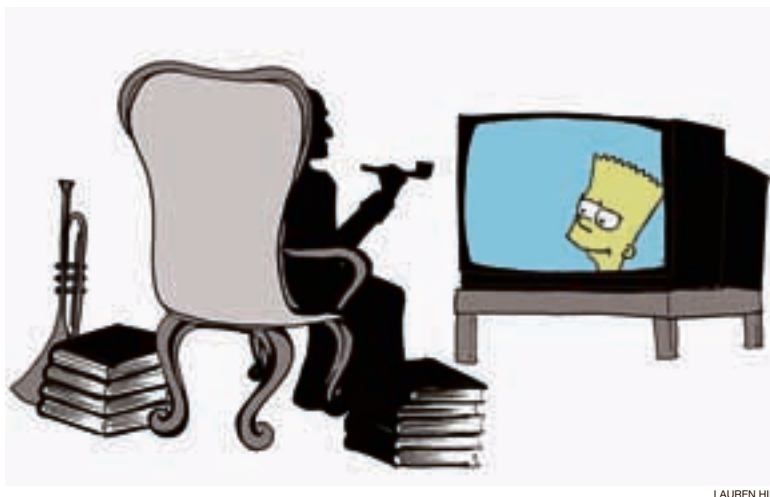
dictated to by a received wisdom that has never been questioned, there is simply no need to put the two in opposition in the first place. High culture and pop culture can co-exist perfectly happily, with no need for the condescension that is currently rife. I'm perfectly happy to let those who take pleasure from Wolfgang and Co. get on with it, just as long as I can carry on enjoying my choice of music without facing howls of derision.

Of course, not all pop culture is worthy of defence. I'd be the first

shows to the most elite art gallery.

In all areas, there will be a few genuine innovators, crafting their work with passion, intelligence, and integrity, and then there will be the rest, derivative, heartless, and dull. Pop culture exists on a far broader scale than the traditional arts, and thus its sins are rendered across a far wider panorama, but this doesn't mean we should neglect its manifold positives. So much pop culture is bursting with wit and ingenuity, but we only feel safe with it by either raising it to the status of "proper" art (see Banksy, for example), or by carefully segregating it, seeing it only as "pop", a clever use of modern references and sly pastiche. Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein understood that pop and high culture could inform one another, but their revolution was never completed, as we can tell each time we mark a legitimate pleasure down as a "guilty" one. We're not on trial anymore people. Let's move on. Vladimir Nabokov, one of the foremost literary minds of the last century, enjoyed nothing more than a can of cold beer while watching football on the telly. We can all learn from that.

The cynics amongst you mock me, or hate me, or perhaps even pity me. You'll think I'm a moron, an ignoramus, a pleb. But I'm also well-informed, critically aware, and what is more, I'm happy. And anyway, all you nay-sayers will have to speak up: I'm wearing a towel. And if that reference leaves you scratching your head, then Sirs, I pity you.



LAUREN HILL

this value – for example, I'm not arguing that the Manic Street Preachers are better than Mozart, but then again, we shouldn't perpetuate a belief that Mozart is intrinsically better than the Manics just because one is high culture and the other isn't. Quite aside from the fact that we shouldn't be

to point out that there's a world of difference between the kind of quality you'll find on something like The Simpsons and the sort of low-brow mass-produced swill that forms the vast and sickly majority of TV, music, and cinema. But this is the case in any field of the arts, from the dregs of all-night game

Nick Clegg



A delicate balance

British liberties are threatened by 'anti-terror' legislation

A generation of populist governments have unbalanced the delicate balance between the power of the state, and the power of individual citizens.

We see it in the headlines week after week: headline-grabbing announcements designed for the consumption of the tabloid newspapers. Proposals that do little to make us safer, but eat away at basic British liberties those previous generations died to protect. Detention without trial. Control orders. Identity Cards. The world's largest DNA database, with records on over a million innocent people.

That's why I have proposed a Freedom Bill: a single act to roll back a generation of illiberal legislation and restore the proper balance between our rights as people, and the government's power.

And the first clause, of the first section, would repeal the 2006 Identity Cards Act. Because it is this piece of legislation which most infringes on our traditional British freedom.

The government claims ID cards will protect us from identity fraud. They are living in a dream world. The ID card database will, in effect, put massive amounts of our personal, private details into a giant box marked "steal me". It will be a

honey pot for fraudsters.

The loss of 25 million child benefit recipients' data this week shows just how easy it is for a foolish "junior official" – or a malicious fraudster – to compromise data when it's so poorly protected.

I believe that the compulsory imposition of ID cards is an issue so at odds with everything I believe is best about Britain, that I have pledged never to register, never to submit my details to the Identity Register, and never to carry a card.

I've received some stick for this decision. But there is a long and honourable tradition of civil disobedience in this country. Many of the values we hold dearest today were only won after individuals made sacrifices and campaigned to win them. And equally those values can only be maintained by a willingness to fight hard to protect them. Sometimes politicians have a duty to lead by example, and sometimes politicians have to act according to their conscience as a human being, not as a legislator.

I am firmly of the view that if enough people, and I have been overwhelmed by the support of thousands of people for my position – most notably Shirley Williams – are willing to take a stand with me we can bring down the ID cards project.

Detention without trial is another

touchstone issue for me. And if the government succeeds in extending it beyond 28 days, repealing that extension will be second on my list.

The Government has decided to continue to push for an extension to pre-charge detention when there is not a shred of evidence that it is necessary. The Home Secretary has admitted she cannot indicate a single case where an extended period of detention would have been needed.

It seems the Government is scrabbling around for ideas to justify a solution that they have already decided upon. We already have the longest period of pre-charge detention in the Western world – how can they justify extending it on such scant evidence?

This 28-day issue will hijack the debate on the anti-terror Bill, even though on almost all the other matters in the legislation there is a broad consensus – between government, opposition parties, and campaigning organisations like Liberty and Justice.

Why, when there is so much we agree on, have they made a bee line for something so divisive? Do they feel forced to uphold a promise Gordon Brown made last year to secure 90-day detention, a promise he made as he was trying to secure the key to Number 10? The principle of habeas corpus is too precious to be

traded away so lightly.

It is not just our ancient British liberties at stake however. It is also our safety from terrorism. There is no question in my mind that these heady debates have a negative effect on efforts on the ground to stop home-grown radicalisation taking root.

Of course extremists and preachers of hate will seek to radicalise youngsters within their communities whatever we do. But surely we have learnt by now that breathless talk about the "war on terror" or sloppy anti-terror legislation gives them needless additional ammunition with which to sustain their twisted grievances?

As the national debate on terrorism matures, our aim should remain steadfast and simple: to protect both our lives and our liberties, and to refuse to accept that one requires the sacrifice of the other.

If we are to restore that precious balance between people and their government, we will have to take a stand on this issue, on Identity Cards, and more. As leader of the Liberal Democrats I will make sure my party defends our civil liberties to the last, no matter what this cynical, authoritarian government proposes.

Nick Clegg is a candidate for the Liberal Democrat leadership.



Asad Kiyani

Dancing with the Devil

The overthrow of the President isn't good news for Pakistan

A man dies and is told he is going to Hell. On arrival, Satan takes him on a tour. Everywhere they go, there are giant holes in the ground. Massive trolls stand guard with swords and maces. Satan explains that each pit is for people from one particular country, and the trolls ensure no one escapes. "What about that hole over there," asks the man, pointing at a hole with no guards. "That one?" says the Devil. "That one's for the Pakistanis – each time one of them gets close to the top, the rest pull him back down."

It's clear now that Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf is about to become the latest casualty of this attitude. Still, if he indeed deserves such a fate, surely he deserved it well before now. Yet instead of getting his just reward in a timely manner, Musharraf will be subject to the same opportunism and short-sightedness that dominates Pakistani politics and ensures the country remains impoverished and concretely underdeveloped.

Musharraf's presence as a military-politician has been tolerated in the West by his willingness as an ally in the war on terror. Unfortunately, he's recently shredded his credibility by acting as a dictator, attempting to mute the courts, political rivals and the media. Thousands have been jailed or put under house arrest as Musharraf desperately tries to consolidate power. Should he fail, the execrable vultures of Pakistani politics have been circling for months and are ready to swoop and pick away at what's left of the nation's carcass.

With the fall of Musharraf, Pakistanis will no longer have to worry about how many media outlets operate in the country, but just about who is looting the country's coffers and stashing the rupees in Dubai, Suffolk and Normandy. In other words, they'll be free to go back to their ordinary lives with a failing education system, entrenched poverty, no health care, and rigged elections.

Musharraf made two fatal mistakes, starting with the first time he fired the Supreme Court's Chief Justice. He might have overcome that had he not then attempted to shore up his position by getting in bed with the dregs of Pakistani

politics. First, he and the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) sabotaged a political rally to support the Chief Justice with an opposing rally. The orchestrated conflict between protesters led inevitably to the deaths of over 40 people.

In spite of the violence, the CJP managed to get reinstated. Musharraf gambled again and entered into a power-sharing agreement with former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. She and her hideously opportunistic Pakistan Peoples Party would form a new government, with Musharraf as a relatively powerful President. The trade-off? Bhutto and the PPP would not have to face up to the myriad of corruption charges that had been lingering since the late 1990s.

It was a win-win deal, except for an increas-

"In Musharaff's absence, the country will fall back into the hands of the same animals who have spent the last sixty years tearing it up."

ingly independent judiciary. Among the cases the Supreme Court was set to rule on were the legality of Musharraf continuing in his dual roles as Chief of Army Staff and President, as well as the amnesty granted to the PPP. A negative decision in either case would have scuttled Musharraf's hopes of maintaining power and opened the door for Bhutto and her rival Nawaz Sharif to re-enter domestic politics without the general's benediction.

Bhutto and Sharif spent most of the 1990s trading the prime minister's post between them. Both were brought down by corruption allegations, until Sharif tried to remove Musharraf from his post and the general engineered a coup to save himself. Bhutto's husband was widely known as Mr Ten Percent, and documents from across Europe confirm the couple's thievery.

Sharif was nearly as bad financially, and also twice amended the constitution to ensure there were almost no checks on the power of the Prime Minister's office. Their only saving grace is they are not in the armed forces. Instead of military might, they use hollow voting and rigged elections to create a veneer of democracy.

The press was always free during their reigns, and would freely publish details of which government officers were receiving bribes and from whom. Nothing came of this, because nobody cared to do anything until the opposition decided it was their turn to suck away the country's wealth.

Exactly the same thing is happening now. From local human rights officials to overseas Pakistani student groups, there is an outcry about the state of emergency declared by Musharraf and demands for a return to the rule of law. Even Canadian lawyers are marching. The only question is where have they been? Why now, and why not for all the disappeared, the uncounted victims of the war on terror who have been imprisoned in the thousands without trials or charges? What about the first time Musharraf removed a Chief Justice and installed the one he just fired? What about all his corrupt allies, some of whom are implicated in the same schemes as Sharif and Bhutto's husband? What about the amnesty given to Bhutto, or the collusion in the Karachi atrocities with the MQM? And why not when Bhutto, Sharif, and the MQM spent a decade mercilessly ravaging the country?

In Musharraf's absence, the country will fall back into the hands of the same animals who have spent the last sixty years tearing it up. Whereas there was hope for progress under Musharraf, who at least reduced the scale of corruption, his political successors will only worsen the situation. Yet the brave souls who are only now lining up to tear down the battered general and open the door to the regression and stagnation of the past don't care. As long as they can claim a role in his downfall, their intermittent appetite for politics will have been satisfied. As Pakistan slowly descends back into its special place in purgatory, the Devil doesn't just watch – he is within us.



I don't know about you, but this Idler's totally spent. In fact, since this is a newspaper, grossly over-spent. In times like these, I am empathetically reminded of Tingles, my gout-ridden pet chinchilla, for whom the nice man in the white coat prescribed "a good long sleep".

Indeed I day-dreamt such a 'sleep' would be my lot during the supervision I just attended. In the event, the occasion more closely resembled a Nuremberg Trial than an elitist academic privilege, except I had neither shiny buttons to admire nor the excuse that I had been ordered to commit my crime of copying and pasting the entirety of my plagiarised introduction into my (now doubly plagiarised) conclusion.

It's not my fault. I have, quite simply, been here for too long. I even conducted a nostalgic inspection of a tree the other day just to remind me of what salad looks like. And yesterday I hailed the Head Porter as "Dad", and inexplicably intimated to him that I could no longer remember which way round boxer shorts should be worn. How am I supposed to function academically and extra-curricularly, when I feel about as on top of my game as a dormant owl which is being roguishly defecated upon by a roving band of bran-flake-munching dormice (dormice: game; get it?)

Nor am I the sole contributor to this orgy of loathsome lethargy. I was recently informed by the captain of the newly-formed Blues procrastination team that a despairing clique of academics have channelled their pedantry into a mischievous bid to add 'lecture hall' to the entry for 'dormitory' in Roget's latest thesaurus. Similarly, I hear that unprecedented demand has driven Sainsbury's to strike a lucrative labour deal with the Cambridgeshire Constabulary for assistance from convicts to package microwaveable macaroni cheese.

"Yesterday I inexplicably hailed the Head Porter as 'Dad'"

Eight weeks is an unreasonably long time. It is too long. It is unacceptable. Put in context, even Anne Widdecombe's mother, I'll wager, didn't have to undergo eight weeks of labour. Drug companies would have twice the number of shareholders if the competitors of the Tour de France had to endure an eight-week cycle. Someone should do something about it.

Terms must be shortened dramatically to fortnight-long duodecimesters, with a strict ban on work imposed on Fridays to dodge the detrimentally disgruntling implications of fifth-day blues. Work materials should be categorically confiscated between duodecimesters to prevent the keen injustice of clandestine scribbling. Proctors should be retitled 'Delocutors' and perform the sole duty of arresting the larynx of anyone discovered toiling in contravention of this measure: in all probability the culprits will be the bastards who ask questions in lectures. Lastly, I propose a ban on Cliff Richard records. Cliff Richard is an idiot.

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

Übermensch

Brightest
Strongest

Fastest

Loudest

Weirdest

Prettiest

Biggest

Fittest

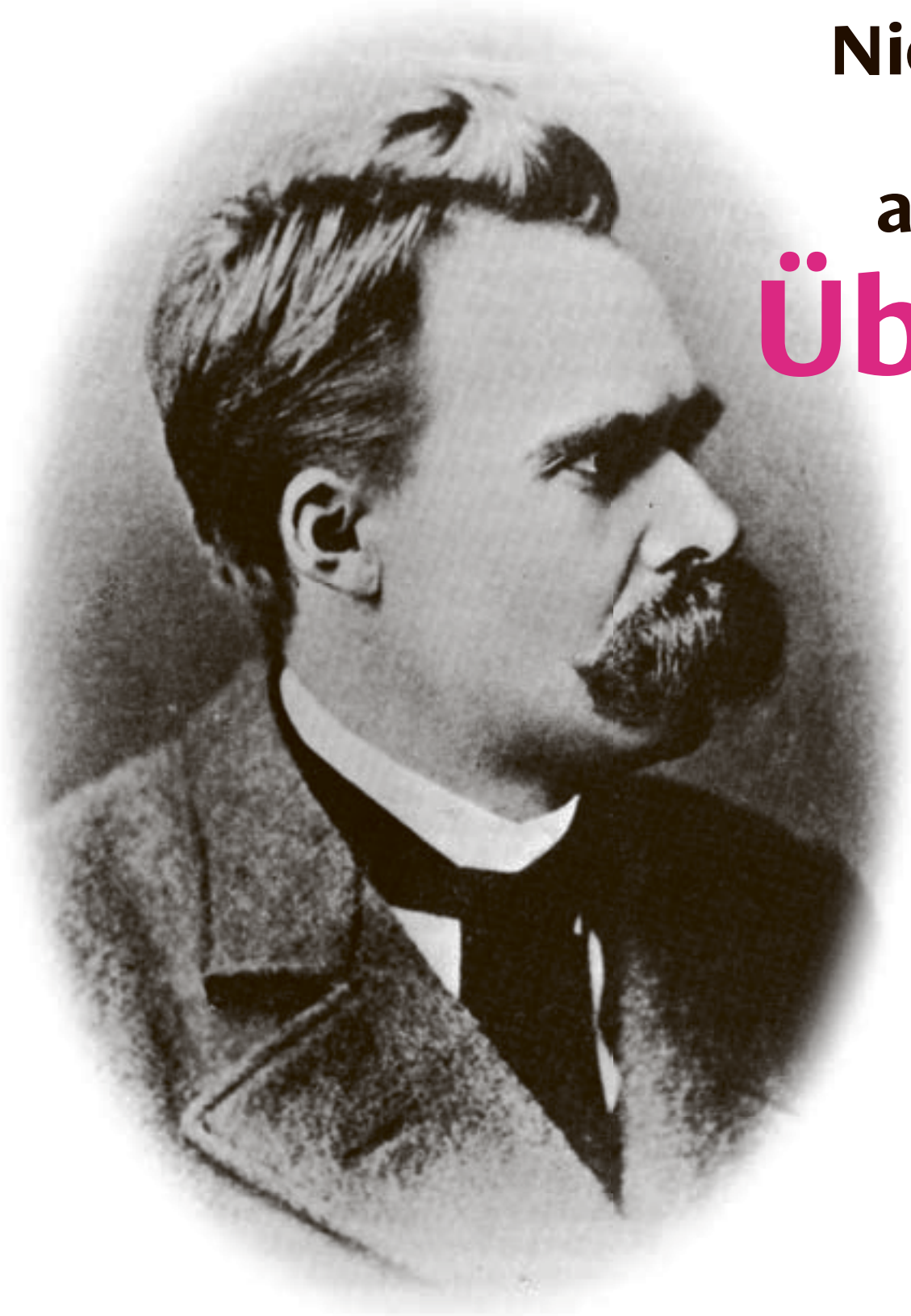
Nicest

Funniest

Cleverest

Worst

Best.



the

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VIEW



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One Question Shouldn't we be allowed pets?

OLLIE SOUTHALL

Performing preliminary packing of my Peter Crouch deluxe edition memorabilia, I was listening to Elton John's hit parade smash Honky Cat (1972). Distracted momentarily from the limby Liverpoolian by an air-bass solo, the thought of my own supine felines Alan and Keith (named after international heroes Chegwin and Shearer) entered my head.

Now be assured, there's nothing better on a cold Christmas morning than waking to see lazy Alan curled at the foot of my bed and naughty Keith depositing yet another dead Robin Redbreast onto my slippers. These musings on my absent feline friends made apparent a terrible absence: on my return from another unsuccessful outing to Cambridge nightspot Ballare, there would be no lazy Alan, no naughty Keith, only the sweaty charms of my gibbering neighbour, Whittington. There can be only one response to this outrage: a howl of emptiness. Where are the pets of Cambridge?

Several historical figures attest the value of animal company. Swashbuckling moggie Captain Haddock (see Facebook) performs more pastoral duties in John's and Magdalene than Lassie or that Dolphin who rescues hapless floaters. Everyone knows that Byron kept a bear in Trinity and hardly anyone knows that my friend Harry's uncle tried to trump this for originality with a pet Purple Heron. Surely it's clear that neither would have been so successful without the help of their beast buddies. Captain Haddock has saved many a student from the agony of late night essay writing. Having the sleek ninja slink through one's window and settle himself brazenly on the keyboard soothes both mind and soul. The sight of that nocturnal scamp settling himself lovingly into a mound of musty socks is a universal prophylaxis to the body's aches and stresses.

From whence does this evil prohibition derive? Why does the university prolong this vile embargo depriving its members of the obvious pleasures and subtle delights of the pet? Man cannot life with goldfish alone, students will not, cannot, tolerate this Orwellian diktat for long. Did not Adam and Eve abide in harmony with the beasts? The murmurings of unrest grow stronger by the hour. This university faces a stark decision: let the animals back (and improve grades) or meet most animal rebellion.

Spot The Difference

Chris Huhne and **Nick Clegg** both claim they want to make a difference. But, as they scrap it out for the Liberal Democrat leadership, it is very difficult to tell them apart. They come from identical backgrounds and seem to promote identical policies. **Bob Thomas** and **Joshua Sutton** spoke to both of them and found a wealth of similarities.

The Liberal Democrat party is in the throes of a dramatic leadership struggle. Chris Huhne, an Oxbridge graduate, Westminster alumnus and former journalist, insists that the party needs him, leading the charge forwards towards a country which is "free, fair, and in which opportunity abounds."

His distinctive rival, Nick Clegg, Oxbridge graduate, Westminster alumnus and former

journalist, instead argues that the party cries out for his alternative brand of "freedom, opportunity and 'reaching out'". The choice risks tearing the party apart, as "the issues" are thrashed out, some liberals having to accept that the core value of "freedom" might fall at the wayside, being replaced by the ideal of "a free society."

The tension in Wolfson Hall, Churchill College on Wednesday

21st November, as the candidates met for hustings, was palpable. One gentleman wore both a knitted hat and cycle helmet, presumably in case something dangerous happened.

Nothing did. Instead, both candidates replied in accordance with the party manifesto to a series of banal and uncontroversial questions, re-iterating the almost complete similarity of their views. We had the chance

to speak to each candidate individually, to give them the chance to try and distinguish themselves. Bob Thomas spoke first to Chris Huhne...

Predictably enough, the conversation drove towards education. Mr Huhne had previously criticised the Labour handling of educational reform, suggesting that it had assumed a "market oriented" character, a reference to top-up fees, outsourcing

Continues on next page

Spot the Difference... Continued from p13

and city academies. "A sensible position for the party to take is to defend our position on top-up fees, so that people can have a university education, without leaving university with excessive debt." A similar challenge is laid against the Labour move to send 50% of school-leavers to further education and university. Although supportive of a general increase in the number of school-leavers moving into higher education, on the quixotic grounds that "we will only survive as a civilised society if we're living on our wits; brain-power rather than brawn-power," He feels the drive towards particular, prescribed targets to be unwise.

The calming warmth with which Chris discusses education policy had a strangely relaxing effect and I listened at length to his plans to reform the education system from its foundations, starting with primary education. He matches his rival's pledge to bring state-funded education into line with the private sector within ten years, aiming to close the £3,700 p.a. gap between the average amount spent on pupils in each area.

In this respect, primary education reforms stand as the central pledge, hoping for what he calls the "knock on effect on education opportunity through the system" which results from higher quality education for 3 or 4 year old children. "If a child at age 8 is still unable to read, there should be strong attempts to remedy that then and there, to get the basics in place for further advance later on."

A potentially controversial and radical aspect to Huhne's constitutional policy is his call for a "popular veto", according to which proposed legislation could be put to a referendum on the grounds of 2.5% of the population's dissent. The motivating influence behind the policy is Huhne's belief that it will ensure that there is "a real consensus behind legislation" and that "legislative decisions are not simply used for press-releases." However, in allowing a small minority to slow the legislative process to a standstill, requiring a referendum on

campaign office, entitled "Calamity Clegg" (now renamed "Nick Clegg in the media on public services reform and proportional representation" following a swift apology from Chris' camp). Although the title of the document was its only offensive quality, I asked Chris if the perceived ad hominem attack on Clegg from his camp would limit his capacity to attack Nick's policies for the remainder of the campaign. "I made an apology for what was clearly an inappropriately titled document. Nick's accepted the apology and that's the end of the story," states Chris, avoiding the opportunity to make any specific policy criticisms, along with the opportunity to answer my question.

The parallel interview with Nick Clegg was intended to highlight the differences between the two candidates, but instead served largely to emphasise the similarities.

Neither candidate brought this 'exciting, engaging, optimistic new brand of politics' to the Churchill hustings

Ensuring liberty in Britain, distancing Britain from America, making sure the Liberals support the European Union, giving "power to people" and getting everyone involved in politics are the ideas that underpin Nick Clegg's campaign. One of his priorities is to reach out to those who "feel that they are shut out from politics" and make sure not only that they feel politics is relevant, but also that they have a role in the political system. Nick pledges to achieve this by allowing "communities to feel in charge of their own lives," and by encouraging people to get involved in the political process at the local level. His commitment to scrapping ID cards is "as important," and he makes clear that there "is no room for ID cards and similar measures in a Liberal Britain."

You can't help but observe that Clegg employs Liberal party policies repackaged, but if the members of the Liberal Democrat party are willing to bite, perhaps he has got the message right.

On education he joins Huhne in pledging that under his leadership "education would be the number one priority" and that the Liberal Democrats would abolish tuition fees for students.

Mr Clegg's position on Britain's nuclear weapons system, Trident, however, is a rare area of ambiguity. Although he has made comments saying that he would like to see a nuclear weapon-free world, he states that he does not want Britain "to get rid of Trident straight away, as it would give us nothing with which to bargain with other countries." Surely a man

truly committed to a nuclear-free situation would scrap Britain's nuclear weapons first as a sign of real commitment to the process?

While his attitude towards America is cool (he is particularly critical of the government's decision to endorse "Son of Star Wars" weapons placements), his fondness for the European Union is nothing but total. Although he makes the predictable points about the EU being vital for managing the substantial international issues of our day, such as climate change, he fails to address a question regarding whether or not his policy of making sure that power rests with people on a local level, sits at odds with his fondness for the EU.

After the interviews, the hustings was a sad sight to behold. The questions raised by the party faithful of Cambridgeshire were met with orthodox, manifesto-trained responses from the first candidate to answer, and an uninspiring "I agree with everything my colleague just said" from his opponent. At times, whiplash looked inevitable, and collars audibly cracked with the friction-induced heat of crazed nodding and affirmations of agreement. The final question of the evening was obvious: "What distinguishes you from your rival?" The response from Clegg was simple: "I have an orange tie".

Some people laughed. Others were less certain that he was joking. In private he was just as reticent; "Whilst I am politician from the north [and care more about northern issues he goes on to say] ... Chris is from the south". It is hardly a radical policy difference.

Underneath this familiar rhetoric genuine policy differences do exist, particularly regarding Trident, electoral reform and the "popular veto". These are all issues upon which Huhne is a braver reformer, wanting a sooner end to Tri-

"What distinguishes you from your rival?" The response from Clegg was simple: "I have an orange tie"

dent and rejection of the "first past the post" system. It may well be that his more radical agenda will gradually emerge, teased out by months of dogged interviewing, and that genuine debate eventually breaks out.

But neither candidate brought this "exciting, engaging, optimistic new brand of politics" to the Churchill hustings, and both had clearly decided to leave policy disagreements behind for the evening. Clegg jokingly remarked during the debate that "normal people don't think about politics that much." Perhaps this is why. If you want to be taken seriously by your voters, perhaps you should take your voters seriously first.

Statistic of the week Lyrical Genius

**Melua**

As the great songstress Katie Melua once sang, there are nine million bicycles in Beijing. And regardless of the Alan-Partridge-esque tone of the following lyric "that's a fact", it would stand prominently as one of the very few pieces of modern music to confront the number of cycles in Asian capital cities.

In the fourth verse she goes on to assert that there are "6 billion people in the world", a statement she qualifies with the problematic "more or less". According to Wikipedia there are currently 6.6 billion people in the world, a discrepancy to Miss Melua's figure which threatens to overwhelm the numerical plasticity afforded by "more or less".

The second verse, if anything, is even more vague. There is almost no way of knowing with any certainty how many "light years from the edge" we are, or even if there is an edge at all. Miss Melua admirably admits that this is just "a guess", but by juxtaposing this astrophysical imagery with the more tangible visual of Chinese bicycles.

**Brainiac**

Yet not only does this throw the population figure into doubt, but it also looms large over the authenticity of that ostensibly more concrete first verse. Are there *really* nine million bicycles in Beijing? Is it *really* a fact? She herself offers no statistical support, and in the light of the rather whimsical subject matter of the piece as a whole (it is a song dedicated to some sort of male love).

There are very few reliable surveys on the subject, and one cannot help but feel that Miss Melua's artistic purpose would have been better served had she concentrated on an area in which the number of bicycles could have been more accurately established, as lying at the heart of the lyric is a clear tendency to uncertainty. For instance, Cambridge, with its population of 130,000, has approximately 60,000 bicycles. Whilst this is also, of course, a guess, the probable divergence from the true figure is much less.

You heard it here first.

Adrian Dangerhands

Profile of the Week

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

Average Cambridge Student

According to Facebook, this is the blandest person in the town

1984, Pride and Prejudice, His Dark Materials, Life of Pi, Jane Eyre, The Time Traveller's Wife, The Bible, Catch 22

Sex:

42% Female
38% Male

Is one of a group numbering:

38,560

Political Views:

13% Liberal

Interests:

Music, Reading, Travelling, Travel, Photography, Cooking, Art

Favourite music:

La, Radiohead, Muse, Bach, The Killers, Jack Johnson, U2, Queen, Snow Patrol, Pink Floyd

Top Books:

Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings,

Photo of Average, Boring Man:



A new sort of politics?

any issue which attracts 2.5% of the population's disagreement, Huhne seems to risk reaching out to apathetic voters to the cost of stagnating political progress.

The "stain on that young Huhne's copybook", a fanatical, wild-eyed, mature, liberal supporter explained to me before the interview, regards a document leaked from Huhne's

This is You Curious Muso

Big ears, all the better for hearing the beauty of nature, offset by eyes which cannot see the oddness of own face

Shirt once worn by Sibelius' butler, bought on ebay for £1242

Perfect pitch, imperfect social skills

1915 Guitar, retrieved from Ypres and preserved in the steam of unicorn's tears

Shorts from "Sound of Music". Too high for comfort, but frustratingly too low for true castrato

"Neck"; launch-pad for for punnery

Knees (knobbled)

Sandals (leather) for career as vicar

The green, green grass of edelweiss-besprinkled hills

Croatia/England

Mistletoe

Yes, it does sound a bit sordid, but then again so am I, and there's nothing quite like a bit of legitimised lunging to bring on the Christmas Spirit.

Mistletoe: helpful

Rory McGrath

Is he? Isn't he? Reported sightings of the former Footlight trying to unlock his bike on King's Parade have shot up over recent days. He has also been spotted skulking around Market Square. Go on, tell us a joke.

Poirot

So England are out of Euro 2008. That leaves, let's see, about 18 hours of fertile ground for the ITV schedulers. We predict a surfeit of village murders, tweed, and small Belgian men in moustaches. Bring it on.

Tatties

One of the worst places in Europe. There is literally no way you can prepare a baked potato in a manner which makes it worth £6, yet this is exactly what happens in this hellish hybrid of the Black Hole of Calcutta and the cafe from Withnail. Avoid or die.

Slow walkers

Cambridge is full of narrow pavements. If you are on a narrow pavement, do not walk at 1mph, because when you do I can feel my life slipping away as I try not to step on your heels, or punch you in the back of the head.

Intense Cold

It's not so much a weather as a gesture in the absence of weather. I did not sign up here to wear hats and gloves to the pub in Early November.

Ice: cold

UndergraduaTelly

We watch TV, so you don't have to.

This week your assiduous correspondent will foray into hitherto uncharted and murky waters, as he pays his dues to the undeniably mysterious world of internet television, and in particular the bane of sophistication and decency that is YouTube. Other than perhaps the daily hour spent cruising for babes on Facebook, or any time spent in the ADC bar, there are fewer more fruitless activities than browsing this most graphic forum for freaks, geeks, perverts and copyright breachers.

People generally fall into two categories with respect to YouTube: on the one hand there are those super-human characters capable of logging on to the website with a clear notion of what they want to watch (if anyone's looking for ideas, I'd recommend "donkey rapes man" as a particularly rewarding search – you get 13 possible videos to choose from) and once they've seen it manage to leave their computer, probably because they've got a girlfriend/boyfriend to see.

Most mortals, however, enter the site initially to relive some classic moments of Andy Gray football commentary ("take a bow son, and I really mean that") or watch this year's UK Eurovision Song Contest entry (a classic by any standards), but find themselves three hours later having watched Jeremy Paxman's greatest TV moments, the execution of a Middle-Eastern dictator (an experience which launched the immortal analogy for Kris Akabusi's penis "swinging like Saddam on YouTube") and a captivating rendition of the Backstreet Boys' magnum opus "I Want It That Way" by fifteen-year-old Chinese identical twins.

Yet the oddest videos on YouTube are not the home-made boy-band tributes, neo-Nazi propaganda or even suicide notes, which people have some understandable, albeit bizarre, motive to film and share with the cyber-world. Far stranger are those which are "remixes" of pre-existing weird videos; it would not be inconceivable to encounter a montage of footage of the Saddam execution set to ATB's "9pm Till I come" with opening credits which proudly attribute responsibility for this monstrosity to a curiously-

named design luminary, typically called something like DJ e-pussy 69 from Reykjavik.

Most people who waste their time on YouTube do so passively, automatically sifting through endless compilations of "Top ten premier league goals" (for the lads) and "BaByliss-sponsored world hair-straightening championships 1992" (ladies), but for people to actively create such bizarre non-entertainment takes internet depravity to another level. The sad thing is that by watching their videos we must be considered partly responsible for the current cultural nadir and when, in 2015, e-pussy 69 is being gently teased by Jonathan Ross on Friday Night, we will have to put our hands up and take at least some of the blame.

Of course, no discussion of YouTube would be complete without touching on the staggering comments which people make on the message-boards of each video. User Qumi02 has shared with us the following gem about one of Wednesday's videos of the day entitled "How to Charge an iPod using electrolytes and an onion" (brace yourselves): "that's a damned lie!! its apples! your just trying to sell onions! no honestly thats a cool idea but your voice makes me sleepy." Enough said.

At its heart, however, the terrible power of YouTube stems from the fact that as soon as you have finished watching one snippet, your attention is instantly drawn to the related video section on the right hand side of the page, which gives you little option but to delve further into the dark recesses of some internet oddball's imagination. Once you've seen one video posted by Household Hacker or sharprobot101, you've got to see them all. You feel compelled, despite your better judgement, to sit through monumental amounts of weird, deviant home videos on the off-chance that you see one vaguely entertaining thing.

Like the internet in general, there is no limit to the amount of time you can spend on YouTube, being led by pop-ups and links to items of ever-increasing insanity, degeneracy and wantonness. My advice is to stick to the proper telly: at least when Deal Or No Deal is over, you can turn it off and get on with your life.

John Reicher



Paxman: Former Varsity editor

Road to Ruina

Richard La Ruina is a professional pick-up artist. He hadn't kissed a girl until he was 21, but he now earns his living teaching other men the secrets of how to become irresistible to girls. **Ed Cumming**, a man in need of some assistance if ever there was one, tried to find out exactly how he does it

You do a pretty unusual job. How do people usually respond?

People are normally fascinated. Guys often think that it is unnecessary, they don't get why some men can't get a girlfriend. Girls sometimes think it is a bad thing because it is applying technique to a natural process. I tell them that some men have no chance of meeting women through their job or social circle and are forced to approach women cold in bars, clubs, coffee shops etc. I tell girls that these men are normally a little shy, a little unconfident but are the good ones, they would be better off if these guys approached them instead of the players and drunk guys.

Can there really be such a thing as a 'Natural Art'? Isn't there something inherently deceptive about letting a technique govern your instinct, particularly in the hunt for a partner?

Any time a guy starts a conversation with a woman, it is forced, it's calculated, he's not saying exactly what he is thinking which is usually "I saw you and find you physically attractive so I'm going to chat with you for a bit, ask for your number and try and sleep with you". For someone who doesn't have natural ability with women, he will have to go through a learning process. Initially it will be unnatural and very calculated. Over time, he can lose the lines (the unnatural training wheels) and he will become very natural because he will no longer be pre-planning, consciously applying technique, or being fake.

How did you get into being a professional seducer?

I didn't kiss a girl until 21, only kissed two at 25. I had to learn it all from scratch myself. From running a business teaching guys how to do it and from going out and talking to thousands of women, I've become better than anyone else I've ever met.

How many women do you reckon have you slept with?

I get more out of relationships than one night stands, but probably about 50 in the last 18 months. I've kissed hundreds in that time.

Doesn't it slightly spoil the fun of the chase and remove some of the magic of connection?

It can do if you take it as far as I have. If I were learning these skills for my own use and not for the business and for teaching, I would have quit a year ago. At that point, I could meet girls I liked and make them my girlfriend and I was still very emotional. Now I've become very fussy and it is difficult to feel as emotional or excited.

Is it in danger of objectifying women?

Yes, in pick up, the whole thing is broken down into code words and missions and it is pretty dodgy. I like to remove the jargon and make it as natural a process as possible. Generally the guys I teach want girlfriends and are very nice guys – better than the average guy you'd meet in a bar.

Playing psychological tricks on girls?

Yes, this is something else that can be done. You can read palms, do Derren Brown style tricks, and lie cheat and trick a girl into bed. Who is more likely to do this though? Someone who is desperate and can't get women, or a real master who has choice and abundance. I love women and I can honestly say I've never broken a girl's heart!

Do you worry about the long run – it must be quite hard for a girl to settle down with a professional con-artist?

Not at all, if they know me, they know that I'm a good person and will treat them well and be open and honest with them. I am probably the only guy in the club that is straight with them, I'll tell them if I am single or not and I won't mislead them or trick them in to bed. I don't need to! Just like a millionaire doesn't need to steal sweets.

How important are looks?

Attractiveness is made up of many things, looks is one. More important is energy, body language, state, and things like this. This is what women say when they say they want a man with confidence. How is confidence communicated? Answer that and you have the key to what attractiveness is.

What do your mates think about it?

They think it is a cool job, they like coming out with me. My female friends like it too, they are fascinated with the whole area.

What's the best place to meet girls? For instance, I've always believed that Cindies is a terrible place to pick up.

If you want a girlfriend, the day-time is best. I'd talk to girls in Boots, Starbucks, Borders, or anywhere else, it should be a natural part of your life that when you want to talk to someone, you do. Nightclubs are good, you can meet nice girls there too, but it is generally a more sexual environment and better for casual relationships. Cindies last time I went was pretty good, I'd say Cambridge is easier than London!

You've said that guys "want a girlfriend", but isn't this approach a bit of a false way to go

about it? It seems to imply that it doesn't really matter what a guy's personality is like as long as he can use the initial seduction techniques...

There is an important thing I teach which is about how to find the right girl. But without having experience in approaching and talking many women you won't be ready when the one you want comes along and you might not even have an idea of what you are looking for!

What does your mother think of it all?

She is proud of me. She likes that I am helping guys and understands that the "get laid" marketing isn't me.

Given that you can get with any girl, do you have any particular type?

Not too specific. I like tall, slim and curvy with blue or green eyes. Latvian, Swedish, and Brazilian girls all have looks that I like.

Do you think that the same or similar techniques could work for girls on guys?

It would be different, girls get approached, they need to know how to separate the bad guys from the good guys and make the right decisions. I would put together a lesson on how to do that. I have helped many female friends and this is the area I normally work on. Summarise it as "catch him and keep him".

Three rules for success?

1. Practice makes perfect: you won't be able to seduce a woman by memorising some pick up lines off the internet and regurgitating them at the club. To master the natural art of seduction requires dedication - you will inevitably crash and burn but every "failure" must be re-framed as a learning experience. Dust yourself off and try again.

2. Leave your ego at the door. If you can't take constructive criticism or accept the fact that not every single woman will be yours, you won't get very far. You must be able to learn from your mistakes.

3. Don't let pick-up become your life. An attractive man is one who is well-rounded, confident and above all, not totally dependant on one aspect of his life to support him totally. Have other interests besides women - take up interesting hobbies, strive to be continually learning new skills or travel. When you let seducing women become the be all and end all of your life, your self image becomes dependant on whether or not you get the girl and you become desperate and needy; you will inevitably fail to attract into your life the women you seek.



La Ruina, who claims his mother is proud of him

Out and About in Paris

The Paris Lesbian and Gay Film Festival has been vital in pushing queer film-making out of its comfort zone. **Giovanni Menegelle** examines this year's successes and failures and explains why queer cinema is still relevant

Once upon a time there was a gay film all the gays went to see and they all raved about it. Fit cast, coming-of-age, coming-out. So what's the problem? Well for a start it's probably the worst film you'll ever see. No wonder you sit there asking yourself, "Ok, when's the sex coming?", hoping the sensitive gay schoolboy with no body-hair might finally get to shag the head boy, who is secretly gay, or on second thoughts so straight he doesn't actually mind a boy once in a while, just to prove that he can. Oh, and the poor overweight fag-hag with no sexual future. What are we to make of her and all the other women who are either despots, pushovers, or lesbians.

Queer cinema has long been plagued by such familiar clichés. The 1990s saw a new wave of filmmakers attempting to move queer cinema out of the comfort-zone of the festivals and into the mainstream. At one end of the spectrum was Neil Jordan's *The Crying Game*. The story of an IRA man's love affair with a transvestite, a huge success with the critics, with a score of Academy Awards nominations. At the other end was *Get Real*!, a classic coming-out story set in Basingstoke, running with the pitiful tagline "School's out, so is Steven Carter".

However different, both films showed a real difficulty in over-

"films showed a real difficulty in surpassing not only the prejudices held by straights about gays, but also the prejudices gays have about themselves"

coming not only the prejudices held by straights about gays, but also the prejudices gays have about themselves, not to speak of the underlying misogyny. So the question now at the Paris Gay & Lesbian Film Festival is whether queer cinema can avoid all the clichés whilst appealing to a wider audience.

The festival opened with *XXY*, a Franco-Argentine production that has already won this year's Cannes Critics' Week Grand Prix and Rail D'Or, and which is scheduled for release in the UK in the new year. The film tells the story of Alex, a 15 year-old hermaphrodite living as a girl on the Uruguayan coast and the

physical realities she must confront when falling in love with Alvaro, a visiting Argentine boy.

Inés Efron, is remarkably sensitive in her portrayal of a difficult and troubled character, and is captured beautifully by the director Lucía Puenzo, in her first full-length feature. Another Argentine film at the festival was *Glue*, which deals with the intricacies of adolescent sexuality through a visual style that is both warm and intimate, without being too sentimental or surgical. *XXY* and *Glue* are the product of a new wave of South American independent filmmaking. What is clear is that whilst queer audiences may still want their staple coming-out stories, films such as these are opening the way to a new type of queer cinema that tackles issues of sexuality and the body in a much more subtle and essential manner.

However, *The Houseboy*, the new film by the American independent director Spencer Lee Schilly, in my view fell short of the quality and multiplicity set by *XXY* or *Glue*. Essentially the story of a depressed kept-boy who wants to kill himself on Christmas Eve, *The Houseboy* does little to offer real emotional depth, despite the leading character's best efforts to expiate himself through a series of casual sexual encounters. Worse still was Nina's *Heavenly Delights*, the only new full-length British feature on the festival programme. This tale about an Asian-Glaswegian lesbian who enters a curry competition after the death of her father seemed surprisingly tacky given the director Pratibha Parmar's long history in making documentaries for Channel 4.

Nevertheless, the day was saved by *Riparo*. This Italo-French production, directed by Marco Simon Puccioni, traces the breakdown of a lesbian couple's relationship as they unwittingly smuggle a Moroccan teenager into Italy in the trunk of their car—a touching portrayal of the tensions that emerge as cultural and sexual differences meet in a society that tends to marginalise both. Another story of marginalisation, *Four Minutes* is the new film by the German director Chris Kraus, which is out in cinemas next February. By far the most moving of all the films in the programme, *Four Minutes* follows the journey of a young female prisoner as she attempts to win a piano competition with the help of an elderly piano instructor.

Jack Hazan's *A Bigger Splash*, originally released in 1974, was screened in its newly re-mastered version. Starring David Hockney as David Hockney, this cult docufilm

traces the painter's period of depression following his break-up with Peter Schlesinger, his great love and model for many of his famous pool paintings. Following Hockney's own trademark aesthetic, the film brings us close to him and the tensions created between his life and creativity. Adding to the cult factor, Bruce LaBruce's fantastic new art-porn flick *Give Piece of Ass A Chance* was to be found amongst a drearily long list of shorts. It features a group of lesbian sex-terrorists and their attempt to kidnap the daughter of a rich businessman in the hope of producing a new line of sex-toys—my personal favourite.

The festival closed with *The King And The Clown*, a film that has already broken all box-office records in its native South Korea. Set in the sixteenth century, *The King And The Clown*, tells the story of Gong-Gil, an androgynous travelling actor, and his unexpected relationship with a tyrannical king, in an

"The King and The Clown has broken all box-office records in South Korea"

amazing mixture of traditional Korean theatre, circus and dance. Despite my reservations about the portrayal of all female characters as cruel and heartless manipulators, this visually



The Houseboy disappointed audiences

stunning film signals, at the very least, a new willingness in Asian cinema to challenge sexual taboos within the sphere of mainstream filmmaking.

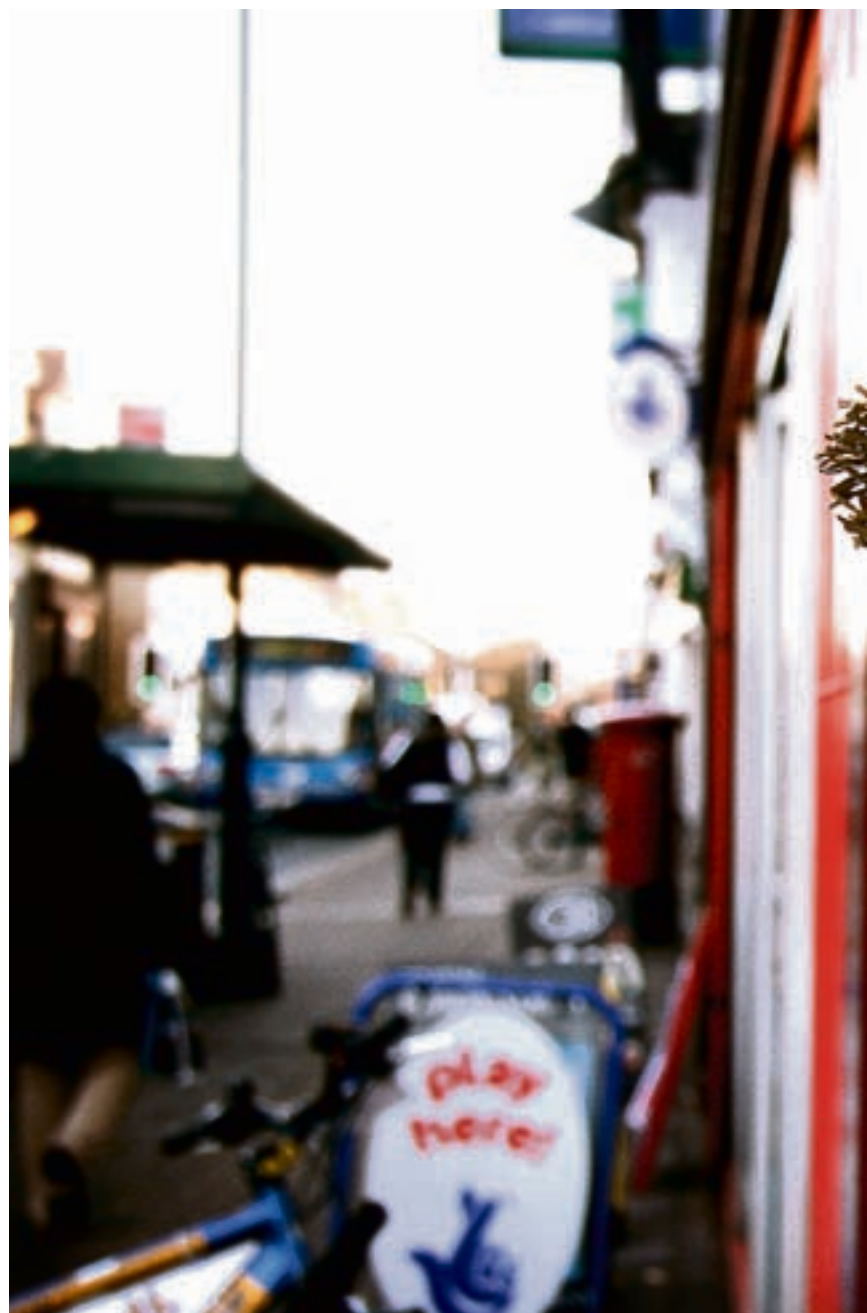
Indeed the festival as a whole seems to have been about expanding borders, particularly as the issue of sexuality looks to be increasingly ingrained with the question of culture and immigration. Moreover, I sensed a real effort by the organisers to get beyond the festival's "Gay and Lesbian" label, and to attempt to bring transgender and intergender issues into the queer debate and out of the dehumanising domain of medical categories. The political debate in France is currently set to macho-gear, with Sarkozy on one side and the strikers on the other. Thankfully, the Third Paris Gay and Lesbian Film

Festival came to the rescue.

There still exists a necessity for the queer community to make up for the fundamental lack of representation of queer desire in mainstream culture. There is also an urgency to provide images that challenge prejudices, both within the queer community and in mainstream culture at large. But this is exactly why queer filmmaking still has a crucial role to play and why a festival such as this remains so important. If we think of the current debate in the UK on so-called family values, of the chilling return of a 'moral politics', and of the legacy of Section 28, which still lives on despite its repeal in 2003, all these things and many more point to the real need to contrast the silence and self-censorship that prevail in our popular culture.



The King and the Clown was one of the highlights of the week



Girl Meets Boy



All clothes stylists' own
Modelled by Stephanie Bain
Photographed by Alex Guelff
Styled by Iona Carter and Emma Draper



Fashion Disaster?
Johnny & Luciana are on your
trail and they're going to make
you look fabulous



Johnny & Luciana

Top Tips: The Christmas Party

First things first, you need to actually be invited to a Christmas party before you have any Christmas party concerns. This is much less likely to happen if you a) are generally a bit of a twat at parties, b) have a penchant for dressing like a bit of a twat at parties or c) like to get "royally, suitably, next level annihilated" (like a bit of a twat) at parties. Johnny & Luciana committed all the aforementioned offences back in their Fresher days, but are now older, wiser and ready to help you. Here are our top five tips to ensure that you can show your face once more in Lent Term.

1 The Preparation
Ideally, one should endeavor to set aside somewhere in the region of 3 to 5 hours (depending on how kindly God has blessed you in your facial department) for beautification. We suggest reclining on your bed, legs raised to encourage increased circulation (christmas glow), cucumber slices on your eyes to reduce puffiness, and the soft, soothing sounds of sperm whales calling through the air, for relaxation. If you don't have time for this, just splash a bit of cold water on your face and proceed to step two...

2 The Outfit
De-stressed and level-headed you should now be suitably conditioned to avoid any of the following festive misdemeanors: 'Sexy' (usually slutty) Santa - Santa was a fat old man, yet year in year out we hear thousands of girls exclaiming "I'm just gonna go as Sexy Santa again"... A bulging, baptastic PVC minidress? Ho, ho, ho indeed. Green & Red Overkill - Lazy Boys are likely to revert to Mummy's knitted christmas jumpers at such events. The weather outside may be frightful, but not as frightful as your sweaty pits will be. Face paint - this is generally not a good idea for a number of reasons. Parties are hot. People sweat. Face paint runs. By the end of the evening you are likely to look a state and if you've had a few glasses of mulled wine and ended up doing something you shouldn't have, so is that embarrassing CompSci from downstairs that you've been ravaging in the broom cupboard.

3 The Arrival
People love nothing more than a hearty shove from the latest party guest making a beeline for the drinks table. Make sure to stand on as many toes as

possible, swill your full wine glass animatedly, 'general finish' it and then spray the room with partially-masticated mince pie. If you happen to be a little tardy, make sure to exclaim at the top of your lungs "Sorry I'm late!" to all in earshot. They'll all be massively relieved that the party can finally begin now that you've arrived.

4 The Main Show
Drunken chat is never good chat - you may think you are being "banterous", but chances are you are either boring others or just embarrassing yourself... Favourites include: "Don't tell anyone, but I've had the same pair of pants on for three days!", "People keep coming up to me and telling me how great I look, it's so embarrassing" and the classic, "I have had seventeen glasses of wine and I'm still sober!". Being an inebriated mess does not suddenly make you stonkingly irresistible to the rest of the room, despite what you might think at the time. For goodness' sake, this is not the moment to "go for it" with that hottie you've been eyeing up all term. It's more than likely that the attempt will fall flat on its face (as could you) and all your subtle, carefully-constructed flirting will be out the window.

5 The Aftermath
After arriving home (alone), GO STRAIGHT TO BED. Do not under any circumstances go near a computer. Not only might you be tempted to send a facebook 'apology' to said hottie (just wait until you log on in the morning...), but you run the risk of failing to realise quite how embarrassing it is to upload 60 photos of your left eye, your right elbow, your hottie or the floor.



THEATRE

1 Which French playwright died on stage, during his performance as a hypochondriac?

2 Which unfortunate film-maker did critic Kenneth Tynan describe as 'the five-foot Pole you wouldn't touch with a ten-foot pole'?

3 Which great British stage actor gave the name of Herbert Pocket (a character from Great Expectations, a part he was currently playing) to the police, upon being arrested for a homosexual act in a lavatory in Liverpool?

4 Which saturnine composer was knighted in 1992 for (although some might say in spite of) his contribution to music?

5 The news of which actor's death caused Rupert Everett to burst out

laughing on stage (according to the dreamboat's memoirs serialised in the Daily Mail)?

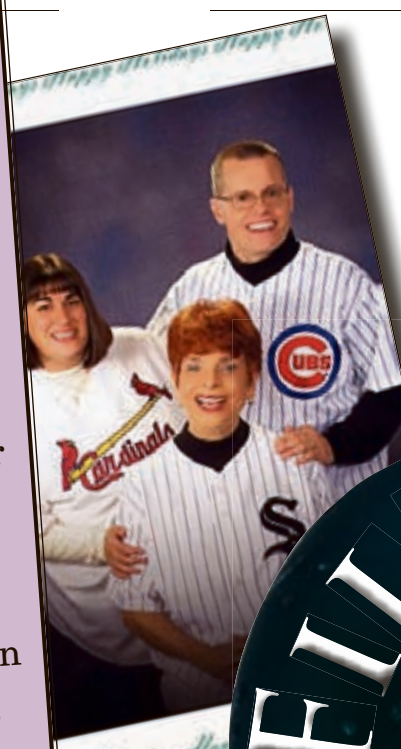
6 Which hit-musical and Varsity-favourite appropriated (and sullied) the title of Walt Whitman's 'I sing the body electric'?

7 The genitalia of which ageing British actor were recently described by Germaine Greer as "impressive"?

8 Which "outrageously macabre" playwright created the fictional character Edna Welthorpe to complain about his plays in the newspapers?

9 Which famous playwright and poet died on 23rd April, his birthday?

10 To whom did Leo Tolstoy complain "you know I cannot abide Shakespeare, but your plays are even worse."



FILM

1 How old was Orson Welles when he wrote, directed and starred in Citizen Kane?

2 Complete the title: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II:..."

3 What year did Martin Scorsese win his first Academy Award?

4 Who claimed famous film critic Roger Ebert was a "fat pig with the physique of a slave trader" in 2003?

5 Who provided art direction for the above before moving on to film?

6 Which film's budget consisted of obtaining rights for soundtrack outweighing

actual production costs?

7 What actor played the school principal in E.T., only to have his scene cut when Spielberg decided that his presence would be too distracting?

8 During the shoot for which film did Björk disappear leaving filming suspended indefinitely, only to emerge from some woods three days later?

9 How much weight did Christian Bale shed for his role as a PoW in Vietnam in Werner Herzog's new film Rescue Dawn?

10 The first film to show an erect penis?



MUSIC

1 Ian Curtis, lead singer of Joy Division, committed suicide. This is not very Christmassy. But what five word phrase would you find on his memorial stone in Macclesfield cemetery?

2 Which Men Behaving Badly star once scored a Christmas number one, and in what guise?

3 This is Spinal Tap is the best music film ever. Name Spinal Tap's lead guitarist.

4 According to the aforementioned lead guitarist, what is "the saddest of all keys"?

5 The best Christmas song ever is Fairytale of New York by Kirsty McColl and the Pogues. Fill in the blanks to complete the title of a classic Pogues album: "---, ---, and the lash".

6 Oxford-based band On a Friday realised their name was

shit, so changed it to the name of an old Talking Heads song. Who did they become?

7 Superstar DJ Norman Cook (aka Fatboy Slim) used to play bass in which weird-as-fuck Hull-based 80's band, who narrowly missed out on a Christmas number one in 1986 with Caravan of Love?

8 This term, Maximo Park played at the Corn Exchange. In what country would you actually find Maximo Park (not the Geordie band, but a municipal space in which to relax)?

9 Who was recently voted number one in NME's annual and always-trustworthy Cool List?

10 Who is the fittest member of the reformed Spice Girls?



Merry Christmas,
love Elton

VISUAL ART

1 Which actor made front-page news weeks ago after selling a painting for a multi-million dollar profit?

2 A photograph by which artist was recently seized from Elton John after concerns it could be seen as child pornography?

3 How long did it take Shaun Greenhalgh to make his "Egyptian" statue later authenticated by the British Museum and valued by Christie's at £500,000?

4 Who's retrospective did Brian Sewell last month variously dismiss as the work of a "menacing old crone" and "manipulative old bat"?

5 Jeff Koon's Celebration series (inspired by the custody battle for his son) this month made record prices at auction. What unusual job did his ex-wife do?

6 A chapel in Padua contains one of the first comprehensive treatments of the Passion in painting. Which artist was responsible?

7 Which painter renamed their "Last Supper" to "Feast in the House of Levi", after their work was declared blasphemous and they were summoned to the Inquisition?

8 The birth of Christ has always been a popular subject for artists, but how many specific Nativity scenes does the National Gallery own?

9 And how many do all the Tate Galleries combined own?

10 Earlier in the year the exhibition of a six-foot sculpture of Christ was cancelled after being described as "one of the worst assaults on Christian sensibilities ever". What was it made of?

1 Which boisterous Romantic kept a pet bear in his rooms on Great Court?

2 Which poet and founder of the Dada movement died, selfishly, on Christmas Day 1963?

3 Which story by Charles Dickens was published December 19 1843 in order to pay off some debts?

4 The voice of which reclusive American novelist was first broadcast on the Simpsons?

5 Which Celtic beauty, soap starlet and Caius student had her first novel published in 2006?

6 Which Footlights star was named Pipe Smoker of the Year, (before the award was discontinued

- through no fault of his own - for legal reasons)?

7 Which half-Jamaican novelist supplemented her maintenance loan as a jazz singer before publishing her bestseller in her last year studying SPS at Kings?

8 About which twentieth century poet did David Hockney comment "if that's his face, imagine his scrotum"?

9 Which American Beat novelist famously shot his wife in a game of William Tell?

10 Which nineteenth-century poet apparently read Paradise Lost to his wife whilst naked in their garden?



ILLUSTRATIONS: ANNA TRENCH



I have special presents
for you...

LITERATURE

2007

VARSLITY CHRISTMAS QUIZ

ANSWERS: 1. LOVE WILL TEAR US APART 2. NEIL ALTE GUINNESS 3. ROMAN POLANSKI 4. SHAKESPEARE 5. LORD BYRON 6. TRISTAN TZARA 7. VINCENT GALLO 8. EBERT RESPONDED ALTHOUGH FILM: 1. 25 2. THE SECRET OF THE Ooze 3. 2007 4. ROUGHLY 2500 (55 POUNDS) HE LOST EVEN MORE 5. HARRISON FORD 6. DANCER IN THE DARK 7. THE BROWN BUNNY 8. DAVID LYNCH 9. CLARK GABLE 10. WILLIAM TILL HARK BEEN THE DIRECTOR OF I AM FAT, ONE DAY I WILL BE THIN, BUT MR. BASE-MO! 1. HUGH GRANT (LZ, BY ANDY WARHOL) 2. NAN GOLDBIN 3. THREE WEEKS A LOUSE 4. STEPHEN FRY 5. BURROUGHS 6. WILLIAM GILIAN 7. TILL HARK BEEN THE DIRECTOR OF I AM FAT, ONE DAY I WILL BE THIN, BUT MR. BASE-MO! 8. TWELVE 9. SIX 10. CHOCOLATE VERONASE 8. TWELVE 9. SIX 10. CHOCOLATE CICCIO (N) 6. GIOTTO (SCROGGE) CHAPL (L) BOURGEOIS (AT TATE MODERN) 5. PORCUPINE (L) 7. HARRISON FORD 8. DANCER IN THE DARK 9. CLARK GABLE 10. WILLIAM TILL HARK BEEN THE DIRECTOR OF I AM FAT, ONE DAY I WILL BE THIN, BUT MR. BASE-MO! 1. HUGH GRANT (LZ, BY ANDY WARHOL) 2. 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Travel Unravelled

Budding travel writers shouldn't bother about going on holiday. The real travel's to be had on your own doorstep, argues **Patrick Kingsley**

'Modern travel is bloody boring really", Eric Newby, the inventor of the modern day comic travel book, once told me over tea at his house in suburban Surrey. And presumably he should know: back in the days before Easyjet, Eurostar and package holidays to Machu Picchu, he hiked to deepest Afghanistan, sailed to the Antipodes and rowed the length of the Ganges with his wife, Wanda. In this

elaborated whilst driving me back to the station, "when Eric started, there was a real sense of adventure to travelling. Now it's just package holidays."

Undeniably, the Newbys have a point. At a time when scores of Freshers wax lyrical about their live-changing Gap Years in Rajasthan,

Yet, whilst the world is becoming smaller and more crowded, whilst journeying to Central Asia or Australia is not nearly so adventurous as it was in Newby's mid-century heyday, does this really mean that travel is dead? Surely it in fact shows that a new form of travel has

of as boring and familiar 'probably aren't that familiar once we scratch below the surface. Most of us never see many places and ways of life that are few minutes from where we live. We often act like quite spoilt people, saying "bring me a new dazzling experience," but without realising what's

on our plate already.'

De Botton talks a lot of sense. After all, given that now anyone can fly off for mysterious adventures in far-flung lands, the traditional travel novelist has become redundant. Modern travel writers, then, shouldn't be worrying about whether low-cost airlines and package holidays will ruin the traditional aspects of their art-form; they should instead focus their attentions on the New Travel, the kind of micro-travel which explores not what is thousands of miles away, but rather what is on our very doorsteps. Travel literature's future is not in the truthful, factual reporting of faraway places but in the re-invention, re-interpretation and even semi-fictionalisation of the regions closest to home.

Nevertheless, Rory Stewart, a fiercely factual traveller whose two books about his journeys in Iraq and Afghanistan are supposedly without embellishment, could not disagree more. At a recent discussion of this very topic at the Royal Society of Literature, Stewart strongly lamented how 'British travel writing [has been] condemned to a move away from truth', a move which represents a 'falling-away in the travel-writing tradition'. He lambasted the likes of William Dalrymple and Colin Thubron for, quite simply, making things up; by contrast, he praised the dry travel reports of the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-centuries, reports which, though perhaps po-faced and factually dense, were written in a truthful style which nevertheless provided, he suggested, a real sense of novelty and significance for their readers, a style which,

Stewart suggested, could still prove powerful today. In short, he argued, the future of travel literature lies in factual rigour, unemotionalised detail, and needs to move away from being simply a 'backwater of elegant but ultimately disengaged prose.'

At the same meeting, however, Rory Maclean, a travel writer of the imaginative school whose six books semi-fictionalise his various wanderings in Eastern Europe, Asia and Crete, vehemently denied his namesake's assertions. Maclean argued that, at a time when travel has become so easy, when information about faraway places has become so easy to come by, the new role of a travel writer should not be to impart facts or dull data but rather to provide an emotionalised and personalised vision of a country, city or region.

It's hard to disagree with him. Whilst factual travelogues may have had a following in the Edwardian era, they have no place in a century where anyone can pick the latest edition of Lonely Planet's South-East Asia On A Shoestring at the local Water-

"We often act like quite spoilt people, saying 'bring me a new dazzling experience,' but without realising what's on our plate already."

stone's. Since even the most distant places in the world can be summarised by a series of figures, facts and prices in the most recent Rough Guide, since the travel writer no longer has the power to amaze his readership with previously unknown information, his new role should be to emotionalise, semi-fictionalise and to essentially re-introduce us to the places with which we are already familiar. The future of travel literature, therefore, is not in 'travel fact', but 'travel fiction'.

"the premise of traditional travel writing is that if you go abroad somewhere very far away, you'll be able to produce something more interesting than staying here and journeying around your bedroom"

era of low-cost airlines, Newby argued, travel, and – by extension – travel writing, is dying a slow death, a point he makes abundantly clear in the closing lines of one of his later works, *A Traveler's Life*: 'the time is not far off when there would be no place on earth accessible to ordinary human beings in which they would be able to feel themselves alone under the night sky without hearing the noise of machines'.

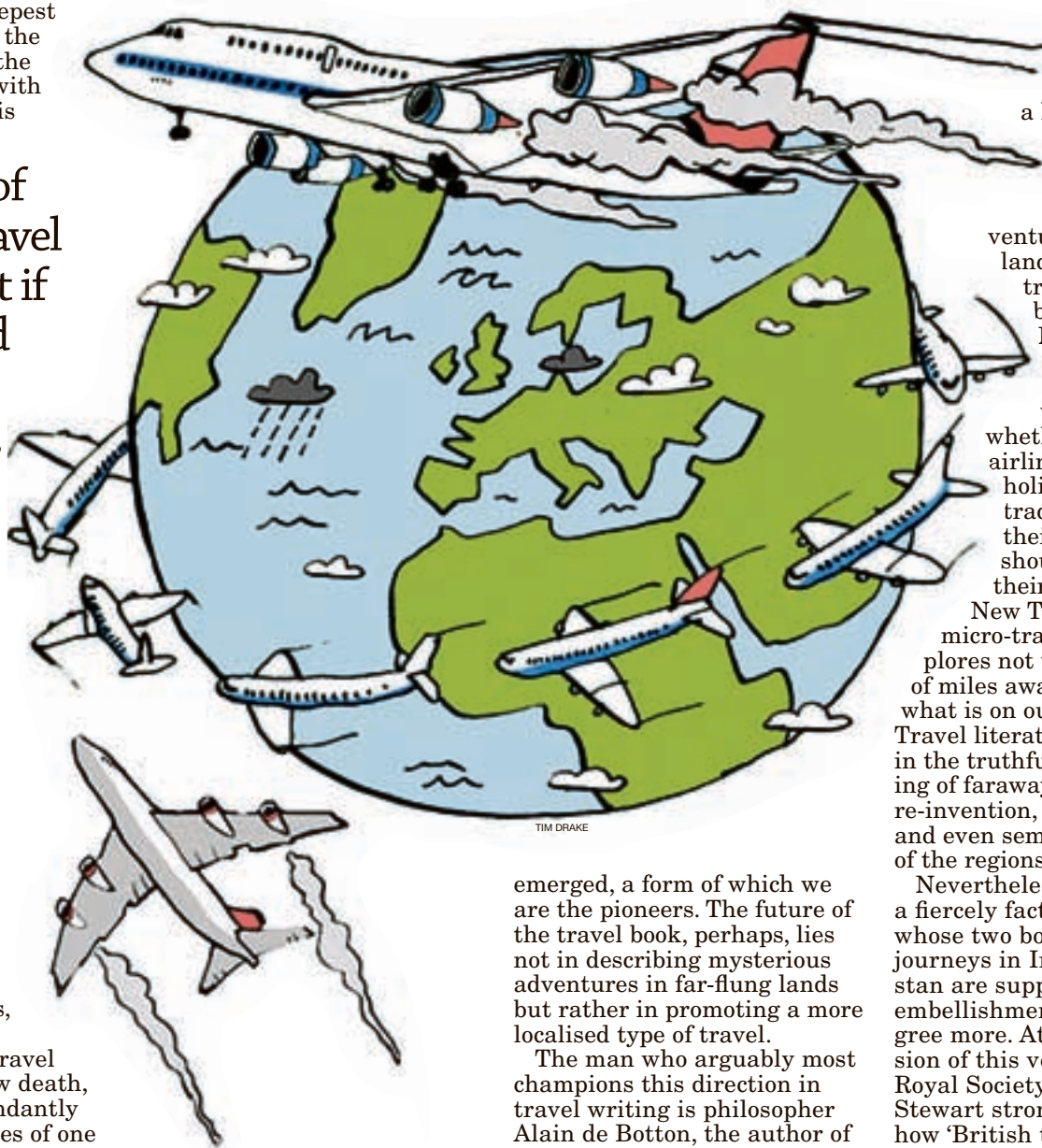
Mechanisation, he explained to me at his home near Guildford, is turning the world's mysteries into mundanities: 'Nowadays, there's fewer amusing things to do, there's so many more people now – it was so much more exciting travelling when I was younger.'

Indeed, as Wanda herself

and in an era where the most popular recent travelogue is a book called *Merde*, a dull, trashy account of a businessman's year in faraway Paris, it is hard not to agree that both travel and travel literature have lost their edge. Given that travel is no longer the preserve of the privileged few, it could even be argued that modern travel writing is now pointless. After all, why write about the wonders of Istanbul, Rome or Moscow when, thanks to the aeroplane, your readers can be exploring the city within a few hours themselves.

emerged, a form of which we are the pioneers. The future of the travel book, perhaps, lies not in describing mysterious adventures in far-flung lands but rather in promoting a more localised type of travel.

The man who arguably most champions this direction in travel writing is philosopher Alain de Botton, the author of *The Art of Travel*, whose Hammersmith home I also recently doorstepped. He explained to me that 'the premise of traditional travel writing is that if you go abroad somewhere very far away, you'll be able to produce something more interesting than staying here and journeying around your bedroom.' De Botton, on the other hand, disputes this traditional view: 'It's just not true: you only go away because you can't see what's interesting closer to home.' Furthermore, he argues, those things which travel writers do think of as close to home, those things they think



Cakebridg

The only solution to Cambridge's woes is cake. Shocked to discover that the Bun Shop doesn't do buns and that the once welcoming Caza Mir has been mangled into an untrendy wine bar, **Constanza Dessain** and **Jeff James** set out on a mission, sworn to seek no rest until they had unearthed Cakebridge's finest

First Class Teas Peas Hill, just off Market Square

The cake is elegant and gourmet, the setting a slightly stilted subterranean homage to eighties japoniserie. The carrot cake is superb, if misnamed. Its datey earthiness went perfectly with the Lapsang Suchong, but Stanza felt that it suffered from the crucial flaw of a fundamental lack of carrot. She's prepared to be open-minded, but we wouldn't want carrot purists to opt for this version: dark without being heavy, but no orange glimmers. You can taste the pestle and mortar in their chocolate and almond, which was a triumph in coarse-grained goo, but it's too rich, even for seasoned cake-fiends like us – share it with your date. The ginger cake was gluten- and excitement-free. Cake apart, we weren't entirely convinced. Go if you can get the window-seat upstairs; otherwise a First Class cake will be ruined by distinctly third class ambience. The greatest shame about FCT is the downstairs seating area. Seats are straight-backed and too tall for the low tables, and beige is all very well, but you get enough of it in college furnishings. And don't come here in search of a cappuccino. They've got 400 varieties of tea, but only filter coffee.

The Black Cat Café Mill Road, past the bridge.

The Black Cat may not be within your overworn personal triangle of college-library-Sainsbury's, but this is all to

the good. Work up an appetite on the bike ride, and escape from the stash-clad scum of the city-centre. It's glorious when you get there. When we went for the official cake testing, their cake-maker was off ill, and they still threw nearly everywhere else into the shade. Everything is served with pots of whipped cream and their cakes are original and intelligently thought out. To warm up the palate, there's a moist and serious chocolate fudge cake with generous brownie-redolent depth. Their ambitions, however, are angled at much higher things. Stanza loved the pineapple and coconut, which managed to do great things with a difficult fruit. Jeff couldn't have enjoyed more the buns with whole hazelnuts, coconut and rich, mineable veins of chocolate. The set-up is simple and light, there's no muzak, so you can work or read the paper, or just eat the very best cakes in Cambridge.

Fitzbillies On Trumpington Street

Something of a shibboleth among Cambridge cake-heads. It started in 1922, of course an excellent year for cake, and for Modernism. Joyce turned a seed cake into 'mawkish pulp her mouth had mumbled sweet and sour with spittle'.

Some of their cakes have aged less

well than Ulysses and Fitzbills might not be quite the right place for cake-snogs, but be sure to take away their wonderful Chelsea buns for cinnamon-sin. The lines of cakes in the front of the shop will make your heart race, but while the carrot cake is passable and good to buy whole, the chocolate fudge is dry and flavourless, we're sorry to say. Avoid the Sachertorte and choux buns. Nevertheless, they do an excellent cream tea and the interior is pleasant if underlit. Go, but stick religiously to the Chelsea buns.

Aunties' Teashop St Mary's Passage

Embrace the naff, if you can. Celebrate the naff, if you're Stanza. Their cakes are good, but doilies abound. We heard more than one conversation about the new John Lewis, but John Lewis is hot stuff even in the Kambar these days. Their hot cakes cheer the soul: we are particularly fond of the banana cake with syrup and ice cream. It's unfussy, inelegant, whopping and lovely. Their chocolate fudge is the second best in town, a

lighter and more naive version

than the Black Cat's – sometimes that's exactly what we need. The dark sticky ginger loaf comes piping hot and is as sexy as Aunties can manage – unless you enjoy a French maid outfit.

Savino's Emmanuel Street

Quite frankly we're torn about whether to speak the truth over Savino's, home of our hearts. Don't all rush there at once, but their chocolate croissants are the best thing that has ever happened to Cambridge, or to either of us. If you manage to get there when they're fresh from the oven you will know a joy like no other. They do run out, but it's worth waiting for the next batch. No, really. Other highlights are the lemon drizzle (delicate to a fault) and Stanza's favourite Cam carrot cake (perfect icing). The cappuccino is the ideal accompaniment to caking. Set in a bus stop, you might think it's too close to the madding crowd and it can be a bit bustly at weekend lunchtimes. It's perfect, though, for clandestine afternoon trysts, and doesn't close until 8pm, giving us hours to sink back and revel in the delights of a successful Cakebridge afternoon.

We set out on a mission to find the finest cake in Cambridge. And cake we found. Sticky layers of burnt sugar and pastry, damp, succulent, chocolaty goldmines, banana and syrup and carrot and Chelsea buns. But cakes are not just about cake houses. Jeff fondly remembers lemon and coconut cake from his bedder, pink and green monstrosities from the less well brought-up, and illicit lemon drizzle in a fellows' garden by night. Last weekend, weary of the library, we stumbled across a baking competition in our local, the Champion of the Thames.

The "Champ Choc Cake Comp" was able to stir new energy into grizzly old regulars and overwrought students alike, comrades in arms for a stolen afternoon of cake and beer (don't ask for tea at the Champ). We hope this is only the beginning of the transformation of all of Cambridge's buildings into cake providers. For nothing in this town will redeem you like cake.

Restaurant Review Tom Evans

The Mill

★★★★★



Whatever happened to lunch? Nobody seems to have it nowadays. If I told you five years ago that in 2007 people wouldn't have lunch any more you'd have said to me: "that isn't true, and stop following me". But look around you. How many people do you see eating lunch? Now look again with one eye closed. How many people are really eating lunch? Not many I bet. The Boots Meal Deal is a lunch of sorts, but they position the wraps in the packets so that they look much bigger than they actually are, and I always feel a little bit world weary when I finish a Boots Meal Deal. Sandwiches have also recently gone into my bad books because The British Sandwich Association, which aims "to promote the consumption of sandwiches", decided to reject my application to become an officially endorsed producer of sandwiches. Membership would mean getting my kitchen inspected by the boys at BSA, and being allowed to use the BSA logo, which looks like a slice of Pizza.

The logo for the Pizza, Pasta and Italian Food Association does not return the favour, and is one of those logos that just looks like two boomerangs. Audaciously, the Pizza, Pasta and Italian Food Association calls itself PAPA for short. Now before I get letters about this (and I do get a lot of letters, you should see my pigeon's hole) I want to make clear that I understand this is a joke, because papa is an Italian word. But it is also outrageous. There is an etiquette surrounding the making of acronyms. You're allowed to leave articles, prepositions and conjunctions out of the acronym. Hence NSPCC as opposed to NSFTPOCTC. You are not just allowed to make stuff up. PAPA I think comes from this arrangement: Pizza, Pasta and Italian food association. I sent them a letter complaining. And asking to be made a member.

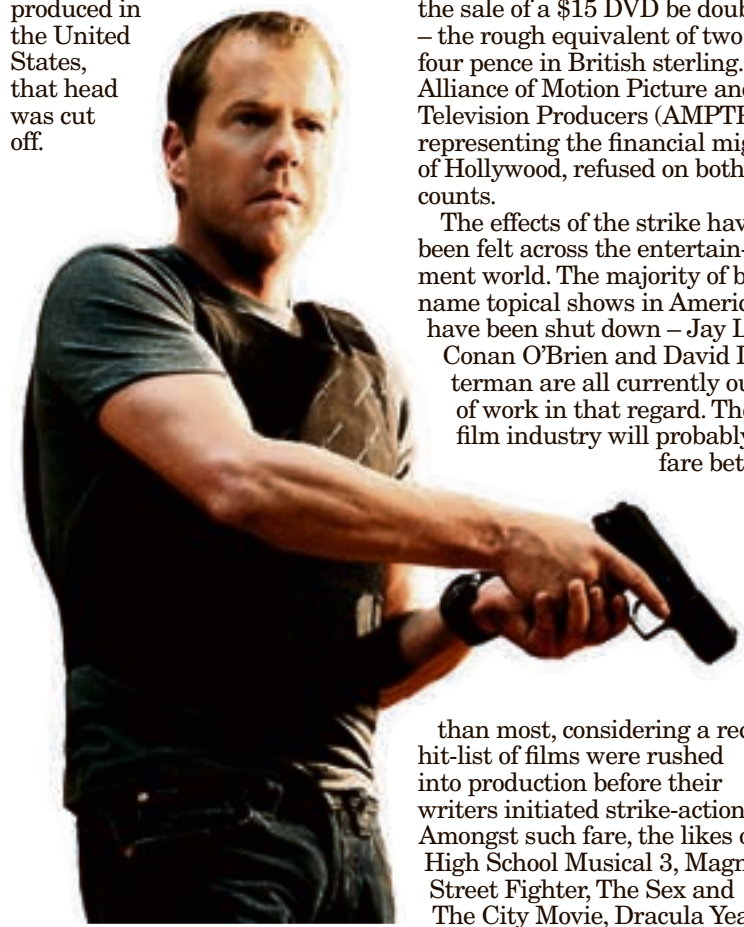
Anyone can be a member of lunch at the Mill, and there are no acronyms on the menu. I went for the field mushroom, beetroot and stilton wellington with fat chips and a tomato sauce (the a is important here). The wellington was a beautiful crispy thing and fresh, with a reassuring wait that you don't get with inferior pub food. The mushroom was a little intimidated by its bedfellows, but who wouldn't be. The ham with chips and peas was a sturdy and more traditional arrangement, although peas tend to fall off my fork. An old couple next to us told the barman three or four times in the space of two minutes that the portions had been generous. "That's the idea" said the barman. They do dinner too.



Struck Off

Hollywood's on strike, and some of the most popular American TV shows, such as 24, Lost and Prison Break, are in jeopardy, stopping production halfway through. **Greg Buchanan** surveys the damage

If you woke up this morning, it's because Jack Bauer spared your life. Killing Jack Bauer doesn't make him dead – it just makes him angry. What colour is Jack Bauer's blood? Trick question. Jack Bauer does not bleed. If Facebook is the hub of a generation, then such quips as these place real-time television series 24 and its seemingly invulnerable secret agent hero Jack Bauer (Kiefer Sutherland) at a growing culture's head. Remember, remember, the fifth of November – because two weeks ago, due to a strike begun by the Writer's Guild of America (WGA) preventing any new scripts being written for the majority of television shows and films produced in the United States, that head was cut off.



Such occurrences are not unprecedented. In 1988 the Guild – representing film, television, radio and new media writers in America – struck for 22 weeks, causing the industry as a whole to lose an estimated five hundred million dollars. Back then, the issue hinged upon how much writers should be paid for re-runs of their programmes. In a YouTube world where television audiences are slipping and internet-based video-on-demand is ever-growing in popularity, the Guild this year demanded that its writers should be granted residual payments for such media amounting to 2.5% of money raised. Furthermore, the WGA asked that the four cents a writer currently receives from the sale of a \$15 DVD be doubled – the rough equivalent of two to four pence in British sterling. The Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP), representing the financial might of Hollywood, refused on both counts.

The effects of the strike have been felt across the entertainment world. The majority of big-name topical shows in America have been shut down – Jay Leno, Conan O'Brien and David Letterman are all currently out of work in that regard. The film industry will probably fare better

than most, considering a recent hit-list of films were rushed into production before their writers initiated strike-action. Amongst such fare, the likes of High School Musical 3, Magneto, Street Fighter, The Sex and The City Movie, Dracula Year

Zero, and the Justice League of America can be found.

Yet it is within the realm of television drama and comedy that the viewing pleasure of audiences will suffer the biggest blow. Some animated shows such as Family Guy, due to their writers being WGA members, will fall from the air very shortly. South Park is one of the strike's few survivors

“What colour is Jack Bauer's blood? Trick question. Jack Bauer does not bleed.”

as a non-Guild show, and rumours that an upcoming episode will directly deal with what is currently going on in Hollywood abound. One of the real and definite concerns of the strike is, however, the fate of new and ending programmes. New shows such as Gossip Girls and Journeyman, still trying to find their audiences, may be dealt a death blow by any extended hiatus. The critically acclaimed Battlestar Galactica and fan-favourite Scrubs, both of which are entering their final series, may never now convey their intended finales if the strike action persists.

Depending upon the number of scripts completed for each of the current series in production, some programmes may elect to air only half a season and wrap up with hastily constructed finales. The second series of Heroes, which, according to its producers, had always been designed as a series of story arcs rather than one massive plot like Season One, will wrap up in the US on De-

cember 3rd with episode eleven. A new ending has been written to give it more of a definite conclusion. Similarly, Prison Break has thirteen completed scripts, and as the thirteenth episode supposedly ends on a cliff-hanger regardless, will most likely be presented as a full series also.

The main casualties in terms of cult-viewing would undoubtedly be LOST and 24. LOST executive producer Carlton Cuse has been spotted around various Hollywood picket lines with a WGA sign asking passers-by a question that many around the world would probably like to know the answer to – “Do you want to know what the island is?” Only eight episodes of the fourth series have been completed. In reply to questions from entertainment website IGN surrounding whether his television network would choose to air these without the rest of the series, he said “we'd rather them hold it. It would be like reading half a novel”. And 24 relies upon its strongly serialised nature – episodes are supposed to represent an hour each over a single day – and so despite a similar number of eight episodes being completed, neither show is likely to be seen by audiences until the strike ends.

However, all is not lost. Movie news website “The Hollywood Reporter” ran a statement from WGA chief negotiator John Bowman in which he stated that “there comes a time in every broken relationship for one side to step up and be the bigger man. Let us be the bigger man. I love you, AMPTP”. And even if an attitude of reconciliation from the Writer's Guild of America does not bring any conclusion to this strike soon, then British talent could provide a solution. The Guild's British equivalent, the WGGB, has threatened any potential scabs who might wish to break the American strike

with the simple fact that any future career for such a writer in America would automatically be ruined as soon as the strike is resolved – so all budding screenwriters out there should think before sending their latest work into Twentieth Century Fox or Paramount. Yet in a nation where television programming increasingly hails from America, stifling any home-grown talent and ruining the competitive chances of British TV shows in the process, the strike may at least help creatively speaking.

Whoever said that unions were lame ducks has clearly been proven wrong – the Writer's Strike has defeated Jack Bauer where thousands of bullets have failed; it has left us stranded in the everyday world, unable to find a way back to the LOST island; it has left us stuck outside of Prison; and it has left us powerless, without a Hero, in the middle of nowhere. Yet while the strike will certainly seem a thorn in the side of many an audience member, Seth MacFarlane (writer of Family Guy and voice of Peter, Stewie, and Brian) explained the situation to the website IGN by saying that they key issue impacts “regular middle class people, who for the record do not make \$200,000 a year. They are just regular people who drive '92 Toyotas. And all they want is a fair participation on revenues that are generated by things they create for new media – which is Internet, DVD – and as anyone can see, that stuff is going to be very important in the future and they want to make sure they're protected.” He went on to implore the crowd in the guise of evil baby Stewie that “victory will be ours”. Whether any such victory can be gained for the writers, and by extension the viewers who will soon so desperately want their television programming back, remains to be seen.

...while **Daniel Cohen** talks to Hollywood writer and striker **Tracy Straub**

Stacy Traub is the creator and executive producer of ‘Notes From the Underbelly’, an American sitcom that returns for its second series in the United States on 26 November. Her Hollywood career began in the late 90s as a writer's assistant for the series Mad About You, followed by her first job writing for Suddenly Susan. Work writing for Kitchen Confidential, based on the early experiences of New York chef Anthony Bourdain, and What I Like About You followed, before she was approached to write the pilot for Notes From the Underbelly, a show “about a married couple who are starting a family. It's like Sex and the City once they get married and start settling down.” In the ratings-driven world of American television, “the odds are definitely against” getting a series com-

missioned after a pilot, let alone for a second series; no wonder writers are so intent on getting paid fairly for the shows that are actually aired. Collaboration in American screenwriting is strong – unlike British television series, frequently authored by an individual or duo, those in America have a team of writers. Traub is very keen on this aspect: “We all sit in a room and figure out the stories together and do the re-writes together. It's a great atmosphere... And it is much less lonely then sitting in a room by yourself in front of a computer.”

Although Notes From the Underbelly is currently being shot, Traub has spurned production for striking: “I am walking the picket lines four hours a day and not doing any writing.” She believes that television is the only medium in which the

writer, as creator, “really has the power” and the “final say”, but that they are still “often taken for granted”. The strikers have been “unbelievably” united – perhaps a result of their collaborative work. A strong presence is even felt at the 6am picketing shifts, while actors have picketed alongside them. There is definitely a strong sense that this is about the future: “things are obviously in flux right now... eventually there may be no network television, and we'll just download everything from the Internet.” At a time of great insecurity for everyone in Hollywood, writers are refusing to be left behind: “I believe we are fighting for something extremely important. For us, and for future writers down the line.”

It's hard to see the trouble ending here. The Screen Actors Guild's contracts expire next

summer, and an actors' strike is a possibility. Without writers, projects can be rushed into

production; but without actors they would come to a complete standstill.



Hollywood: the hills are on strike



For most of us college art makes little impact on our lives. **Anna Trench** explains the opportunities for getting involved and issues a call to arms for the apathetic artists of Cambridge

One day when you're bored and looking for something new to do, why not go in search of your college art room. It will probably be found up a hidden staircase, behind a locked door and closed shutters, and inside this dusty room will be dried out oil paints, broken easels and a few dire 1980s pastel nudes. But don't be disheartened - there may be more going on than you think.

Unlike drama, music or sport, visual arts in Cambridge can be an ironically difficult thing to see. Of course, we have loads of galleries, dozens of commercial ones dotted around the streets as well as Kettle's Yard and the Fitzwilliam Museum. But maybe you think you're a bit arty (took AS level art, or an art foundation course, or do architecture or art history, or maybe you're just an unconventional compsci who enjoys drawing naked men) and want to know what actually goes on in the colleges? Well, there are life classes, dark rooms, exhibitions by students and established artists, collections you can borrow from, lectures and talks and events you can go to. You just have to search. Look for websites and Facebook groups. Look on notice boards. Art posters won't be that hard to find, for unlike those of chess soc they (probably) won't be made with soul-destroying WordArt.

There are quite a few life drawing classes and workshops around the university, and King's and Pembroke also have dark rooms. Christ's has weekly 'experimental' workshops run by their resident artist, Newnham has 'Sunday sessions' to share

arty skills, Pembroke has an open art room for college members every Friday evening and holds weekly events such as art therapy classes and clay workshops, and ArcSoc (Architecture Society) has dozens of events and a great website on which to find out about them (www.arcsoc.com). Queens' and Pembroke both hold life classes on Mondays, at 7-8.30 and 7.30-9.30 respectively. ArcSoc has life classes every Friday at 2 in the architecture department.

For years King's college ran a popular undergraduate life class, but as the college currently has no artist in residence the classes are on hold - or at least officially. A week or so ago at around midnight, a girl stumbled up to the King's art room with some others after formal, having been pennied a few too many times. In an unforeseen turn of events she soon stripped off and an impromptu life class ensued.

Some of the drawings produced appeared in the All Souls exhibition at King's last Saturday. It was an open exhibition where students brought work, and there were also blank canvases with paints and pens for people to make their own art. A number of other colleges put on student exhibitions. They are important not just as a forum to show the art we have created, but also to promote the space and materials we have. John's put one on in Michelmas last term and Pembroke Art and Photographic Society has a winter exhibition coming up; last week ArcSoc had a 'Summer Sketchbook' exhibition.

Jesus has an annual student exhibition in the chapel and library, and last May Week some

active Jesuans set up a space called The Forum in an old shopping arcade, with art projects, performances and film screenings. It's also worth keeping an eye out for college art competitions. They sometimes lead to exhibitions, and could land you a hundred pounds or so just for messing about with your paintbrush.

Most colleges have amazing art collections and often hold exhibitions by established artists. New Hall has the best collection of 20th century women's art in the country, and it's there for everyone to see. Take a trip up the hill and look at works by Paula Rego,

"In an unforeseen turn of events she soon stripped off and an impromptu life class ensued"

Barbara Hepworth and hundreds more, which fill the corridors, hall and dome of the college, as well as the Quentin Blake sketches in the café.

If your taste is more for modern sculpture, take a stroll the gardens of Jesus, Emmanuel and Churchill, which all have significant works on display (though none quite so infamous as Flanagan's Jesus horse). By contrast, a lot of the art in colleges appears rather hidden, and is discovered by accident after turning an

unfamiliar corner or visiting your DoS's room. Undoubtedly there are many great works hidden away in fellows' rooms (there's talk of a Picasso hidden in King's) but what's really exciting is that in many cases we don't have to observe these works of art from a distance. Most colleges allow students to borrow works for the year, from tattered posters to original prints of Piper and Paolozzi.

If you search hard, you'll find that there is a lot of art at Cambridge. But the problem seems to be that unless you are directly involved with your college art room or dark room, it's easy to remain ignorant of it. Furthermore, with the relatively small number of art historians, the cliquey architecture scene and the fact that Cambridge, unlike Oxford, has no fine art course, there is no consistent centre for visual arts. But there is a fair bit of funding available, and we just need to take advantage of it.

There was a Cambridge University Visual Arts Society a few years ago, but when I recently looked it up (and got rather excited about the events they were holding) I discovered the website hadn't actually been updated since 2004. What we need is an organized centre for the visual arts: one that has enough interested members that it won't disappear after a year or so, and one that can make links between smaller art societies and inform students of upcoming events. Having said that, ArcSoc does a fantastic job and is open to all students. So use your pencil for something that isn't defacing library books, and get involved.

Arts Column Lowri Jenkins

Like a lot of English students, I'm a big fan of Shakespeare. I was the kid in the GCSE English class getting evangelical while everyone else thought Macbeth was 'boring'; I can reel off a fair few quotations; I even have a cheeky Romeo and Juliet pen which, on being turned upside down, depicts ol' Romeo climbing up to his lady's balcony.

Yet however much I love the Bard, I can't help but think his deified position as master of English literature is a bit over-zealous. Critics such as Harold Bloom in 'Shakespeare and the Invention of the Human' (the clue's in the title) get to the extreme of implying that Shakespeare's genius is so far-reaching that he could see through time and predict the theoretical models we now throw on him. Even the mistakes, apparently, were deliberate. Clever William.

I'm not saying that Shakespeare was simply a lucky scribbler; I wouldn't dream of questioning his genius. What troubles me is that the extent to which we glorify him might stop us from appreciating his concrete dramatic and poetic achievements. This sycophantic approach to Shakespeare engenders a kind of reader laziness: ah well, he's so bloody good we'll just never understand it. Let's just read it in a self-righteously sermonising voice and hope everyone else bows down too.

And the resistance to scrutiny which this laziness invokes also has huge impact on the performance of Shakespeare. Simply praising the text as poetry and failing to identify its dramatic properties, from the Corpus Playroom to the RSC, encourages "emo acting". This is the kind of acting which can only be likened to a dodgy Hundred Reasons b-side. Delivery of lines is in a stylized/constipated whisper, unexpectedly giving way to moments of SHOUTING REALLY FUCKING LOUDLY SO YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND THE WORDS.

As difficult as it is to be heard at the back of the Globe when the groundlings are all rustling in their condom-a-like waterproofs, I doubt very much that this kind of performance is the best way to get the point across. Grand feelings aren't conveyed just by turning up the volume: Shakespeare's plays work dramatically not because they read well, but because they inscribe particular actions, tensions and situations which are concretely actable.

What pisses me off the most is that it's not just students with a four-week rehearsal schedule and Part I dissertation to write that fall into the trap of emo-acting. A lot of the time professionals get paid to do the same thing, just on a bigger stage and with a costume that wasn't salvaged from Oxfam. Blind reverence towards Shakespeare only encourages this kind of empty performing: if we were keener to pick apart the Bard's words we hold so dear, we might do better at making them sing.



Some think
intern.

**We think
colleague.**

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Once Upon A Time... The 2007 ADC/ Footlights Panto ADC

Dir: Alex
Clatworthy

Theatre
★★★★★



RICHARD GARDNER

The Footlights Panto is as much a part of Christmas as Santa, mistletoe and mince pies. This is where you go for cheery cheesiness. But somehow, this year's doesn't fully live up to the promise.

Clatworthy and Mullarkey's *Once Upon a Time* is, to coin a phrase, a pantomime of two halves. The first is a workmanlike but pretty confused version of your classic Cinderella. The approach to punch-lines definitely veers on the less is more. Musical numbers are overly long and every idea is stretched well beyond its natural limit. Is this supposed to be traditional? Or should Cambridge students be subversive?

Who knows, but you might have children in the audience. So, the script falls back on a tame poking-fun-at-class-

distinctions theme. The 'upper class' ride horses; the 'lower class' are called chavs. My,

"Emma Hiddlestone redeems the intrinsically dull romantic lead part with singing that is simply beautiful"

look at all these boundaries they're pushing. "Oh, casual prejudice!" the King laughingly calls out. Quite.

The whole thing finally gets going after the interval. This

is Footlights doing Footlights in sketch-like bits of Alice in Wonderland madness. Liberated from the panto story, Brothers Grimm characters dart in and out and Cambridge's classic word-play gags begin. Add in Will Featherstone and Jack Gordon-Brown bounding about the stage like a pair of over-excitabile puppies engaged in a bonding ritual and everything gets much more enjoyable.

There's no doubting that this panto has a fantastic cast. Emma Hiddlestone redeems the intrinsically dull romantic lead part with singing that is simply beautiful. And Alastair Roberts steals the show with his (underused) comic genius. For anyone who has seen him before, all you need to know is that he plays a French revolutionary. For

anyone who hasn't, let's put it like this: this boy can make the line "there are no T-shirts, this is communism" sound like Monty Python. What a feat.

And yet. And yet. And yet. The 'x' factor isn't quite there. As theatrical impresario George Devine had it, the secret to a good play is "the script, the script, the script". Which is, in a word, patchy. This is a panto that would benefit from liberal editing. The first ten minutes, for example. Gordon-Brown does a sterling job of carrying the production along with him, but it's beyond the power of any man to stop *Once Upon a Time* from dragging.

See it just to watch this cast in action, but it's less a laugh a minute than a chuckle every ten.

Imogen Walford

Moliere's classic play about the deception of a doting middle-aged man by a cunning young man, who tries to seduce his wife and win his money. It began well, with Alice Malin tottering onto the stage, bent double, and surveying the audience with a sneering raise of the eyebrow. Playing Orgon's aged mother, she was so convincing that one might be forgiven for thinking her to be an elderly relative of the one of the cast, lost on the way to her seat.

As she continued to lecture the assembled family on Tartuffe's virtue, they crept behind her in imitation of "what's the time Mr Wolf?" tiptoeing within an inch of touching her before she rallied to another sententious point with such violence that they were sent scurrying to the back of the stage. The blocking was intelli-

gent throughout, a highlight of which was the Tartuffe's seduction of Elmire, during which Orgon is hidden underneath a table, a scene with great pictorial quality.

This farce was rendered quite surreal by the translation, which treated Moliere's original liberally, but to great comic effect, unafraid of using modern idioms such as "bugger me sideways". Orgon, played by Joel Massey, treated his role with an amusing reflexiveness, hamming his preposterous concern for Tartuffe's well-being and, more impressively, sharing the humour of the text's own fallibility. His aggressive outbursts were funny if a little too frequent.

The dress was for the most part coherent with the period chosen, which seemed to be early twentieth century; waistcoats and cravats comple-

menting the scene interludes of dance band music. Philippa Dinnage and Cait Crosse each dressed and behaved as society 'types', the former daddy's spoilt but obedient little girl, the latter a sexually liberal society dame. Howie Taylor's Tartuffe came across as a slimy matador, replete with gigantic silver cross and open necked silk shirt. He was both rapacious and sly as the man who tricks the doting Orgon of his money and (nearly) his daughter. The excellent cockney maid, Helen Winston, was fully aware of the many 'double entendres', sharing them without overplaying them to the audience.

This was not universally the case, however, and there was the odd occasion when the thought of a possible innuendo seemed to overrule the expression of the true meaning. Some characters chose to belie the

rhyme in the couplets, reciting the lines without even a cursory emphasis at the line-end, whilst others behaved more like rhetoricians, pausing for effect at the end of each.

Both styles worked, the latter being more self consciously absurd, more obviously a call to the audience, but the two together sometimes appeared as incoherent, some playing within their characters, others more consciously exaggerating. This is a small criticism when considering that each individual managed to present a plausible character, with a notable cameo from Ben Hayward as the jobsworth bailiff with a worryingly dictatorial moustache. The play ends with a clever twist of fate, and a satire on King Louis' treatment of his friends, which raises questions of justice of with fresh eyes.

Pascal Porcheron

Tartuffe Homerton Auditorium

Dir: Kiran Gill

Theatre
★★★★★

view

from the gods



In the spirit of Christmas cheer, this final View from the Gods column offers a two-fold apology to those injuriously dealt with this term by the theatre section.

Whilst maintaining the trite and offensive (not to say badly researched) prose which has invited as much criticism as Enoch Powell's public relations officer, I would like to apologise first to those involved in Fame! The Musical whose unassuming production has been ritually lambasted in these pages. On my part, I suppose I must have willed that superfluous exclamation mark (that alarm bell of cultural negligence) into the title. For who can hear that hallowed name and not see jazz hands tingling, garish smiles, "teeth 'n' tits", glitter and effusions of hackneyed sentiment? One producer of the ill-fated musical angrily emailed me, no doubt due to the fact that he realised his production would no longer be eligible for the most-obnoxiously-punctuated-play award 2007.

One audience member described the production as "undergraduate" with a shudder. But why should we be ashamed of student drama? It's all we have. Let us rejoice in malfunctioning radio mikes, obnoxious pre-recorded doorbells that ring in stereo and singers who patently can't sing, in the hope that by the time we leave there will be enough productions on our CV to mitigate the lack of distinction of our arts degree.

The second of my apologies concerns the review of Othello! The Shakespeare Play. Our reviewer Guy Stagg was detected scurrying out of the Corpus Playrooms during the interval. Quite right you might say, unspeakably tedious Shakespeare is a thing rightfully avoided. But you would be wrong. For who has not seen Shakespeare in performance and not felt that intellectual gag reflex compelling one to eschew all further contact with Macbeth, Midsummer Night's Dream and Measure for Measure (for example)?

It is a difficult lesson to learn for reviewers that no matter how boring the play, no matter how attractive the alternatives (the Aryan homunculus was spotted carousing at Cambridge night-spot Ballare that very night) one must remain in the theatre until the curtain call. That self-confessed wastrel invited extra criticism, in his florid effluence "gagging sense of violent irresolution", attacking an ending he had not even seen.

Next week, if you are stuck without the essential advice proffered by this column, go to see Attempts on Her Life, a play my mother left before the end because she said she "thought it didn't matter". There you go then.

A Doll's House

Fitzpatrick Hall

Dir: James Lewis and Lauren Cooney

Theatre

★★★★★

Ibsen's A Doll's House is a landmark of theatre history and a literary classic which has at its heart an exploration of nineteenth century attitudes towards women. The slammed door which marks Nora's departure and the end of the play is one of the most iconic and controversial moments in theatre and it is a play which should certainly not be taken on lightly.

Which makes its popularity as student theatre somewhat perplexing. To do the play justice requires not only a supremely talented and disciplined cast but also two leading actors with a vast amount of energy. A Doll's House was never written to be a light Victorian drama, nor was it intended to serve as a CV booster for the actors in the principle roles, though this is often what it turns out to be; at the end of the performance both cast and audience should be left exhausted.

Happily, Matthew Bulmer's production, on the whole, managed to avoid the common pitfalls: Caitlin Breeze, as Nora, though rather unlikeable at the beginning of the production, warmed up to create a strong and sympathetic



DIYLAN SPENCER/DAVIDSON

protagonist. Her most convincing scenes were those with Pan Demetrious as Dr Rank who also gave one of the most eloquent performances of the evening. It was a pity, therefore, that the scene in which he implicitly announces his death to Nora was thrown away.

The role of Helmer is a challenging one because he is so detestable to the audience but so delightful to himself. Furthermore, the language he uses is patronising and his character is painfully dated.

Patrick Walshe-McBride's performance did nothing to ease these difficulties: rather than breathing life into a cliché, he fell back on caricature and produced a stiff, predictable performance.

Helmer's relationship with Nora is also incredibly difficult to stage because, having lasted for eight years it must now deteriorate over three days. The actors seemed undecided in their interpretation of the Torvalds' relationship and as such, their marriage was largely unbelievable. By contrast, the scene between Krogstadt and Mrs Linde (Max Hayward and Eve Rosato) positively trembled with repressed emotion and was a high point of the production.

The final act of the play is a two-man show and it was here that Walshe-McBride and Breeze finally seemed to display an understanding of their characters.

Consequently, it was in this final act that the production managed to escape the crowded, clinging mire of student Ibsen and do some justice to a classic.

Lizzie Davis

I'm finding this a very difficult show to critique. There was a lot that I liked about it. The character sketches were simple, familiar, and yet effective. The format (our protagonist retells the story of his journalistic exploits to his crazy old aunt, while she sits amongst the audience) is original and makes for a very comfortable relationship between audience and performer. David F. Walton has fantastic stage presence and confident delivery, and Jessica Barker-Wren offers up an unhinged old lady that is second to none. There are, in this funny little story about a provincial town and its not so hard-nosed journalists, all the makings of a fantastic comedy. I wonder, therefore, what it was

about last night's performance that had me checking my watch every few minutes - a bad sign in a short play. Perhaps it was because the production and the script both need some substantial polishing. The action needs to move faster, deliveries need to be stronger, and the performers need to avoid seeming as if they are expecting to mess up their next lines.

Tenzing White, the budding young reporter whose journey we follow, would have definitely seen to some much needed "pruning" of the script. Although Tom Hensby's comic talent is evident, too many average gags stifle the few instances of brilliant writing. That Hensby explicitly acknowledges the presence of poor puns in

charming little moments of meta-theatre salvages this to an extent, but not a very big extent. Mention should also go to Ned Carpenter, who slipped seamlessly into at least three roles, showing an impressive command of the West Country accent. Allusions to notable and notorious Trinity English fellows were slightly lost on me, but perhaps had more comic value for those acquainted with Eric and Adrian. I would go so far as to give this play four stars for potential, but as it stands, it has a long way to go before living up to its tag-line as a "Terribly funny play". At least the poster got one thing right: "I scream scoop" really is a terrible pun.

Tash Lennard

I Scream...

Scoop!

ADC

Theatre

★★★★★

PREVIEW

Flesh-eating Jacobean Zombies

Peterhouse Theatre

Dir: Freddy Syborn

Theatre

The dangers of a play named Flesh Eating Jacobean Zombies, which attempts to marry modern and Renaissance subject-matter, and is written entirely in blank verse, is that it may be generic surrealist student comedy ("Enter David Hasselhoff as a terrorist" etc.), pretentious or self-indulgent.

The story: a king called Elvis (played by Syborn himself) beds the object of his son's affections, Lady Danae (Cecily Carbone), so angering his son (Pilar Garrard) that he reincarnates (using your standard alchemy set) the hymen of his beloved and poisons his father with it.

The plot is excellently as-

sisted by Jeremy Beadle (David Isaacs), ex-ITV presenter, court jester, eater of Turkish delight and lover of Muslim hate-cleric Abu Hamza (Louis Jagger). When this dubious duo finally consummate their forbidden love, it spawns a hoard of the living dead (obviously) who threaten the troubled kingdom with their groaning presence.

It would be a bad idea to attempt to summarise any of the many good ideas which populate the script, but the clever manipulation of blank verse, the appropriation of convention juxtaposed with the eclectic modern reference diagnoses an amusing insight

into the revenge tragedy in the discrepancy between word and emotion. That the Prince says the word "forgive" forty times during the final scene does drift towards self-indulgence, but the final grotesque touch will not fail to entertain.

It is only the wit of the writer which manages to keep these digressive strands within the structure of a tight-spot, as is required of the Jacobean revenge tragedy which provides its inspiration. This weird offering, from the unsung heroes of a college which is attempting to illegitimise fun on a daily basis, deserves to be seen.

Orlando Reade

Shape of Broad Minds Craft of the Lost Art

Album
★★★★★

US Hip Hop in 2007 has been fantastic. After a host of brilliant Def Jux and Stone's Throw Long Players, comes the Hip Hop album of the year in time for Christmas on Lex Records, a young but extremely exciting label. Craft of the Lost Art is solely produced by multi-everythingist Jneiro Jarel who takes his "surname" (since not even this is his real name!) from Superman's dad. Like his Stone's Throw contemporary, the hyper-producer Madlib who has close to 30 aliases, Jarel has countless albums to his name (or not his name as the case may be). Like Madlib's incarnation as the castrato Quasimoto, Jarel uses different

voices and flows to characterise each of the members of Shape of Broad Minds, often harmonising the different characters like you were listening to the Jackson Five having just killed their dad in the bathroom one evening and are now feeling a bit – but not very - guilty. One could draw numerous parallels with Madlib but this is nothing but compliment to their unbelievable versatility. The topics that this album deals with are wide-ranging. Politically-relevant lyrics must be soundtracked with realism to ensure a feeling of gravity in both the performer and the audience. Jneiro's beats live inside your speakers: they grow into little

creatures that wriggle about for three minutes or so and die a spontaneous death. He takes this futurist model and transposes it onto the world: the broad minds talk of girls, death, history, the street, drugs, cars, and probably fire, knives et cetera. His collaboration with the king of underground rap, MF Doom, on the track Let's Go, establishes Jneiro's position on one of the less major Hip Hop thrones in the sky with the lyrics of OPR8R sounding like a beseechment to the switchboard operator up there, entreating her with warm words to upgrade his Cumulonimbus. One day man, one day.

Andrew Spyrou

Caspa & Rusko Fabric Live 37

Album
★★★★★



I should point out before I begin this review that I am slightly biased, due to the fact that I hate dance music. However, rather than turn down the chance to get my name once more in print, I bit my tongue, swallowed my pride, digested my doubts and followed up a few more clichés and non-clichés, and pretended like I did. "A new Fabriclive CD?" I said. "Put together by progressive dupstep types Caspa and Rusko?" I said. "I'm your man" I said. I was lying of course. I'm completely wrong for this sort of thing. I don't frequent dubstep clubs. I don't frequent any clubs, being socially awkward, intensely agoraphobic, and aggressively afraid of neon lighting. I never dance, even in the privacy of my own home (though I have been known to jump up and down to Slayer's Raining Blood now and again – well, who doesn't, eh?), indeed, I avoid all rhythmic movement as much as possible with the exceptions of occasional moshing (see above) and intermittent acts of heavily-disguised onanism (see previous pieces). In short, I am not the ideal man to review a 70 minute mix of dancefloor-smashing dub and bass electro madness.

And yet, I find myself strangely enjoying the sensation. Repetitive and snappy beats, slightly gruff synthy bits, the odd vocal sample ("Rude boy!") – it ain't exactly The Carpenters, yet it remains a strangely unthreatening experience. It purrs rather than growls, shimmies rather than grinds. This might be the MDMA talking, but I didn't mind it at all. This dance music lark could be worth keeping an eye on.

Philip Rack

I find it hard to comprehend why a band who hasn't even released a proper second album yet feels the need to release a DVD. It's a nice DVD no doubt, the display case, in itself, is an artistic oddity, which refuses to close and only seems to be comfortable if stood upright so that it resembles a 3D pop-up book, tableau. The thing is, surely the point of a music DVD is to be allowed, by the technological wonder of recording equipment, to see the great gigs of all time, or bands that have become either too expensive or too dead to see for real. Though I can never actually be at Woodstock, Live Aid, or the Freddie Mercury Tribute Concert, I may still imagine my presence via the magic of

Windows Media Player. There are some good songs here, its true. The anthemic Chelsea Dagger seemed to get the Brixton crowd a-poppin' and the light shows were all a neon mind-warp. The disappointing lack of Scottish banter was made up for by generally jovial renditions of The Pimp and Henrietta. But why the Fratellis feel the need to do this, or why Fratellis fans will feel the need to purchase this when they could probably buy a concert ticket for about the same price is beyond me. If you really can't wait for the Fratellis to go on tour, then by all means, this is the best way to get a fix Otherwise, is there really any point?

Owain Mckimm



The Fratellis Edgy in Brixton

Music DVD
★★★★★

Handel's Xerxes Fitzwilliam Auditorium

Opera
★★★★★

Handel's opera 'Xerxes' has had a chequered history. First performed in 1738, it was dropped after a run of five performances and, with Handel moving onto the composition of his famous oratorios, it seemed to have been consigned to the dustbin of history. It was 250 years later, in 1979, that the piece got its next outing, and since then its popularity has bloomed. Last week's performance by the best of Cambridge's young talent fully justified this revival, combining some professional-standard music with a sensibly judged interpretation. The quasi-fantastical setting and improbable plot is probably just what the eighteenth century rejected and the eighties admired; this production at Fitz steered a fine line between the

two extremities, with the set providing symbolic possibilities and an appropriately wacky feel to the piece. Ruth Taylor excelled in the title role, and despite her less than imposing stature still judged the tone of the role to perfection; and Ben Williamson as Arsamene delivered a flawless vocal performance you'd find it hard to better on the professional stage. In fact the singing across the cast was impeccable, although it was occasionally disappointing that fluid and imaginative acting seemed to have been neglected. Overall this was a deeply impressive performance, and is going to be reprised over the border in Bury St Edmunds next April if you missed it this time round.

Toby Chadd



The Holy Bible The Manic Street Preachers

"You're not fucking doing the Holy Bible. There's no way." That was the Music Editor's reaction to my choosing the Manic's finest work as the term's last entry to this column. And in a sense, I think the band would appreciate that. After all, it was a deliberately provocative work, a raucous yet sensitive two fingers to consumerism, racism, anorexia and everything wrong with mainstream politics and emotions. Richey James Edwards, who wrote the majority of the album's lyrics, went missing fewer than six months after its release, and has not been seen since; a presumed suicide. The opener, Yes, unashamedly embraces powerlessness and hopelessness (*Everyone I've loved or hated always seems to leave; Can't shout, can't scream, I hurt myself to get pain out*) - it's a frank admission of failure. Against this tragic backdrop, the Manics retort with anger, with ifwhiteamericaoldthetruthforonedayits-worldwouldfallapart an eerily prophetic attack on Britain and America's hypocritical racial values (*there's not enough black in the union jack, there's too much white in the stars and stripes*). Faster is a vitriolic socialist manifesto (*I am an architect, they call me a butcher*) which laments communal denial of responsibility (*I've been too honest with myself I should've lied like everybody else*). It's not all politics and bile. 4st 7lb is a moving and tragic account of descent into anorexia, reflecting Edwards' personal experiences, with the motif *I want to be so skinny that I rot from view*. More chilling is Die in the Summertime, where the chanted refrain seems to envision Edwards' internal disharmony and inevitable demise. Set against this impossibly bleak backdrop comes This is Yesterday, a song which against all odds paints a hopeful picture of a fractured relationship; sadness of course is the central theme, but there's a possibility that it's temporary: *Someone somewhere soon will take care of you; I repent, I'm sorry, everything is falling apart*. The music editor was right. The Holy Bible probably shouldn't feature in this column. It's not really an album for a right-minded person; it's an album for the angry and the disillusioned, and anyone brave enough to tackle it.

George Grist

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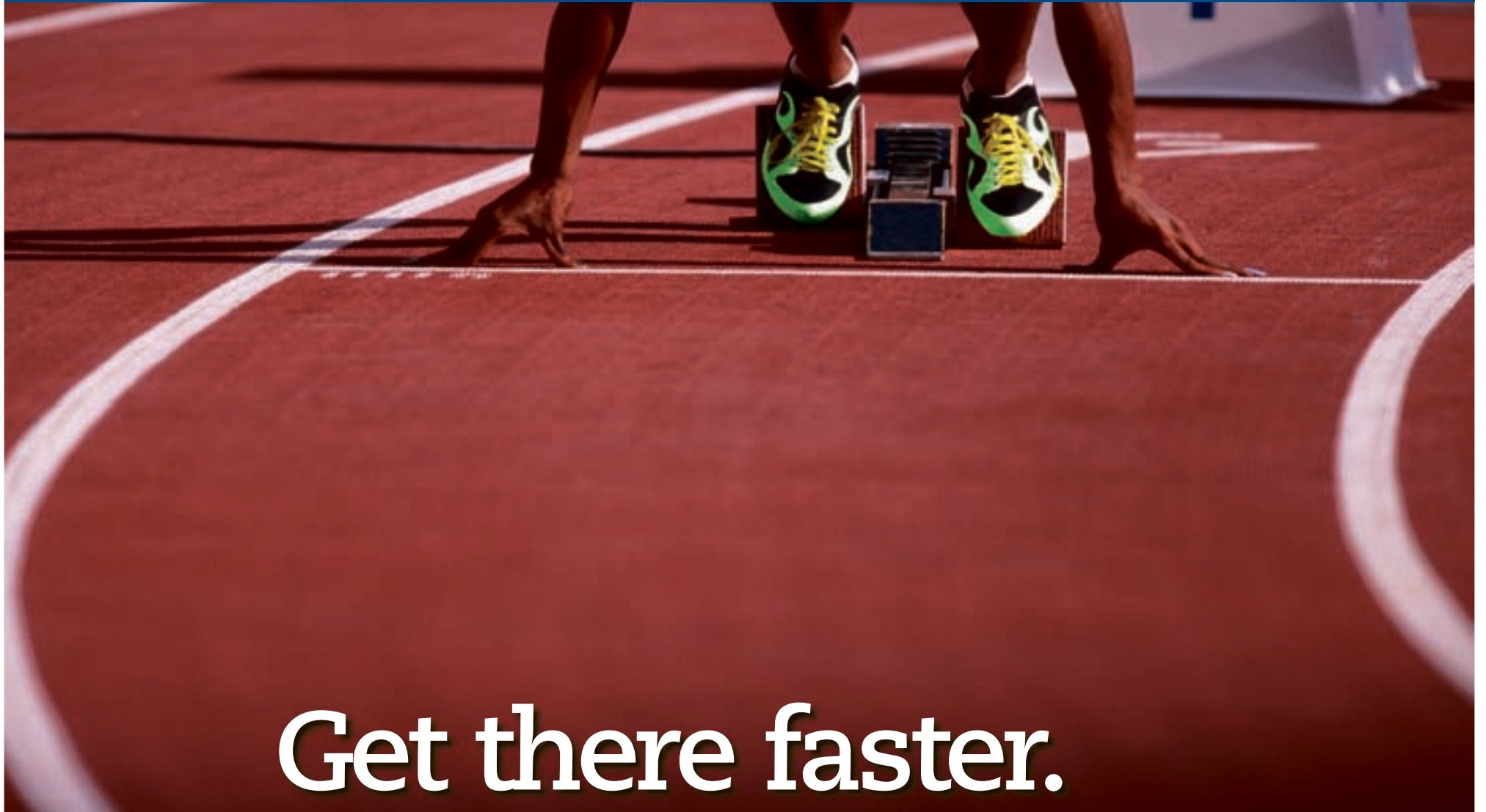
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We're not looking for sympathy, but surely it's right to feel a little hard done by after last weekend. Late goals put pay to both our football selections, and just as Osa-na looked to be coming good in the Greatwood Hurdle on Sunday, up popped Sizing Europe to rob us of our fourth winning long shot of the term. Still, that second means that we'll finish the year with a profit of at least a tenner. It may not be as much as we had hoped for at the start, but it should just about cover the cost of some novelty socks for a loved one this Christmas.

After a hectic European schedule, our betting attention turns back to the English Premier League this week. The early kick-off on Saturday witnesses the battle of Newcastle United verses Liverpool. The Magpies will still be having nightmares about conceding four at home to Portsmouth, and this encounter is unlikely to ease their fears. It has been 33 years and 51 meetings since these two last shared a 0-0 draw, and the Liverpool strike-force should be galvanised by the return of Fernando Torres, if Rafa Benitez decides to pick him that is. With or without Goldilocks, we'll back Liverpool to walk away with all the spoils.

The eyes of the racing world will be focused on Haydock Park this weekend. The Betfair Chase is one of the most valuable races in the winter calendar, and this year's contest should provide decent sport for punters as well. The hot favourite is Kauto Star, probably the most successful horse in training in last year. However, he was beaten by what we reckon was a pretty mediocre horse in his seasonal reappearance last month. Therefore, it might pay to side with My Way De Solzen, a young horse widely tipped to achieve big things. Taking on Kauto Star is definitely a risk, but with My Way de Solzen at 3-1, it's one well worth taking.

This week's long shot has taken on an away day theme, with a tasty 5/1 being offered on Aston Villa and Portsmouth to triumph away to Middlesbrough and Birmingham respectively. Portsmouth have been unwelcome guests in the Premier League this term, and can boast the second best away record, whilst their opponents Birmingham City remain managerless after Steve Bruce's capitulation to Wigan. Aston Villa, themselves fresh from beating Birmingham away last time out, travel to the Riverside hoping to achieve a second away win on the trot. Meanwhile, Middlesbrough's home record is far from impressive, and they have scored fewer goals than any side outside the bottom three this year.

THE BANKER	4-6
LIVERPOOL TO BEAT NEWCASTLE (DRAW NO BET)	£4
PREDICTION	3-1
MY WAT DE SOLZEN TO WIN BETFAIR CHASE	£3
THE LONG SHOT	5/1
VILLA AND PORTSMOUTH TO WIN (ACCUMULATOR)	£3
RUNNING TOTAL	£19.62

Blues cling on for draw

»Fowlie's hockey girls fight hard in a tough match against Nottingham



Tash Barnes makes a charging run down the right flank against tough Nottingham defending

JOE GOSDEN

CAMBRIDGE	2
STANLEY 44 NOBLE 60	
NOTTINGHAM	2
WILLIAMS 42 ATKINS 47	

BECCA LANGTON
Sports Reporter

In a match that was set to decide the BUSA league positions for the season, the women's Blues came up against their closest competitors, University of Nottingham first team. A win would secure a six-point lead at the top of the Midlands Conference and a potentially unchallenged route to the title.

Despite a delayed start to the match Cambridge were ready to go. "We're confident" mused Captain Tash Fowlie, "but we're ready to work for this." From the first few minutes it was clear that the

game would be eventful. Fronted by the ever-consistent Fowlie, the Cambridge defence kept play at a challenging pace, every loose ball was tightly contested and every tackle fiercely fought. Although Nottingham got off to a strong start the visitors were unable to convert pressure to points. Basic errors started to creep into the Blues' play, but a flying save from goalkeeper Lucy Stapleton, kept Nottingham disappointed.

With both teams so well matched, there was little to separate the two. Lisa Noble worked tirelessly up the line, whilst in the centre of the pitch it was Emma Goater once again who brought play into Cambridge's hands, creating one of the best opportunities of the half. A fiendish ball sent flying across the 'D' gave Tash Barnes an opportunity which went wasted, sailing over the cross bar.

With stakes so high, emotion

was to be expected and this did sometimes overrun into needless aggression and some particularly agricultural tackles. "Do they feed them something in Nottingham to make them candidates for anger management?" stormed an angry Blue as yet another stick went swinging backwards, narrowly missing a Cambridge head. Despite the intensity of the first 35 minutes, half time saw the scores still level at 0-0.

The second half of this pivotal game commenced with both teams desperate to claim that crucial goal. Alex Workman worked tirelessly from the start, but with Nottingham deploying some questionable tactics, it was the opposition who stole the lead seven minutes in. A quick ball off a free hit left Cambridge caught off guard and Madeleine Williams slid a wayward ball into the bottom corner to put

Nottingham into the lead.

Cambridge were not to be disheartened and, picking the pace up, began to show the strength and depth inherent in their game. It was only two minutes later that Anna Stanley again found her way into the limelight, picking up a quick ball from Hannah Rickman and slotting it past the unaware Nottingham keeper.

Back on an even keel, play resumed its frenetic pace. Rosie Evans bossed the right side of the pitch, making crucial tackles at

BUSA Hockey - Midlands Conference										
Women's 1A 2007/08										
	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pt		
CAMBRIDGE	6	5	1	0	22	6	16	16		
NOTTINGHAM	6	4	1	1	19	9	10	13		
LOUGHBOROUGH II	6	2	2	2	10	8	2	8		
COVENTRY	5	2	0	3	8	21	-13	6		
BIRMINGHAM II	5	1	1	3	8	12	-4	4		
BIRMINGHAM III	6	0	1	5	6	17	-11	1		

one end and drilling balls onto the p-spot at the other. Although Cambridge increasingly looked like the dominant team, in a rare moment of weakness Nottingham counter-attacked at full pace, and only the diving save of defender Flick Hughes kept the ball off the line. Unfortunately a dubious decision by the umpire gave Nottingham a penalty stroke. Without hesitation a highly competent Ellie Atkins sent the ball flying into the back of the net to make it 2-1 to Nottingham with only 23 minutes left to play.

Cambridge, shaken by the unfortunate goal, came back with resolute determination and, with guileless attacking from Emma Goater and Alex Workman, were rewarded with a penalty corner on the 60 minute mark. An astute tactical call from Coach James Waters and a well-worked, and undeniably slick routine resulted in a goal from Lisa Noble, punched in with such force that Nottingham were shocked to a standstill. With ten minutes remaining the play was fierce and a number of opportunities went begging at both ends.

Commenting on the 2-2 draw, Waters philosophically remarked, "we came here to win it, but we're still three points ahead, and it suits us a lot more than it suits them." With only four more games to play, Cambridge are on route to the top spot in their league.

Sport In Brief

Basketball Blues beat strong UEA side

Facing a formidable UEA squad on Wednesday, the Blues started well. Strong defence, and good high-low post play gave the Blues an early 13 point lead. Notable points came from Leo Parts and Hugo Halferty Drochon. Entering the game, Domantas Jankauskas contributed several offensive rebounds and points from the freethrow line.

By halftime, the Blues extended the lead to 14. In the third quarter, UEA adjusted to the Blues offence, and pulled it back. Starting off the fourth quarter, Damjan Pfarrer hit a crucial three-pointer but still UEA battled back and the point margin decreased to five. However, a late Cambridge surge put them a further 6 points clear and the Blues ended the game 61-54 up.

Blue boxers pulverised in Portsmouth

Last Tuesday, two Cambridge boxers travelled to Portsmouth in their first away fixture of the year. In the first bout, Taras Gout was looking to avenge an earlier defeat last April, he put in a classy performance against Singh of Portsmouth, and pulverized his opponent. However after the three rounds the majority decision went to Singh.

New club president, Paul Miller, fought his first bout as a light heavyweight, against a physical Portsmouth novice. Miller's opponent threw in some big hits and strung together some well executed combinations. The contest was stopped by the referee in the third round giving the Portsmouth boxer a well earned victory.

Lax ladies batter Bristol

This Wednesday the Women's Lacrosse Ladies travelled to Bristol in the latest instalment of their BUSA domination. Unbeaten so far this season, Alex Carnegie-Brown's team continued their winning form by annihilating their opposition 16-2.

It was a strong performance all across the pitch right from the starting whistle but special commendation must go to the midfield, who worked tirelessly in both defence and attack, whilst Kate Morland topped the scoreboard with multiple goals at Second Home. A second half attempt by Bristol to break down Cambridge's zoning tactics failed and the Blues continued their ascendancy, maintaining the majority of the possession. They look a hard team to beat.

Men's hockey Blues shocker

In a packed weekend of hockey the Men's Blues faced two tough matches, which they desperately needed to win to resurrect their season. On Saturday the Blues faced Ipswich away, the Blues struggled to translate possession into goals. A snap shot from Ipswich in the second half brought them the only goal of the match, which they won 1-0.

Against Indian Gymkhana on Sunday, the Blues started strongly with an early goal from Phil Balbirnie. Gymkhana responded with a goal just before half time and the match entered a tense phase. The Blues fought hard in the second half, but their opposition proved too tough. Gymkhana finished the match winners by four goals to one, leaving the Blues to rue their performance.

Home strait to Fairbairns

» 1st & 3rd set to dominate men's while Christ's tipped to win women's

ED WILLIS
Sports Reporter

College rowing reaches its Michaelmas Term finale next week at the Fairbairns Cup. The longest race on the Cam, it is notoriously difficult to call. In the Senior Men's competition, 4.3km long, it is difficult to look past First and Third (Trinity) who have firmly established their supremacy over the past year. Full of confidence, after repeated success so far this term, they include rowers of huge experience in Tom Coker, Dan Jane and others, and will be hoping to come away with victories in both the VIII and IV man events.

Varsity Predictions

Seniors:

Men's Senior VIII: 1st: First and Third, 2nd: Pembroke

Men's Senior IV: 1st: First and Third, 2nd: LMBC

Women's Senior VIII: 1st: Christ's, 2nd: Jesus

Women's Senior IV: 1st: Christ's, 2nd: First and Third

Novices:

Men's 1st Novice VIII: 1st: LMBC, 2nd: Fitz

Women's 1st Novice VIII: 1st: LMBC, 2nd: First and Third

It seems that the real contest will be to determine who can follow closest in their wake. Last year's Fairbairns winners Jesus have struggled so far this term. Pembroke though, have made impressive strides, turning heads with their performance at the Winter Head, where they finished second to beat LMBC (St. John's) by six seconds. Fit and well drilled, they have emerged as one of the leading contenders. LMBC will provide strong resistance as always, with four returning First May rowers and Great Britain experience in their ranks and they will perhaps be slightly disappointed at their Winter Head performance. Nobody seems sure as to what Caius will



Hot favourites: the FaT 'crew to beat' settles into a steady rhythm out of Chesterton during training

JOE GOSDEN

produce at Fairbairns but they are certainly capable of making an impression, yet it would be fair to say that their priority is regaining the Lent headship next term.

All the talk in the Women's competition this term has been about Christ's, whose young and energetic crew dominated at the Uni IVs, as well as the Autumn and Winter Heads. There are more experienced women's crews in Cambridge but so far no one has been able to match Christ's for technical precision or fitness. Jesus and First and Third certainly possess the fire-power to change this, but they need to show it next week. Also in the mix are Downing, who have been hampered by illness and injury this term.

With a full compliment they have the potential to make the podium. Emmanuel's women seem to be making something of a speciality

of the four man discipline. They reached the final of both the first and second divisions at the Uni IVs, but even so, they will do well to make this kind of impact here.

A first term of rowing culminates at Fairbairns for the novice crews. This week's Clare Sprints will provide a good indication of who to look out for, but a rough picture has begun to emerge after the Queens Ergs and Winter Head. LMBC are undoubtedly favourites for both the men's and women's sections. Last year's novice winners Fitzwilliam were just about in touch in the men's section, and will probably present the main challenge to the Johnian pursuit of another clean sweep. Jesus showed, in winning the Queens Ergs, that they have the individual physical ability to record fast times, and they will be hoping to transfer that

form onto the water. Vying to keep pace with LMBC in the women's competition will be Pembroke, themselves winners at the Queens Ergs, while Newnham, First and Third as well as Magdelene and Caius have shown potential.

Two boats made up of Blues boat and Goldie candidates will also be competing next week. They traditionally set off first and second, and use the event as a preliminary to the following week's Trial Eights, itself a trial run for the boat race. The two evenly matched boats will be desperate to impress the coaches as they bid to cement a place in this year's Varsity crews. The twisting Fairbairns course provides good experience for the coxes before they have to tackle the Thames, and the big race conditions will give the rowers a flavour of what is to come.

Boat Club Captain Interview

» Varsity talks to Dan O'Shaughnessy about the Blue Boat's prospects

JOE GOSDEN

The Fairbairns Cup is only around 900m longer than the St Lawrence River is wide back in O'Shaughnessy's hometown of Brockville, Canada. The fourth generation of his family to row for Brockville RC, O'Shaughnessy will lead this year's CUBC squad into the Henley and Tideway boat races at the end of Lent term. A week from now he will be sat in the first of the CUBC Trial VIII's as they make their once-yearly appearance on the upper reaches of the Cam in JCBC's Fairbairns Cup.

CUBC have won the Fairbairns Cup every year that they have entered it, with no college boat having ever got close in their only chance to measure how far short they really fall of the two crews that most of their oarsmen dream wistfully of joining. Last year CUBC posted times of 13.20 and 13.49; 45 seconds faster than Jesus, the fastest closest college boat.

Fairbairns is the only time of the year the historic Goldie Boathouse ever sees racing shells inside it, something that apparently makes it "pretty special for the guys". The Trial VIII's leave Ely at first light and paddle the 25km upstream to start the race at Jesus lock, before continuing straight over the finish line and back to Ely.

O'Shaughnessy described the squad's progress as "excellent" as they approach the halfway point

in the training programme. He hotly contested any notion that the CUBC decision not to enter this year's National Ergo Championships alongside Oxford was related to any deficiencies in the Cambridge squad. He explained that they hadn't entered the – Oxford dominated – event because "it's only 2k so it's just not worth bothering with. Congratulations that they won but the boat race is four and a half miles,

not a quick sprint".

O'Shaughnessy is described as "driven" by his fellow oarsmen, a refreshingly un-arrogant CUBC President who manages to combine a talent for rowing with a commanding leadership style. Weighing in at over a hundred kilos, he is one of the heavy weights in what is once again an international flavoured squad. There are, however, a substantial minority of undergraduates who rowed Goldie last year and are looking for promotion as they enter their second year of the fearsome Duncan Holland coaching regime.

At present, 20 rowers plus coxes remain in the squad and the next cuts are likely to take place in the New Year. The crews will be away on foreign training camps in warmer climes during the Christmas period before regrouping at Goldie Boathouse in the second week of January for the final run up to the race.



MICHAEL DERRINGER

News from the River



This weekend we had the privilege to hear the insight of two individuals very close to the team, both with first-hand experience in humility. On Saturday we were joined by Wayne Pommen, 2004 President and winning Blue, who was forced from the squad just days before the 2003 race when a PLA launch crashed into the Cambridge boat, breaking his wrist and ending his year.

It would have been easy for Wayne to blame any one of a number of parties responsible for the accident. It was extremely tempting to leave England for his spot on Canada's 2004 Olympic Squad. Eight months of training had been negated in an instant by factors he had no control over.

Instead, he chose to stay in Cambridge. He made the technical changes he admittedly was too stubborn to make in his first year and bought into the program with all the enthusiasm of a novice oarsman. The result? In a reversal of the previous year's fortunes, Wayne captained the 2004 crew to a resounding victory.

Arrogance would have led to unmet potential; humility fostered unparalleled success.

Sunday afternoon, Dr Mark de Rond, who splits his time between teaching at the Judge and sharing his insight with the squad, gave us a presentation on lessons learned from last year's crew. Central to the tenets he emphasized was the theme of humility. The final point he made – a seeming paradox when first delivered – was that 'it can make sense to sacrifice competence so to improve performance.' He cited both the 'lovable fool' and the 'competent jerk', and extolled on how the former will often beat out the latter in the realms of both business management and high-level sport. One must exhibit flexibility to benefit a team; star status alone will not suffice.

Back to my flatmate Trevor. Before I cut him off, he suggested that humility was the most noble and honourable trait. When adhered to, it invokes the images of life's emotional successes – the kind of victories rewarding despite one's confidence in ability. Forgotten, the outcome can be disastrous. Oedipus allegorically married his mother and faced an unenviable, yet self-imposed, blinding by her own brooches.

We learn humility in all aspects of life: some in the boardroom, and some on the water. Some, I suppose, tragically, after blinding themselves. Yet despite the individual context in which humility is taught, the real achievement lies in applying that knowledge to all other facets of life.

And thus, I can say with some confidence, that of all the intangibles I wish to bring forth from my experience at Cambridge, I hope that an appreciation for humility, applied to all future challenges, will find a place at the top of the list.

Spencer Griffin Hunsberger

Man with a job to do: skipper Ross Blake on the Big Match

HENRY STANNARD

Next Sunday morning, a lone figure in a turquoise jacket will saddle up his trusty twelve-gear and ride to the homes of fifty or so strapping young men, who, by the time he makes the final few stops on his grand tour of Cambridge accommodation, will know whether they have made the cut for the Varsity Match.

Ross Blake, ex-Bath and Bristol scrum half, capped internationally at U21 level and now captain of Cambridge Rugby, is burdened with this task. "Obviously there are going to be some very disappointed people – a lot of places have been really up for grabs this year and there are still a lot of players in contention – but I will also be bringing great happiness to lots of people", he says, confessing that he still has no idea how he personally will respond to the emotional havoc he will wreak that day.

It certainly is a unique situation for a player of Blake's standing, but he appears to revel in it. Admitting that he "grew bored of professional rugby", two years ago he swapped the tedious realm of professional sporting stardom for the exciting world of Economics at Hughes Hall and has never looked back. Having been elected captain by the squad of last year's victory, he is taking his job very seriously, and is relishing the prospect of leading the team out against possibly one of the strongest Oxford sides in recent history.

Led by Cambridge reject Joe Roff, who was accepted to do PPE without an interview, Oxford have been in ominous form all season, losing only two matches, but none of that matters. "It suits us to be underdogs," he says "We haven't had the greatest of seasons and have been really unlucky with injuries, but deep down we know how good we are – it's a one off game and it's them who will have to deal with all the pressure going into it". The knack to winning a Varsity match for Blake is simple,

"You want to get your best 15 players out on the pitch, adopt a style to suit them and then make sure that they can handle the pressure – some players go into their shell but we're confident that this year our squad will all step up together". Blessed with the first thoroughbred fly half to play for Cambridge in ten years, Ross Broadfoot, whose recovery from injury has coincided with a resurgence in the form of the side, has led him to believe that "our first fifteen are certainly a match for their first fifteen, and we know that whatever happens it's going to be a really tight game".

Whereas the Varsity match at its peak in the mid-nineties used to attract crowds of up to 70,000, recent years have seen a drop to around 40,000, which, along with the birth of professionalism diverting future superstars from academia, has been seen by some commentators as a sign of the diminishing relevance of the fixture. Blake rejects this criticism, stating that "the Autumn internationals have meant that ours is no longer the first game of the season at Twickenham, but we think switching the game to later on Thursday this year will attract more spectators."

He sees the future of the Varsity match, at one stage almost completely dominated by antipodean imports, as becoming a more British fixture, with a number of ex-pros forgoing a final contract to come to university being increasingly supplemented by talented undergraduates, which can only be beneficial to their development. He thinks that "some of the younger members of the squad have really come on this year through playing with experienced guys like John Blaikie" and that "every player here has the capacity to play at professional level, if they want to."

So Joe Roff beware – The Light Blue Legion are not going to surrender the Bowring Bowl without a fight.



Coach's Corner

Tony Rodgers
Blues Head Coach



Tony Rodgers is the Blues team coach and played for Cambridge 1968-70. He is also a fellow at Hughes Hall.

How does this team compare to the last few years?

The first XV are still as strong, but we're lacking some of the strength in depth of the last few years, especially in the backs, but we've put most of our injuries behind us now and are starting to hit some form.

What is your role as coach?

Well it's the captain that runs the show – Dick and myself are just

appendages really to help with the organisation and training – we tell him what we think about selection, but it is always him who picks the team.

Inside Track on Oxford?

We went to see them last week and they're a strong forward side – plenty of driving mauls. Joe Roff is now playing at inside centre and he's got a massive left boot, so we can expect plenty of tactical kicking over the top.

Any good anecdotes?

Gavin Hastings, when he was captain in 1985, started singing O Flower of Scotland to a group of thirteen Englishmen and a Nigerian in his final huddle – inspiring to a Scot but the others didn't really know what to do so sheepishly had to sing along.

Is there a knack to winning the Varsity match?

Most definitely – we have to make the most of what we've got at the time, and that means training correctly – this year we've brought in some top level coaches for one-off sessions, like Shaun Edwards for the defence. We also like to come in as underdogs as it puts more pressure on Oxford.

The fifteen to

The Pack



Jon Dawson

Position:
Tight-head Prop
Blue debut: Varsity '06
College: St. Edmund's
Height: 6ft
Weight: 116kg

Rock of the front row, brings experience and brute force to the team



Joe Clark

Position:
Hooker
Blue debut: Varsity '05
College: St. Edmund's
Height: 6'1"
Weight: 112kg

Dynamic hooker, useful in the loose with a surprising burst of pace



Anthony Fitzpatrick

Position:
Loose-head Prop
College: Caius
Height: 6ft
Weight: 110kg

Often overlooked but crucial in the set piece and puts in a lot of work at the breakdown



Jon Blaikie

Position:
Lock
Blue debut: Varsity '05
College: Hughes Hall
Height: 6'7"
Weight: 110kg

Last year's captain, offers leadership and experience to the pack



Trevor Boynton

Position:
Lock
Blue debut: Varsity '06
College: Hughes Hall
Height: 6'6"
Weight: 110kg

Hard-hitting South African, brings brawn and aggression to the loose



Rich Bartholomew

Position:
Blind-side flanker
Blue debut: Varsity '05
College: Jesus
Height: 6'2"
Weight: 104kg

Vital at the breakdown, rampant in the loose and wins turnovers



Joe Wheeler

Position:
Open-side flanker
College: St. Edmund's
Height: 6ft
Weight: 95kg

Mobile back row forward, good with the ball in hand and making covering tackles



James Lumby

Position:
No. 8
Blue debut: Varsity '06
College: Hughes Hall
Height: 6'6"
Weight: 109kg

Really physical player. Crucial ball carrier and leads the pack from the front

Key Man

Key Clashes

In the centres:

Chris Lewis and Sandy Reid vs Joe Roff

The undergraduate Cambridge duo take on the incredible experience of Oxford's captain. Capped 86 times by Australia, Roff was, until this year, the all-time Super Rugby top try scorer. Joe Ansbro had the measure of him last year and Cambridge need to suppress him again.

In the front row:

Jon Dawson vs Oliver Tomaszczyk

Both heavyweight powerhouses will look to dominate in the scrum and outmuscle each other at the breakdown. Dawson's weight advantage and wealth of experience should give him the edge over the exuberant young Pole.

At the breakdown:

Rich Bartholomew vs Anthony Jackson

In tight Varsity matches, ball retention and turnover are crucial. These players may well decide which way the game goes.



tackle Oxford

The Backs

Key Man



Ross Blake (c)
Position: Scrum-half
Blue debut: Varsity '06
College: Hughes Hall
Height: 5'9"
Weight: 82kg
Charismatic captain who leads by example, creative in attack

Key Man



Ross Broadfoot
Position: Fly-half
College: Hughes Hall
Height: 6ft
Weight: 94kg
Crucial playmaker with a massive boot. Rock solid in defence and a good distributor



James Wellwood
Position: Wing
College: St. Edmund's
Height: 6ft
Weight: 95kg
Powerful and evasive runner with the ball, clinical finishing ability and a prodigious try scorer



Chris Lewis
Position: Centre
Blue debut: Varsity '06
College: St. Catharine's
Height: 6'1"
Weight: 91kg
A physical centre who enjoys contact and crash-ing through midfield



Sandy Reid
Position: Centre
College: St. John's
Height: 5'10"
Weight: 85kg
Quick footed and nimble, a lightning burst of pace puts this fresher through gaps



Andy Stevenson
Position: Wing
College: St. Catharine's
Height: 6'2"
Weight: 95kg
Pace man of the side, likes to beat men on the outside and counter-at-tacking down the right



Hamish Murray
Position: Full-back
Blue debut: Varsity '06
College: St. Edmund's
Height: 5'11"
Weight: 84kg
Strong under the high ball and a reliable kicker from hand

Varsity's predicted XV

Let's hope the pack can scrap their way to three-in-a-row



JONNY UFTON

With the big day at Twickenham almost upon us, I am left in a strange kind of limbo. Having been involved in the Varsity match for each of the last four years, this year I have to watch from pastures new (about time!). It is a strange sensation, not being involved, and even though the pressure, emotions and expectations of everyone involved are fraught for the next few weeks, I am deeply envious of their situation.

Even just recalling the traditions of selection, Port and Nuts, the presentation of the shirts, the tense last training session, team photos, heading up to London and the whole Varsity Matchday experience brings excited butterflies to my stomach; speak to any other ex-Blue and you will get the same answer.

So what of this year's team? Results have been varied, and like many in the current Cambridge clubhouse, one is tempted towards tentative comparisons with the Other Place. The Light Blues early season uncertainties and a run of poor results have been followed by a string of very encouraging performances. Early injuries, always a huge problem in such a short build-up, have meant that game time for the final 22 has been put at a premium. It has been a tricky balancing act for captain Ross Blake, choosing between giving all the opportunity to gain a

place and getting enough time to build the team spirit needed when it comes to the crunch at Twickenham.

It appears that the press will yet again focus on the clash between the Light Blue forwards and the Dark Blue backs, a contest which has defined the matches in recent years. Yet, and as a back it pains me to say this, the Varsity Match is invariably won in the forward exchanges, and this year will be no different. It is never the free-flowing, open spectacle we'd like it to be because there is so much at stake for the players; defences are tight and experience counts for a huge amount.

The back-bone of the team looks strong. The players will look to the experience of Jon Dawson, John Blaikie and Ross Blake to keep the team going forward. Ross Broadfoot, at fly-half, has shown his worth to the team on his return from injury and his point scoring ability cannot be under-estimated. It is also great to note the presence of so many undergraduates in the Blues set up this year, most notably Johnian Sandy Reid, who emulates most recently, Charlie Desmond in becoming a fixture in the side as a fresher.

Prescient views are often foolhardy, as the match is a total one-off. Because it is such a tense tussle, the result usually comes down to a single score and predictions for such narrow contests count for little. December 6 will be no different.

I'll be in the stands with the rest of the rabble, praying that the light blues can make it three wins in a row. I can tell you that it is an awful feeling being on the losing side, but if the forwards play to their potential and the half-backs can control the game then us old players in the crowd will have a very happy afternoon.



Waiting in the Wings



James Astbury
Position: Flanker
College: Hughes Hall
Height: 6ft
Weight: 99kg



Llewellyn Pilbeam
Position: Lock
College: Trinity
Height: 6'6"
Weight: 115kg



Pat Crossley
Position: Hooker
College: Homerton
Height: 6ft
Weight: 103kg



Tom Basey
Position: Scrum-half/wing
College: Hughes Hall
Height: 5'9"
Weight: 83kg



Tom Woolsey
Position: Hooker
Blue debut: Varsity '06
College: Queens'
Height: 6'1"
Weight: 100kg



James Greenwood
Position: Wing/full-back
College: Hughes Hall
Height: 6'1"
Weight: 91kg



Juliano Fiori
Position: No 8
College: Jesus
Height: 6'4"
Weight: 104kg



Ashwin Reddy
Position: Prop
College: Trinity
Height: 5'10"
Weight: 96kg



Tom Malaney
Position: Open-side flanker
Blue debut: Varsity '06
College: St. Edmunds
Height: 6ft
Weight: 96kg

The form guide

Cambridge - recent reasons to be cheerful

DATE	SCORE	OPPOSITION
09/09/07	AWAY LOST 8-46	KANTO GAKUIN
16/09/07	AWAY LOST 19-44	WASEDA, JAPAN
30/09/07	AWAY WON 29-25	OLD BLUES
02/10/07	HOME LOST 22-34	TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
09/10/07	AWAY WON 27-20	LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY
15/10/07	HOME LOST 7-47	SARACENS
22/10/07	HOME LOST 12-33	LEICESTER TIGERS
30/10/07	AWAY LOST 12-29	ESHER RFC
05/11/07	HOME WON 18-17	LONDON IRISH
14/11/07	HOME WON 26-24	CRAWSHAYS WELSH XV
21/11/07	HOME WON 43-24	STEELE-BODGER XV

Oxford - a barnstorming season

DATE	SCORE	OPPOSITION
15/09/07	AWAY WON 24-7	NYAC 1st XV
15/09/07	AWAY WON 43-7	NYAC / OLD BLUES
22/09/07	AWAY WON 44-0	AMERICAN COLLEGEIATE XV
29/09/07	HOME WON 48-14	KANTO GAKUIN UNIVERSITY
06/10/07	HOME WON 34-0	TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
15/10/07	AWAY WON 33-11	MOSELEY
22/10/07	HOME LOST 19-50	NORTHAMPTON
29/10/07	HOME LOST 12-52	OSPREYS
05/11/07	AWAY WON 33-14	EXETER CHIEFS
14/11/07	HOME WON 34-17	MAJOR STANLEYS xv
19/11/07	AWAY WON 25-19	LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY

SPORT



Rugby p38
Can the Blues make it 3-in-a-row?

Blues roger Steele-Bodgers

» Oxford's Roff lays down the challenge then sees Cambridge thump invitational XV

CAMBRIDGE
TRIES: MURRAY (2), REID (2),
STEVENSON (2), CLARK
CONS: MURRAY (4)

43

**STEELE-
BODGER XV**

24

GEORGE TOWERS
Chief Sports Editor

In what is always the second biggest match of the season, the Blues took on Micky Steele-Bodger's invitational XV at a packed Grange Road. The game was all the more important as Joe Roff and his Oxford team were watching from the sideline. In front of an expectant crowd, the Blues hoped to build on their two match winning streak and maintain their momentum with just weeks to go before the big game in London.

The Steele-Bodger XV, containing a number of old Blues and Irish international Kevin Maggs, enjoyed all the early territory and possession. They dominated the first ten minutes, probing the Cambridge defensive line and gaining ground via multiple phases of attacking play. The Bodgers were rewarded with the opening score of the match when Chris Ritchie rumbled over for a try, which came from some solid forwards play. Watt slotted the conversion, bringing the Bodgers a seven point lead.

Cambridge

A. Fitzpatrick, J. Clark, J. Dawson, L. Pilbeam, J. Blaikie, R. Bartholomew, J. Astbury, J. Fiori, T. Baise, R. Blake (c), J. Wellwood, S. Reid, C. Lewis, A. Stevenson, H. Murray.
Replacements: A. Reddy, A. Sanderson, P. Crossley, T. Boynton, J. Wheeler, T. Malaney, J. Greenwood, D. Akinluyi, J. Thompson

Steele-Bodger XV

N. Conlon, C. Ritchie, C. Hannan, C. O'Keefe, H. Head, R. Jenkins, S. Barlow, N. Alberts, G. Williams, J. Watt, N. Piggott, S. Wilson, K. Maggs (c), A. Hayle, O. Viney

Following the visitors' early onslaught, the Blues pulled themselves together and regrouped. Richard Bartholomew began to dominate the loose and put in some big hits resulting in a turnover for the Blues. Blake



SOPHIE PICKFORD

Hugely impressive fresher Sandy Reid, seen here in defensive mode, scored a brace of tries to sink the Bodgers

exploited the Bodgers' disorganisation at the back with several penetrative kicks that gained the Blues valuable territory. However the Blues failed to convert the territory into points as Hamish Murray sent his first penalty attempt wide the first of many misses during the match.

Twenty minutes into play, Murray linked with James Welwood to score the first of Cambridge's seven tries; Welwood made a powerful run down the left, beating several Bodger defenders before putting in the pass sending Murray in to score. The Blues followed up their score with continued attacking pressure; Blake led from the front, playing out of position at fly-half, with several inspired chip kicks, which had the Bodgers relentlessly on the

back foot. Andy Stevenson joined the attack from right wing, cutting an exceptional line, which would definitely have led to a try had his pass not resulted in a knock-on.

Towards the end of the first half the Blues were comfortably directing the pace of the match. A spell of rugged forward work saw the Blues camped on their opponents' try line, which resulted in a try for Andy Stevenson. Again Murray missed the conversion, but the Blues went into half time three points ahead with the score at 10-7.

Having been on top for the majority of the first half, the Blues started the second in the best way possible: moments in, after a blitz attack, Joe Clark smashed over the Bodgers' line, scoring Cambridge's third try of the

match. Minutes later, Murray scored his second try of the match, which he ran in right under the posts allowing himself an easy conversion.

Despite Cambridge's two tries in six minutes, the Bodgers weren't going to give up the fight. Several phases of attacking play resulted in Adrian Hayle scoring in the right corner, and the score was brought to 24-12. In the following moments the run of play returned to the Blues' favour; Sandy Reid burst through the defensive line and screamed through to score.

In the final moments of the match the games opened up and several tries were run in. Stevenson scored his second of the match, which was followed by a Bodger try in response. Sandy Reid wrapped up the match

with his second, following a cheeky dummy to the defence.

As ever, the Steele-Bodger match was an entertaining affair, but more importantly, after what has been a largely disappointing season, the Blues finally came together as a team. For the first time they performed to the level that has been expected of them all season. The forwards and backs interlinked smoothly, creating attractive rugby, but more importantly, rugby that led to tries. There are still areas that need work - Ross Broadfoot's place kicking was missed, but overall confidence is running high and if the Blues can replicate this performance against Oxford on 6th December, then they should be able to extend their winning streak in the game that really matters.

THE FEZENC PRESENTS...

S.U.A.D.

THURSDAY 29TH NOVEMBER 07

THE FEZ CLUB, 15 MARKET PASSAGE, CAMBRIDGE

Fosters £1.50 Vodka Sorted £1.50 DBL Vodka & Mixer £3.00 Wild Shots £1.00 2-4-1 Cocktails until 11:30pm