

Features

Torture Garden
Review **Page 18**



Sport

Rob Andrew
Interview **Page 30**



Arts

Martin Rowson
Exclusive cartoon and
interview **Page 16**



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VARSITY

The Independent Cambridge Student Newspaper since 1947

ARU makes desperate attempt to improve poll performance

VARSITY NEWS REPORTER

Emails leaked to Varsity from senior management at Anglia Ruskin University have revealed damning evidence of the University's encouragement of efforts by staff to hike ARU's National Student Survey results.

The NSS, which surveys over 300,000 students annually on their university experience, has been seen by ARU senior management as a way of improving their university's public reputation in the wake of having finished bottom of the 2007 Sunday Times University League table after students slated ARU on grounds of "teaching, organisation and management".

An email sent in the wake of the publication of the Sunday Times League Table from Vice Chancellor Mike Thorne highlights awareness that "everyone who reads the [Sunday Times League Table] was deeply shocked to find us bottom" and discusses the fact that "we need to respond to [this] pretty smartly, both internally and externally."

This manifested itself several months later, not in the form of a drive to improve standards of "teaching, organisation and management" but in an missive advocating a push to redress the damage done to ARU's reputation through the NSS. A 31 January circular from Dr Paul McHugh, Director of Student Affairs, explained that although "it is important that we do not attempt to influence students [responding to the NSS] unduly... I do think it's reasonable to point out... that NSS results are increasingly seen as a key component of a University's external reputation and that reputation will be attached to the degree with which they leave us".

McHugh added that lecturers should finish their lectures early and encourage students to head down to the computer terminals

"dedicated to the NSS" located all over the Cambridge and Chelmsford campuses so that they can fill in "a good online response". He advocates that lecturers "keep pumping out the message" and "get students to march off to a terminal straight away" in addition to informing them of other colleagues who will be sent "out and about... looking for final year students to nobble". At no point in any of the emails is any reference made to any attempts to improve the issues complained about by ARU students in the NSS.

Responding to suggestions that the survey's findings might be skewed by students' self-interest, McHugh said that he did "not approve of crude attempts to persuade students to give their Uni

"it is important that we do not attempt to influence students unduly"

"good marks" but that he did "think it is worth explaining to students how the survey is increasingly being used outside the higher education sector."

McHugh emphasised the role of the NSS as a channel for feedback, and was joined in his praise of ARU tactics by Frankie Whiffen, Anglia Ruskin Student Union (ARSU) President, who told Varsity: "a lot of students are apathetic and won't visit their student union, but this is an easy way to access way to contact the university.... The university is always trying to gain feedback. This is how it works at Anglia Ruskin." He added: "we're not set in our ways, we're dynamic and changing."

The NSS push involved "colleagues out and about at Cambridge and Chelmsford looking for

final year students to nobble" and NSS stickers on sandwiches sold in the university cafeteria.

In a later email McHugh requested that lecturers "do your bit by discussing the survey" with finalists, who would be sent NSS reminders, and informed staff that there would be survey-dedicated computers in both AR campuses' libraries. In a memo to staff, McHugh suggests that "More enthusiastic colleagues may decide to allow a class to finish early and that students are directed to nearby computer terminals to complete the survey!"

Asked if this was an appropriate use of resources, Paul McHugh said that it was "a convenience for our students" and added that ARSU had also provided dedicated terminals. As to whether finalists should be putting the survey before their work, McHugh told Varsity that "students have been reluctant to complete the NSS online which means that they are often pestered by phone later", and argued that "this is more disruptive and disturbing" than the university's promotion of the survey. Whiffen told Varsity: "It's not aggressive marketing. You get so much stuff, like junkmail, sent to you all the time."

CUSU, who staged a protest in which they burnt copies of the survey and promotional material outside their old Trumpington Street offices last year, remain highly critical of the survey and promotes opting-out. CUSU is now the only union in the country to do so after Oxford and Warwick's student unions ended their opposition.

Last year Cambridge was the only higher education institution in the country not to reach the 50% response rate required by the NSS to publish its findings. The then CUSU Education Officer, Jacob

CONTINUES ON PAGE TWO



MICHAEL DERRINGER

Lighting up the lawn

Over 200 students took part in "Orange Wednesday", an event organised by Cambridge University Amnesty International to call for the free trial or release of inmates at Guantanamo Bay.

Fashion

Varsity Fashion Editors chronicle
London Fashion Week

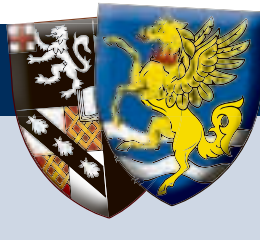
» **Pages 16-17**



Face Off

Robinson crusade: Churchill
fight them on the beaches

» **Page 14**



Interview

Mitchell and Webb on
That Mitchell and Webb Look

» **Page 21**



In Brief

Foie gras protestors attack top restaurant

Cambridge restaurant Midsummer House was sprayed with graffiti by animal rights protesters opposed to it serving foie gras. Responsibility for the attack, which took place on Saturday, was claimed by the Animal Liberation Front, who said that the restaurant “made itself a target by continuing to support and profit from the horrific animal abuse involved in the production of foie gras”. Protestors glued door locks, damaged windows and spray-painted slogans such as “Stop Selling Foie Gras” and “Ban Foie Gras” on the Michelin-starred restaurant. Police are currently investigating the criminal damage which took place in the incident. But the attack was not the first example of protest against the use of foie gras: on Valentine’s Day, at a peaceful protest organised by Animal Rights Cambridge, campaigners carried placards saying: “Foie gras = diseased liver” and “Don’t buy into cruelty”.



Clementine Dowley

South eastern links

The University has formed a new partnership with a university in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In the first deal of its kind between Cambridge and an Eastern European state, staff from the Cambridge Institute for Manufacturing, part of the University’s Department of Engineering, will found a post-graduate course and an industrial support unit to assist the development of manufacturing companies in the region. The agreement between Cambridge and St Cyril and Methodius University, which is based in the Macedonian capital, Skopje, was made official last week with a Memorandum of Understanding, the signing of which was welcomed by Macedonian Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski.

Ricky Power Sayeed

Fee protest flop

Education Not For Sale staged a protest against top-up fees on Thursday at Anglia Ruskin University. However, the organiser Richard Braude, a part-time member of the CUSU Exec, had failed to obtain a necessary permit from Cambridge Council. Police arrived to shutdown the illegal event, only to discover that so few people had turned up that the crowd was not big enough to qualify as a protest.

Isabel Shapiro

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Head, described the NSS as a waste of “precious resources” and its content as “over-simplistic to the point of meaninglessness”. He was highly critical of the “aggressive marketing of the survey”, in which the NSS would telephone students up to eight times to encourage them to complete the survey.

Cambridge has so far refused to pass on students’ phone numbers to the NSS.

Last month Pete Coulthard, current CUSU Academic Affairs Officer, condemned the University for “leaning on the Heads of Houses (e.g. Masters) to put pressure on JCR Presidents to encourage students to participate”. Coulthard also criticised the format

Cambridge supports the NSS and has put pressure on CUSU to change its stance

of the survey, its over-simplicity and timing, which he claimed has disrupted finalists’ work in past years.

CUSU is lobbying the NSS to make a ‘bank’ of additional questions specific to collegiate universities available in the survey. This year’s survey for Cambridge will contain one question on extra opportunities afforded by a collegiate university.

The University supports the NSS and has put pressure on CUSU to change its stance. It has argued that abstaining from the NSS might adversely affect Cambridge’s reputation for student satisfaction and could discourage state school applications. In response, Coulthard noted Cambridge’s high placing in the league tables for satisfaction, and described the “the deliberate intertwining” the issues of survey participation and access as “unnecessary and unwelcome” and “misleading”.

Access overhaul

» ‘Stalled’ recruitment initiative under review

MICHAEL STOTHARD

The University is to radically overhaul its undergraduate recruitment strategy in the recognition that its initiative to become less elitist has “stalled”.

Despite costly recent recruiting attempts, the proportion of Cambridge students from state schools has actually declined over the last few years. Two years ago 58% of Cambridge students were from state schools compared to 56% last year. The figures for this year’s intake are expected to be even lower still.

“Progress has stalled. We’re not happy with where we are so we are rolling up our sleeves and working even harder,” said Director of Cambridge Admissions Geoff Parks.

Cambridge is planning to market itself as the cheap university, with low rents, virtually no transport costs and access to free laptops. It will also stress that graduates can expect a strong “premium” on future earnings. It hopes that this will tackle the myth that Cambridge is more expensive than other universities.

From October, any student whose parents earn less than £25,000 per year will automatically qualify for a full grant.

These initiative announcements follow mounting government pressure for top universities to become more inclusive. Last week the Higher Education Minister, Bill Rammell, heavily criticised Cambridge and Oxford for admitting just one in ten stu-

dents from lower socio-economic backgrounds. This is compared to other Russell Group universities which accepted one in five students from more disadvantaged backgrounds.

The revamped admissions policy will now put “significant” new funds into recruiting pupils from

Cambridge is planning to market itself as the cheap university

middle ranking state schools. “We have put so much attention on the hardest-to-reach students that we have overlooked those from reasonably successful maintained-sector schools,” Parks told the Guardian newspaper.

This is a significant change of tact from a policy that had previously been focusing on “people who might not even be thinking about university at all,” said Parks.

Academics will also try and engage with state-school teachers, in the light of Sutton Trust research which found that half would never or only rarely encourage their brightest pupils to apply to Cambridge or Oxford.

Oxford is currently carrying out research to find out why its attempts to widen participation to disadvantaged students are also failing. It currently accepts 53.7% of its student body from

state schools. As in Cambridge, this figure is declining.

The recent move to abolish the separate application form is hoped to make the process of applying to Cambridge easier and less daunting for state school pupils.

The Chairman of the Sutton Trust, Sir Peter Lampl, said that he was encouraged by the latest news: “Any moves by Cambridge and other top-ranked universities to attract more non-privileged students – and to break down the barriers which prevent them from applying – are very welcome. There is a particular need to make sure that young people are fully aware of the bursaries and other financial support on offer, as our most recent research showed that non-privileged students are often ignorant of this.”

» 58%

PROPORTION OF CAMBRIDGE STUDENTS FROM STATE SCHOOLS IN 2006

» 56%

PROPORTION OF CAMBRIDGE STUDENTS FROM STATE SCHOOLS IN 2007

Application process simplified

OLLY WEST

The University’s application process is to become simpler, following an announcement that the separate Cambridge Application Form (CAF) is being scrapped. The £10 application fee will also be abolished.

Previous candidates were asked to fill in the CAF in addition to completing their UCAS application. The changes will take effect in October.

Cambridge University’s Director of Admissions, Geoff Parks, said: “We are pleased to be able to make these changes now to simplify the process of applying to Cambridge and bring it in line with that of other universities.”

The application process will remain largely unchanged. Applicants will still be able to choose their college through UCAS, or submit an open application. The earlier UCAS deadline of October 15 will remain in place for all those applying to Cambridge due to the organisational requirements of interviewing over 12,000 candidates. A supplementary questionnaire, as used by many universities, will replace the CAF and it is hoped that this will be completed online.

However, the simplification of the process is seen as crucial in bringing Cambridge’s application

process in line with that of other universities, thus reducing perceived elitism. It is hoped that this more straightforward and standard process will further encourage applications from students from “non-traditional” backgrounds.

Parks said: “We have been looking forward to the day when we could discontinue our separate application form since the University started work on the new internal student-records system, CamSIS. We are delighted that this is now becoming a reality. The change will benefit everyone concerned: applicants, their schools and colleges, and our admissions tutors and officers.”

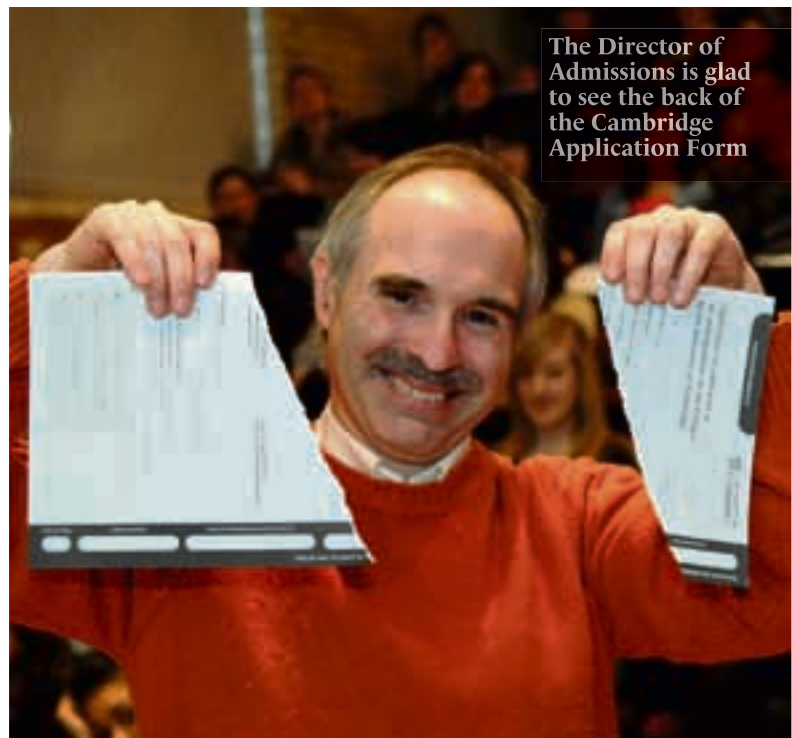
The Cambridge Special Access Scheme (CSAS), for applicants whose schooling has been disrupted or disadvantaged or whose family and school have little history of higher education, will continue. A form, downloadable from the Undergraduate Admissions pages of the University website, is still required for these applications.

The CAF is over 50 years old, and thinking in the state-sector is that it only serves to extenuate the perception that Cambridge is not a “normal” university to which all are welcome to apply. State schools and colleges welcomed the removal of both a real and perceived barrier to admissions, and the news that the ap-

plication system would become less daunting.

Discontinuing the CAF is the first major step in the University’s campaign to “compete more aggressively” for state students. This campaign also includes renewed plans to increase engagement between academics and state

school teachers, after Sutton Trust research shows that half of state-school teachers would “never or very rarely” encourage their students to apply to Oxbridge. Parks: “And naturally we hope that, as a result, gifted students all over the country will feel encouraged to apply to the University.”



The Director of Admissions is glad to see the back of the Cambridge Application Form

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Students don jumpsuits for Guantanamo protest

CATHERINE LOUGH

Hundreds of Cambridge students and lecturers yesterday took part in Amnesty's "Orange Wednesday" in order to register their anger at the continued detention of inmates at Guantanamo.

The event, organised by Cambridge University Amnesty International, involved over 200 participants from Downing, Caius, Trinity, King's and Emma donning the infamous orange jumpsuits to protest against the human rights abuses taking place in the "War on Terror". The demonstration, which attracted widespread public attention as orange-clad students attended tutorials and punted down the Cam, culminated in volunteers congregating on King's Lawn in the shape of the Amnesty candle.

The day was organised as part of Cambridge University Amnesty's "Terrorism, Security and Human Rights" Campaign, which aims to highlight abuses of civil liberties in the "War on Terror". Chair of Cambridge Amnesty International Misha Foxell said, "Whilst most people in Cambridge support an end to human rights abuses in illegal detention centres in principle, there's also a lot of ignorance about the issues. Hopefully everyone who speaks to someone in a jumpsuit will go away knowing and caring more about the horrific abuses we know are taking place in detention centres across the world."

Observer Annie Ring said, "It was so inspiring to see all these like-minded people making a stand. But haunting too, knowing what those suits signify: a space created to stand outside of the law, a place where the prisoners have no access to their rights. Guantanamo Bay is an abomination and the shame of our era."

The detention camp also drew criticism from senior members of the University. Dr Mary Beard, Classics editor of the Times Literary Supplement, said, "I'm participating to draw attention to the whole issue of illegal detention. And because I feel embarrassed by the British govern-



Protestors make Amnesty candle on King's lawn

CATHERINE LOUGH

ment's passivity - they have, in effect, acquiesced in this outrageous crime against human and civil rights. I just hope the one-size jump suits will be big enough to fit me!"

Dr Beard's department was the most active in the demonstration, but overall 11 lecturers from the Classics, Law, English, Geography, History and SPS faculties donned orange jumpsuits to participate in the day. Dr Priya Gopal, lecturer at the English faculty, said: "I think it's really important that lecturers get involved with student activism. Especially as we are a humanities department, we do need to stand up for wider humane values."

The situation of detainees is unde-

niably grim. Under the jurisdiction of a country founded by pilgrims fleeing religious persecution, Muslim detainees are not allowed to wash before prayers, denying them the right to freedom of religion. Copies of the Koran are kicked or defaced and prisoners are stripped naked before female soldiers. There have been prolonged hunger strikes and over 350 acts of self-harm in 2003 alone. Of the 40 who have attempted suicide, three were successful in 2006, whilst two detainees have died in mysterious circumstances. Some are force-fed, a practice human rights lawyer Clive Stafford Smith described as "excruciatingly painful." The use of "waterboarding" and "strappado", a torture

technique dating from the Spanish Inquisition, have attracted negative public attention yet continue to be used.

Only 10 detainees out of more than 500 have had the right to a trial, and such trials were of questionable integrity given that they were conducted by the US Military itself. Dr Markus Gehring, a Fellow of Robinson College specialising in international law, said, "I think the existence of a prison camp as such is not against international law but I would argue that its operation with elements of torture, and failure to offer a fair trial to the internees, is."

Dr Molly Warrington, of the Department of Geography, said, "I find

it extraordinary that the United States, which prides itself on the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, uses space in another state - one it despises - to engage in human rights abuses which contravene its laws. That Bush can defend water-boarding and Guantanamo Bay, and still claim that the US occupies the moral high ground, leaves me absolutely speechless."

Guantanamo is rapidly losing the US international face, drawing condemnation from various international leaders such as Angela Merkel, as well as presidential contenders Barack Obama and John McCain. Colin Powell has said if he could close the base tomorrow, he would.

Police intimidate Green Officer

SEBASTIAN WINTER

A week of peaceful protests and green achievements in Cambridge has been marred by "intimidating" police interference.

On Saturday, after the "Climate Changes - What Next?" conference, a flash mob convened in Market Square and activists hung a banner from Great St Mary's Church.

However, earlier in the week, CUSU Ethical Affairs co-Chair Dan Chandler was called upon by two police officers, one a Detective Inspector, demanding to know who was responsible for the organisation of the event. Chandler said that the police were unsure what a flash mob was. "They reeled off public order acts to me, and said that they had 50 officers on standby just in case, which is pretty intimidating when they've just turn up unannounced in your room", he told Varsity.

But in the event, Saturday's

peaceful protests took place without confrontation. Despite the constabulary's interference, the flash mob converged in Market Square at 1pm, confusing onlookers by carrying umbrellas whilst the sun was

"It's pretty intimidating when police just turn up at your doorstep unannounced"

shining. The various incidents of "creative outreach" organised by the national Student Climate Project, also involved activists handing out free cakes to passers-by in central Cambridge, and draping a Student Climate Project banner across the tower of Great St Mary's Church.

The "Climate Changes - What Next?" conference which followed these events attracted more than 100 students from around the UK, and featured speakers from senior members of the University as well as from national organizations. It is planned that a similar conference, organised by the Cambridge Climate Coalition, will take place next year.

There was also success for CUSU's Go Greener! Campaign this week when Downing signed up to the Cambridge Climate Change Charter. The Charter, which calls for Cambridge to lead global attempts to tackle damage to the environment, is a broad public commitment designed to address the environmental impact of Cambridge-based organizations and to promote awareness of green issues. Downing, which has also developed plans to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, is the first college to sign the Charter after the University did so last October.

A is for Artwork, B is for Business, C is for Copy, D is for Deadline, E is for Editor, F is for Firefox, G is for Gill Sans, H is for Helvetica, I is for Interview, J is for Juggling, K is for King, L is for Listings, M is for Microphone, N is for Newspaper, O is for Office, P is for Panic (on a Tuesday), Q is for Quark Xpress, R is for Roughts, S is for Sport, T is for Time, U is for University, V is for Varsity, W is for Website, X is for X-phone, Y is for Yearbook, Z is for Zapf Dingbats.

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Deadline for applications will be March 16th 2008.

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Time - 6:30pm - 8:30pm

Location - Mong Hall, Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge

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Varsityprofile

» Vicky Kleiner

HUGO GYE

Vicky Kleiner likes old things. If pressed, she will name “cucumber sandwiches and rose-patterned wallpaper” as examples of the world she feels is on the brink of disappearing. This is why she has thrown a tea party in her room in Trinity every Sunday afternoon since she arrived at Cambridge in 2006.

“I’m sad that ‘tea’ doesn’t really happen any more,” she said. “It’s a great way to bond: give people tea and cake and they’ll love you. Although that might not work in Afghanistan.”

Vicky was brought up in London, and went to Queen’s Gate, a small

“it is for her tea parties that Vicky has earned her legendary status

private girls’ school in Kensington. She was an only child, except for her dog Rupert. Her father works in the art world, which influenced her

choice of degree: she is in her second year of reading History of Art.

“My parents taught me to be a good hostess” – a skill she has demonstrated over and over again at Cambridge. Her interests include archery, real tennis and Jane Austen, and after graduating she plans to do an MPhil, before herself embarking on a career in art. Last term she founded the Trinity Arts Society – “Trinity Tarts” – and is also head of the college’s Music Society.

But it is for her tea parties that Vicky has earned her legendary status. They started small last year, but have now grown into a University institution.

“There’s something very special about the mid-afternoon; I just wanted to give everyone an afternoon away from the internet, Cindies and writing essays”, she said.

To that end, Vicky goes to Fortnum & Mason every Friday afternoon to ensure the best selection of cakes. There are now so many guests that she quickly runs out of cups every week, and it is not uncommon to see people sipping their tea from martini glasses. The atmosphere is generally well-behaved: when asked whether there was ever rowdiness, Vicky replies, “The worst I’ve ever seen is people slipping vodka into their tea, but I don’t really mind.”

» 95

NUMBER OF GUESTS INVITED TO TEA
LAST SUNDAY

» Earl Grey

EVERY TIME

» 40

NUMBER OF CAKES PURCHASED
EACH WEEK

» 1920s

FAVOURITE DECADE



Future of Portuguese secured for five years

OLLY WEST

The future of Portuguese studies looks brighter after the University signed a long-term protocol agreement with the Instituto Camões of Portugal.

The move, which follows last year’s student-led “Save Portuguese” campaign, will provide for a Camões Language Teaching Officer for five years starting in October 2008.

The new agreement is seen as the

first major step in enhancing and expanding a subject which has twice in recent years been singled out for official praise as one of the University’s success stories. Portuguese language and culture studies have also been marked as a priority of the Cambridge 800th Anniversary Fundraising Campaign.

Dr Maria Manuel Lisboa, Reader in Portuguese at St. John’s College, was pleased by the announcement but insisted that this was no more than the subject deserved. She said: “Whilst

naturally I am delighted with this statement by the university authorities, it is worth bearing in mind that what is now happening in support of Portuguese is no more than what a well-managed institution should have done long before for a subject it has repeatedly singled out for praise, whilst simultaneously allowing the ongoing restriction of its growth by the ranks of departmental middle management. To paraphrase a well-known nineteenth-century women’s rights’ activist, ‘I ask no special favours for my subject, only that heavy feet be taken off its neck.’”

Although a spokesperson for the University stated that “the importance of Portuguese is widely recognized at Cambridge”, it was only just over twelve months ago that the subject made both local and national headlines for all the wrong reasons.

In January 2007 it was announced that Portuguese, the world’s fifth most widely spoken language, was to be removed as a “full” Tripos subject, meaning that no student could study it as one of their two main languages. Provision was to be reduced to the already existing “Pg3” paper, open to all undergraduates as an option in Part Ib. The news was met with widespread outrage and students led a campaign of petitions, protests and letter-writing which eventually saw the decision reversed.

It would have become impossible to acquire any more than a basic reading knowledge through studying Portuguese at Cambridge, and would have had the added effect of denying students the chance to spend their year abroad in Portugal, Brazil or Portuguese-speaking Africa. The MML Faculty has since announced that even Pg3 students will be able to spend their year abroad in Portuguese-speaking countries.



Students campaigning outside the Senate House to save Portuguese last year

Mill Road Tesco gets the go-ahead

» Government watchdog backs big stores

ISABEL SHAPIRO
News Editor

The No Mill Road Tesco Campaign has been dealt a cruel blow by a government watchdog.

To the dismay of protesters who have fought long and hard against the proposal for a Tesco on Mill Road, the Competition Commission has approved the supermarket’s expansion plans.

A national inquiry was launched following widespread concerns that supermarkets were threatening local shops, but the Commission concluded that big stores such as Tesco are necessary competition to maintain high levels of service.

“UK grocery retailers are in general delivering a good deal for consumers” said a spokesperson from the Commission, dashing campaigners’ hopes for government intervention to put a stop to the Tesco Mill Road take-over.

The street is loved by local residents and students alike for its unique collection of independent food shops and restaurants. But many fear that Mill Road will be monopolized by the retail giant, some even believe the road will become a “ghost town” once Tesco opens its doors.

Emma Lindsay founder of the No Mill Road Tesco campaign has criticised the Competition Commission for the way it has handled the investigation, describing it as a “toothless watchdog.”

“I think that the Commission should have taken into account

the impact of Tesco on small shops like we have on Mill Road. Tesco could destroy the place as we know and love it if it opens there. It already has more than 50 per cent of the grocery market in Cambridge.”

Although protesters have been left disheartened and upset by the government’s go-ahead, the Commission have also proposed measures intended specifically to safeguard smaller shops. A new supermarket ombudsman will be set up to guard against large corporations’ domination and manipulation of the independent food market.

But the No Mill Road Tesco Campaign have no plans to back

“Tesco could destroy the place as we know and love it”

down, in fact the campaign seems stronger than ever. Over 4,000 people have signed their on-street petition and last week BBC Radio 4’s ‘Today’ program featured the Cambridge campaign as its main case study.

Lindsay refuses to accept that the Tesco proposal will become reality and counts on the continued support of campaigners to fight the battle to the end. “It is very disappointing but the fight will go on. I don’t think the people of Cambridge will give up lightly.”

Top students choose Ivy League over Oxbridge

KAROLINA SAAR

An increasing number of British students holding offers from both Cambridge or Oxford and leading American universities opt for the latter.

This year showed a 38% increase on figures from 2006 in the number of British undergraduates starting at Ivy League universities.

The Dean of Admissions at the University of Pennsylvania, Eric J. Kaplan, confirms this trend. "The University of Pennsylvania has indeed seen a rise in applicants from the United Kingdom. In fact, since 2005 alone, there has been a more than 35% increase in the number of applicants applying to Penn from the UK, and in 2007 75% of these students accepted Penn's offer of admission", he said.

At Cambridge 150 applicants turn down their offers each year, but the University does not see this as a threat to British academia. A spokesperson from the Cambridge Admissions Office said, "This phenomenon is only

"We do not have the financial resources to compete with leading American universities"

of slight concern at the moment. The numbers of students who turn down Cambridge offers are still very small, and the number who do so to take up places at US universities are an very small proportion of these."

Analysts have stressed the high level of financial support as a factor that attracts British students to study in the US, as in most



cases Ivy League institutions offer better bursary arrangement than their British counterparts. In 2000 Yale introduced a policy admitting international students

without regard to financial need, and offering bursaries covering all costs of attendance. Academic criteria are now the only aspect considered taken into account in the admission process. Harvard have recently introduced a similar policy.

The Cambridge Admissions Office admits that the financial aspect can be seen as a potential cause of the increase. "We do not have the financial resources to compete with leading American universities and for the foreseeable future our priority will remain providing financial assistance to those who need it."

Money might not be the only reason for choosing to study in the US. The flexibility of the major and minor system allows students more freedom in shaping their educations. Many students are strongly drawn by the focus on school spirit at American universities and the prospect of adventure in another country.

While aware of the competition from US universities, Cambridge maintains that the academic quality of an undergraduate Oxbridge degree goes beyond what American institutions can offer. "An undergraduate at Cambridge will receive far more teaching from world-leading academics than a counterpart at a US institution where large proportions of the teaching are done by teaching assistants, and the academics focus on research and teaching post-graduates."

Cambridge medics come out on top

ROBERT CRAIG AND
LUCAS FEAR-SEGAL

Recent research undertaken by a team at University College London has shown huge variations in the performance of doctors from different medical schools.

A research team at University College reviewed the individual performances of graduate medical students in the three-part MRCP examination, the obligatory prerequisite to specialist medical training and eventual practice as a medical consultant. Analysis of the examination performance of 5, 827 students from 19 UK medical schools between 2003 and 2005 found that whilst 83% of Oxbridge graduates passed the test on their initial attempt, only 32% from Liverpool and 38% from Dundee were successful. Professor Chris McManus, who led the investigation, stated that the findings categorically showed that "not all medical schools are equal".

Cambridge medical graduates ranked among the best qualified for specialist medical training in the UK, with 76% of candidates passing the MRCP examination on their first attempt. This was bettered only by their Oxonian counterparts, who chalked up a first-time pass rate of 91%.

Dr Ian Wilkinson, Senior Lecturer in Medicine, said that the "more traditional" nature of Cambridge medical education prepares students more effectively for the MRCP, because of its incorporation of a rigorously scientific pre-clinical course. The report claimed that changes in teaching methods in Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester, such as the adoption of a student-orientated "problem based approach", "have had little impact

on relative performance."

Although the report took into account differences in entry standards, as well as the consequent variation of ability between UK medical students, researchers admitted that the variance between medical schools could only partly be explained by the quality of their intake. McManus said, "You would expect Oxford and Cambridge graduates to perform better, but there is a two-fold difference between Liverpool and Newcastle [which recorded a pass rate of 67%]. Most of this has to be because of the varying quality of graduates."

The findings have prompted calls for the introduction of a new standardized test to replace the MRCP. McManus said, "Our study provides a strong argument for introducing [a licensing exam], as we have shown that graduates from different medical schools perform markedly differently in terms of their knowledge, clinical and communication skills. Although the MRCP is a widely regarded exam that is carefully designed to assess a wide range of knowledge and skills required by a physician, it is possible that some medical schools teach other important skills that this examination does not assess."

A spokesperson from the General Medical Council said, "We recognise the need to ensure that medical education meets the needs of a changing society, and we are working with the government and key interest groups to confirm that it continues to be provided in an effective and relevant way."

However, tracking the changes in average performance in the MRCP since 1989, the report conceded that "for many schools there has been little variation in performance. The overwhelming impression is one of constancy rather than change."

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Juliet



Sordid myth of University Library tower has been dispelled

MICHAEL DERRINGER

Nothing racy in ‘tower of porn’

ELIZA APPERLY

For decades it has been an object of intrigue, speculation and myth making. However, a new cataloguing enterprise has dispelled the myth that the University Library tower houses a collection of pornographic texts.

Whilst established student hearsay has consistently nurtured visions of an illicit pornographic repository, as featured in Stephen Fry’s first novel *The Liar*, staff now busy classifying its contents insist that the tower contains “nothing racy”.

As part of a new cataloguing enterprise sponsored by the US-based Mellon Foundation, the Cambridge University Library Tower Project currently has a team of seven dedicated experts meticulously sorting through the tower’s 200,000 texts. Focused upon literature produced between 1805-1905, the cataloguers maintain that

they have uncovered nothing more *risqué* than distinctly genteel guides to the finer points of Victorian romantic etiquette.

The Library tower has consistently captivated the student imagination ever since its construction in 1934. Although countless curious observers have attempted to gain access to the 157-foot high chamber, no student is believed to have successfully uncovered its contents.

Over generations of aborted exploratory missions, the answer to the tower’s enigma soon became evident – the seventeen floors of secrecy could only contain an illicit stash of scandalous pornographic literature. As a copyright library receiving copies of every published text, what else could explain the occult of a tower described by Neville Chamberlain as that “magnificent erection”?

The Tower Project has discredited the long established legends of scandal. Certain texts bear such interesting titles and chapter headings as ‘A Young Girl’s Wooing’, ‘Suggestive Tones’ and ‘His Secret Out’, but most of the books are romance novels of the most eminently polite flavour, in which superbly named characters such as Psyche Danvers and Lieutenant Jack Holdsworth trip to provincial France, face frightful emotional misunderstandings but eventually overcome Jack’s reticence and Psyche’s nervous “virgin imagination” to happy ever after with faithful butler Mr Moggs.

In one episode of deep romantic contemplation, Psyche is “aroused” by Jack “pulling out his...wrist-watch” to disrupt her reverie in light of a pressing lunch engagement.

Although the one shilling edition of *Flirting Made Easy: A Guide for Girls* (Illustrated) includes most intriguingly named passages such as ‘The Seaside and the Girls at it’,

‘Cupboard Love and Policemen’ and ‘Rural Love Making’, its text in fact adopts a strictly pragmatic tone. Proffering detailed courtship advice to “sensible”, “impulsive” and “newly married” young ladies, the guide suggests such saucy flirtation techniques as “a gentle pause between questions” and far from titillating its readers through sexually explicit content, rather cautions against “the world of deep, deep love and passion” as “rather too wild and weird”.

So no pornography there. But might the remaining tower shelves still be hiding some as yet uncatalogued erotica? “I very much doubt it”, said Rosalind Esche from the Tower Project. Although there is some material the team “don’t yet know about”, their findings so far would suggest that the books in the tower were banished to faraway floors simply because they were deemed as non-intellectual, “grey” or “ephemera” texts, not on account of any X-rated content.

Up to the fourteenth floor of the “restricted access” library tower courtesy of a “temperamental” lift, the gloomy shelves certainly house some incongruous tomes, but nothing to merit scandal. Academic they are not, but pornographic they certainly are not either. In fact, the most surprising titles to be spotted were those more reminiscent of the Puffin Early Reader genre than anything

“a magnificent erection of a tower”

resembling the lewd or obscene: Paul and Pam, The Teddy Bear’s Cruise and This is How We Go to School.

No smutty titles, no obscene illustrations, and more childhood stories than “adult literature”. The myth of the Cambridge “porn library” remains, at least for the time being, just a myth. Perhaps by 2010 when the Tower Project team conclude their mammoth task some saucy titles may be unearthed amid the innumerable book stacks of that magnificent erection. But, for the time being, the more erotica minded students among us must not be disheartened. As the Tower Project team noted, thanks to its copyright status the UL definitely does keep pornography. In fact, there’s “quite a bit of contemporary stuff which people can come and have a look at - for research purposes.”



Christ’s

Flash photography

This week’s edition of Varsity’s esteemed rival publication contained something of a swollen surprise. Many readers of the periodical that issues from our neighbours down the corridor at the Old Examination Halls were concerned that one of the Christ’s rugby boys featured in the back page photo had suffered an injury to his hand, or perhaps his wrist. Those looking more closely were rewarded with a little – we stress little – bit more than a wrist. Though the headline bestowed a moral victory to Christ’s, such sacrosanct college nomenclature appeared inappropriate in the face of the ungentleman’s, um, gentleman.

St John’s

Ungentlemanly conduct

After a particularly heavy night on the shandies, a young gentleman of St John’s arrived home with his regular companion, only to find that she was in fact incapable of practising their habitual late-night activities. Not one to be put off, however, he struck up a somewhat alternative plan. Having chivalrously concealed the young lady under a blanket, he invited another gentleman to help him soothe his throbbing concerns with a strong brandy and a family sized pot of nutella. Alas! Just as they were beginning to mine the very sweetest depths of his chocolate pot together, an unwelcome visitor arrived in the form of the ubiquitous best friend.

The Alps

In the pasty tense

Though belonging to ancient history, a tale picked up this week by one of our presspack here at Spies Towers surely warrants publication: a damsel of great gastronomic repute returned to her Alpine chalet with a gaggle of girlfriends when skiing this winter. A few hours of intense conversation on the subject of the males (and several bottles of plonk) later, the gals retired for the night. Awaking early morning, somewhat worse-for-wear, to the confusing sound of gentle wails, one of the ladies was surprised to find a friend prostrate on the kitchen floor, legs akimbo, the freezer door open and a large-sized baked-good of the Cornish variety in a place it most definitely should not have been.



ELIZA APPERLY

VARSITY

ISSUE 673, 22 FEBRUARY 2008

Varsity Blues

We are constantly being told that Cambridge sport is in terminal decline. Whilst it is true that, with the exception of rowing, we are seeing fewer and fewer world class athletes of the calibre of Rob Andrew play in light blue, the question still has to be asked why it matters. With the rise of professionalism in rugby in particular, it is inevitable that fewer players are going to want to play for any university over a professional club. However, does this really matter - surely we come here to learn, not to fart around on a field? Could there be anything worse than the reintroduction of the hormonally imbalanced Blue swanning around the college bar as if they owned the place, performing random acts of “banter” that even an eleven year old would find banal?

Surely it is better for our most academic of universities to simply take the best at thinking, rather than cave in to any old fool who seems to be vaguely good at exercise. Examine rowing, for example. Besides the fact that it is frankly mystifying why so many care about such a heinously unwatchable sport, there are people who have genuinely given up the chance to be in the Olympics to race in the Boat Race. Why do they care so much? Indeed, why do the hordes of gawping colonials who line the banks of the Thames every March care so much? Despite the fact that they may now get in on academic credentials, it is still mystifying why anyone would want to squander the benefits of a Cambridge education to bob up and down a river. Blue rowers may well attend lectures and do their work, but they certainly don’t even try to branch out into the obscene amount of other opportunities offered at Cambridge, let alone really get into their subjects.

Does anybody connected to the University lose any prestige just because our sports teams aren’t churning out muscle-bound meatheads with 2.iis in Land Economy and Management Studies that devalue everyone else’s degrees? Indeed, if one looks at the pathetic grasping exhibited in many a Varsity programme (“Hugo is looking to pursue a career in Investment Banking after graduation”), as if being good at egg-chasing is a good indicator for potential to understand corporate finance, you can see that a future career in professional sport isn’t even at the forefront of our sportsmen’s mind. What matters about amateur sport is not how high the standard is but how evenly matched the teams, and our goal should be only to compete on an even footing with other, similar universities.

What is scandalous is the attitude shown by the Cambridge establishment. Besides the outrageously low amount of money given to the Blues teams - under £100,000 in 2006 - the University is still one of the only institutions in the country without a sports centre. Despite firm plans having been in place since the late 1990s, and planning permission being granted yet again a few years ago, the University is yet to give a penny of the £20 million required for the first phase - not even bothering to include it as a specific option on the Octocentennial Appeal website despite it being part of the overall goal. It is a frankly disgraceful state of affairs not that we don’t have as many top sportsmen coming here, but that ordinary students are being deprived of facilities available even to most schoolboys.

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 Tom Bird and George Grist *editor@varsity.co.uk* **Associate Editors** Joe Gosden and Ed Cumming *associate@varsity.co.uk* **News Editors** Clementine Dowley, Richard Power Sayeed and Isabel Shapiro *news@varsity.co.uk* **Comment Editor** Asad Kiyani *comment@varsity.co.uk* **Features Editors** Tash Lennard and Josh Sutton *features@varsity.co.uk* **Arts Editors** Hugo Gye and Patrick Kingsley *arts@varsity.co.uk* **Sport Editors** Henry Stannard and Luke Thorne *sporteditor@varsity.co.uk*

Science Editor Kevin Koo *science@varsity.co.uk* **Fashion Editors** Beatrice Perry and Olivia Sudjic *fashion@varsity.co.uk* **Visual Arts Editor** Anna Trench *visualarts@varsity.co.uk* **Theatre Editor** Alex Reza *theatre@varsity.co.uk* **Literary Editor** Ned Hercock *literature@varsity.co.uk* **Film Editor** Ravi Amaratunga *film@varsity.co.uk* **Music & Listings Editors** Daniel Cohen, Oli Robinson and Verity Simpson *music@varsity.co.uk*, *listings@varsity.co.uk* **Classical Editor** Toby Chadd *classical@varsity.co.uk* **Food & Drink Editor** Guy Stagg *food@varsity.co.uk* **Lifestyle Editors** John Lattimore and Luciana Bellini *lifestyle@varsity.co.uk*

Chief Subeditor Jane Hall *production@varsity.co.uk* **Chief Photo Editor** Jason Taylor *photoeditor@varsity.co.uk* **Chief Photographers** Dylan Spencer-Davidson and Lizzie Robinson *photos@varsity.co.uk*

Business & Advertising Manager Michael Derringer *business@varsity.co.uk* **Company Secretary** Patricia Dalby *secretary@varsity.co.uk* **Board of Directors** Dr Michael Franklin (Chair), Prof Peter Robinson, Tom Walters, Amy Goodwin (Varsoc President), Chris Wright, Michael Derringer, Joe Gosden, Natalie Woolman, Lizzie Mitchell, Elliot Ross, Tom Bird, George Grist



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LETTERS

letters@varsity.co.uk

Driving Mistakey

Sir,

I was amused to see a somewhat Clouseau-like quality in your newspaper - both in your accuracy and in your detective work - when Cambridge Spies reported my roadside she-nanigans (‘Copping a feel’, Issue 672). Fortunately the real police were more assiduous in their duties and, far from having time to flee, we were interviewed by them at length as to our activities, which were indeed entirely mutually agreeable. Less so was when we had to re-enter the ball from which we had surreptitiously departed to the strains of “gone to ground” on the huntsman’s horn.

Yours faithfully,

Aloysius Model-Gentlemen,
Robinson College

EU must be joking

Sir,

Katy Lee concentrates on rebutting a minor objection to Tony Blair’s desire for the EU Presidency, namely his vanity, and ignores much more significant ones (‘Emperor of the EU’, Issue 672).

A man who as Prime Minister showed such contempt for the democratic process - culminating in the notorious Bill to Abolish Parliament which our own David Howarth MP only just managed to put a stop to - is not a suitable person to lead the governmental and administrative reform which the EU is more-or-less universally agreed to need.



A man who gave away billions of pounds of public money in risk-free privatisation deals that let the companies get away with providing as poor a service as they like (as even the National Audit Office admitted in a report left unpublished but obtained by “Private Eye” under the Freedom of Information Act) should not be put in charge of a large and complicated Europe-wide bureaucracy.

And a man who lied to his people and the world to take Britain into a disastrous and madly ill-conceived war under false pretences has no business being any kind of international leader.

Blair becoming the EU President would be the biggest and most tasteless joke since Henry Kissinger won the Nobel Prize for Peace.

Yours faithfully,

Laurie Marks,
University Library

I Rose to Sam’s bait

Sir,

I am writing in what pretty much equates to abject horror at the vile opinions expressed in the article ‘Philistines!’ (Issue 672). Your writer makes the self-confirming assertion that “Quality control is assumed to be inherent in the paper. It is not.”, then proceeds to tear to shreds an article published the week before in TCS. I think your writer’s stance justifies the similar dissection of his own article, and I am convinced that the letters page is the appropriate place for such vitriol. There are plenty of people out there who are prepared to run down Varsity; don’t waste the other 31 pages of the paper doing it for them.

Having insulted pretty much every genre and columnist currently active within Varsity, Sam Rose picks on one particular article written by one particular individual, and starts to throw stones. The article in question is about buying art in Cambridge, and the writer of the original piece had disowned all claims to expertise from the start. Rose’s response is to attack the idea that anyone

with so little claim to expert knowledge would ever be so presumptuous as to give an opinion on something as specialist and contextualised as Art without at least a working knowledge of Poussin and the cultural logic of the late capitalist museum.

This looks to me like a pretty outdated viewpoint. Quite aside from the fact that Rose clearly misunderstood the original article, whose explicit subject matter was “what commercial art looks like to the layman”, he is propounding a viewpoint which would prevent anyone from ever talking about art, saying that they like something or dislike something, unless they have the backing of an art historical education behind them. This is profoundly worrying. Rose is trying to claim art as the preserve of the cultural elite, buttressing up the sense of awe and magesterium which prevents us ordinary folk from expressing opinions and trying to feel our way to an appreciation of pictures, museums, commercial galleries, and all the things labelled “art”.

Very few of us ever pick up a paintbrush or visit the Fitz at the weekend. For all that Rose recommends the hundreds of free galleries on offer, telling us aggressively that “you clearly haven’t had a proper look around any of them” is in no way a helpful comment or one that will encourage people to go and look at them. Telling us that commercial art collecting is relevant to students “as much as they wish to engage with it” and then attacking in print one of the very few people (other than himself) who actually has attempted to engage with it is a pretty poor model for encouraging involvement in the visual arts.

This is about as extremist an article as I have ever read in any newspaper. The Art Fascist is an unpleasant beast, but a salient example to the rest of us in how not to read, how not to think about “Art”, and how not to write.

Yours,

Elizabeth Mitchell
Jesus College

Par for the main course

Sir,

I would like to congratulate Varsity for having the courage to finally employ a restaurant reviewer who is worthy of the name. Unlike that facetious idiot Tom Evans, your new correspondent, James Quaife, actually bothered to make some insightful comments about food and did not feel the need to make inappropriate and unamusing jokes. I look forward to reading more from Mr Quaife in the future and will certainly be having some luncheon at Havanabana next time I am in Cambridge with my wife Linda and our kids. James Quaife, I salute you.

Yours faithfully,

Rodney Cassock,
Woking
(Robinson Alum ‘87)

Touché

Sir,

The Blues fencing team are most certainly not out of BUSA competition this year (‘Mixed fortunes in BUSA’, Issue 672). It was the seconds team who lost to Kings London last Wednesday in the BUSA Trophy. The Mens Blues are gearing themselves up for their last 16 match in the BUSA Championship against Southampton (away) on Wednesday. This year’s team have crushed Oxford, UCL, Bath and Bristol, setting two records in the process. We have utmost confidence in our ability to win the Championship for a successive year.

Yours faithfully,

Anthony Crutchett
Cambridge University Fencing Club

Write the letter of the week and win a bottle from our friends at the Cambridge Wine Merchants

Pak politics as usual?

In spite of the rejection of General Musharaff's rule in the recent elections, **Pervaiz Nazir** worries momentum will be lost. If the newly-elected politicians can't do better than their past efforts, Pakistan will remain ripe for another era of authoritarian rule.

The general elections held on 18th February were perceived by the electorate as a referendum on retired General Musharraf's eight year rule. The answer was a resounding 'no'. Had the elections not been marred by rigging and other irregularities, the anti-Musharraf vote would have been even greater. Voting may be a simple statistical measure of preferences, but if it could measure the intensity of feeling, then the opposition to Musharraf would have been overwhelming.

It is often said that ninety-nine percent of Pakistani politicians give the one percent a bad name. The army itself has contributed considerably to the bad image, often aided and abetted by Western powers. Post-election, the question is can this state of affairs change?

The elections were held in an extremely tense atmosphere, with several suicide bombings and killings before and during the elections. They were originally scheduled for mid-January but were postponed after Benazir Bhutto was killed in a rally in Rawalpindi. A notable feature of the elections was her return to Pakistan as Chairperson of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), and that of Nawaz Sharif, leader of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N).

Both former Prime Ministers had been out of the country during the 2002 general elections, and prevented from returning to Pakistan. Bhutto didn't come back because she would have faced charges relating to corruption, and Sharif because of a supposed agreement with Musharraf to stay out of the country for about ten years.

After eight years of quasi-military rule under Musharraf, their return revitalized Pakistani politics. It is quite possible the elections will usher in a new style of governance. Musharraf, who came to power in a coup in 1999 when he ousted then-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, kept himself in power by manipulating the Constitution and relying on support from the Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q).

The options for Musharraf, who is still backed by the United States and United Kingdom, to keep himself in power have decreased

in direct proportion to the options opened up for politicians to reinstate constitutional politics (however flawed these might be). If they can mobilize a two-thirds majority of the lower house, the National Assembly, they might impeach Musharraf or even hold a referendum to determine his acceptability as a President of Pakistan.

The winners in this election have been the PPP and PML-N among the larger parties, and the Awami National Party (ANP) among the smaller parties. The independent candidates have also won a substantial number of seats, far more than they did in the 2002 general election.

In order to understand the current standing of the political parties it is important to understand the structure of Pakistan's electoral system. The elected lower house, the National Assembly has 342 seats, of which 272 are elected and 70 are reserved for women and non-Muslim minorities. The number of reserved seats allocated to a party is directly proportionate on the number of votes each party gets.

The unequal populations of the four provinces are also crucial. The Punjab accounts for roughly 55 percent of these seats, Sindh 25 percent, NWFP 15 percent and Baluchistan 5 percent. The PPP, the most 'national' of the parties, has won 88 out of the 272 elected seats. The PML-N has 66, drawn mainly from the Punjab, and the PML-Q has 36 seats. Once the reserved seats have been allocated, about 20 seats each will be added to the PPP and PML-N. This will jointly give them over 272 seats, which is the number required to elect a Prime Minister.

Apart from the PML-Q, the other losers have been the religious parties. The umbrella of the Muttahida Malis I Amal (MMA - United Action Forum), a coalition

of six religious parties, won 45 seats in the 2002 general elections, mainly in the Afghanistan-bordering North Western Frontier Province. This time round, the party won only three seats. This surely put at ease Western governments and some in Pakistan who saw the MMA's success as a sign of the rise of Muslim militancy in Pakistan.

At the national level, no party has an absolute majority. Therefore only a coalition government is in the offing, with several possible alliances, including one between either of the major parties, or a major party and smaller parties and independents.

Similarly inconclusive elections were held for the Provincial Assemblies. A total of 577 seats to the Provincial Assemblies of the Punjab, Baluchistan, NWFP, and Sindh were contested. No political party, apart from the PPP in Sindh, has an absolute majority to form governments at the provincial level.

In addition to vote-rigging and other electoral irregularities, which were actually much fewer than anticipated, the elections have been marred by violence. Almost 30 people have been killed and about 200 injured in violence that took place before, during and after the elections. As a result, the voting turnout has been low, at about 40 percent. Given the politically charged atmosphere in the country, this turnout is disappointing. Though part of the low turnout might be explained by the problem of security, it is only part of a more complex explanation. Apathy as well as logistics contributed to one of the lowest voter turnouts in the world: out of 161 countries, Pakistan comes fourth from the bottom.

The election was contested around Musharraf's policies, which have been seen to be against Pakistan's interests and far too pro-America. His uncritical support for the latter's

'war against terror', which is perceived by many to be a war against Islam and Muslims; his military action against fellow Pakistanis in the tribal belt; the deterioration in law and order; price hikes, and harsh treatment of opponents (particularly the judiciary), were especially problematic.

Most Pakistanis despise Musharraf's propagation of an 'enlightened moderation'. It is a shallow Westernising liberalism, which is cancelled out by his authoritarian practices. They equally detest his politics, which may be summed up as 'servility abroad, arrogance at home'.

The 2008 elections will no doubt bestow greater legitimacy on whichever party or coalition forms the next government, a dimension that has been lacking during Musharraf's rule. But the problems of Pakistan, a modernising postcolonial state, are huge.

Many of these problems are indigenously created, and require indigenous solutions. There must be a redistribution of power. The relationship between the federal government and the provinces must be addressed, and greater national integration is needed. Problems persist around citizenship rights, income distribution, hygiene, and the enforcement of basic rules and regulations.

Some of the more serious problems have been created by Western countries, particularly the United States. These include constant interference in Pakistani politics for their own perceived security interests, with no regard for their negative impact on Pakistan. These also include dictating the way Pakistani politics ought to be headed, talking democracy but supporting a military dictator, and legitimising secular politics over politics informed by Muslim tradition. By rendering

certain secular types of political discourses and practices as acceptable whilst delegitimising indigenous discourses and practices, including Islamist ones which are unfairly equated with extremism, significant resentment has been created.

The foreign occupation of Afghanistan and attacks in the tribal areas by US and US-supported Pakistani forces have added to the increased violence and polarisation in Pakistan.

There is nothing to suggest that this policy will change. Even after the elections, both the US and UK have made statements supporting Musharraf's continuity in office, something that the Pakistani people may not want. They have also urged 'moderate' political parties (who decides what or who is moderate?) to join together and form government.

In other words, Western powers not only want to determine where Pakistani politics and society ought to be heading, they also wish to control its grammar and vocabulary of politics – but most of all they want their interests to be served. And you don't have to be particularly democratic to do so.

Has the Pakistani political class learned from the bitter lessons of the past? Will it rise above their factionalism and squabbles, and deal with issues related to postcoloniality, modernity and democracy? Will it tackle the ongoing problems of poverty, hunger disease, and a deteriorating law and order situation? If not, after the euphoria of the election wears off, Pakistani politics might well be back to business as usual, making itself vulnerable to another partially self-inflicted dose of authoritarian and undemocratic rule.

Dr Pervaiz Nazir is a lecturer in Development Studies at the Centre for International Studies, specialising in South Asian politics and globalisation.





I went to see the Vagina Monologues on Saturday night and left it confused. The production and acting was excellent. The play itself, however, left much to be desired. This is the sacred feminist play? I found myself feeling a sudden sympathy for girls who refuse to describe themselves as feminists.

"My Short Skirt" stands as a beautiful statement against victim blaming, and I continue to be haunted by the account of rape suffered by women in Bosnia. Many of the other monologues, however, were anything but empowering and informative.

Take the "Angry Vagina", which was angry about tampons, gynaecology exams and douches. No one's forcing women to use tampons or douches. The description of what gynaecology exams should be to set women at their ease - "wear some friendly pink or blue gloves" - was a painful continuation of stereotypes which most feminists have been trying to outgrow.

Other monologues were harmful and poorly informed. In "The Coochie Snorcher That Could", a sixteen year-old lesbian describes her enjoyable experience of having sex with a twenty four year-old woman. When the play was first performed, the girl was thirteen. The age was raised and the line "If it was rape, it was good rape" removed, but the sentiment remains. The choice to depict all lesbian relationships as positive while all heterosexual relationships (barring one exception) are abusive is clear.

That exception is pointed out with the line "This monologue is from a woman who had an enjoyable experience with a man". Really, Eve? You interviewed 200 woman and you think it's funny to imply that only one of them enjoyed sex with a man? How insulting. That lonely monologue is "Because He Liked to Look at It", in which the narrator describes how she "wanted to throw up and die" when pressured to undress by a man named Bob. The outcome is positive for the woman, but it's far from a textbook example of a loving encounter.

In another monologue, the audience can barely hold back their pity when a woman defensively comments she has done other things than sex with her life ("I like the dog shows"). What a terrible return to early nineteenth century pity for old maids. Women are so much more than their genitalia! I should never have to write this! The "Women = vagina" equation becomes increasingly absurd as one woman claims that when shaved she "couldn't help talking in a baby voice". Bob tells another she is "elegant and deep and innocent and wild" based on her vulva. The irony is painful.

When faced with the choice between the complex truth or amusing the audience, Ensler too often chose humour. After claiming the clitoris has twice as many nerve endings as the penis, she concludes gleefully: "Who needs a handgun when you have a semiautomatic?" Aside from the quite poor taste of her metaphor (see Bosnia monologue), does sexual pleasure have to be a competition? Who is empowered when we imply that men who dislike pubic hair are paedophiles? Why treat women as if they are defined by their vagina - the very definition we've been struggling to escape? We can do so much better than that. I hope next year we will.

Kinley Salmon



Power and collaboration

Scandinavia shows politics doesn't have to be partisan

The name of the game is power, if you ain't playing power, you in the wrong place.

If you listen to Primal Scream you hear it, if you read Thomas Hobbes you see it, and if you observe politics in most Anglo-Saxon countries you certainly notice it - politics is all about power. It often seems power is all that politics is about. Political parties ruthlessly attack each other in the House of Commons, ex-MP's compete to make the snidest comment about each other on Question Time, and the idea that various parties might collaborate on policy is laughed out of town and widely derided in the media. Just ask Ming Campbell and Gordon Brown.

There is no doubt politics needs opposition to keep the government honest and that at the end of the day the parties are competing for office, but does politics have to be just so starkly adversarial and characterized by such a bitter struggle for power? Could the idea that politics is about policy come to be seen as equally as important as the idea that politics is about power?

Today's world is characterized by problems, including climate change, terrorism and global poverty. Resolving issues like these requires long-term policy initiatives, a steady and sustained approach, and action that is effective. They require genuinely collective action to deal with them effectively

An adversarial and power obsessed style of politics is of very limited use in dealing with these problems. An interesting example of the value of collaborative government is found not far off the shore of northern Scotland, in Sweden, Finland and Denmark.

In all cases in Sweden, and in most cases in the other Nordic countries, legislation and major policy initiatives are preceded by multi-stakeholder deliberations. When politicians are involved all parties (currently seven) in the Parliament are invited to send representatives. These deliberation groups are well funded, can commission independent research and crucially aim to achieve consensus.

These groups are in a powerful position to affect policy but must maintain good relations with other participants in order to make progress. The result is a set of powerful incentives for the sensible integration of economic, social and environmental policy.

The effect is often very impressive, particularly on environmental issues. For example, Finland had carbon pricing from 1990 (something Britain, Australia, U.S and New Zealand still haven't achieved) and they have had great success in protecting biodiversity on private land. Perhaps most notably, all three Nordic countries have managed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions since 1990, whereas just about every other country in the

world has seen significant increases. Studies by the Ecologic Foundation have shown this is not due to a higher set of environmental values than other countries but to more effective systems of governance capable of actually achieving tangible outcomes.

There are numerous advantages



to a more collaborative response. Opposition politicians find themselves playing a positive and often important role, rather than simply criticising and cooling their heels as they wait for a turn in government. This also means opposition parties are more selective about what they choose to oppose. The best ideas from both sides can be taken on, which helps to avoid policy lurches and achieve stable lasting policies valued by all. This is especially important for long-term issues like retirement policy and the environment.

Collaborative governance also often means policies actually get

implemented properly, as it is much easier to implement policy successfully when the various political parties and other bodies have all bought into the policy in the first place.

Politics cannot be changed overnight and the success with collaborative governance that the Nordic countries have had relies on a set of institutions, norms and mores that have been built up over time. However, the striking success they have had with a more collaborative approach to politics on crucial issues like climate change suggests that the rest of the world has something to learn.

Someone ultimately must still be in power and compromise or consensus cannot always be reached but the interaction between those in power and those not in power could change drastically in many countries. Even a small move away from starkly adversarial party politics would be of tremendous value not only to improving the effectiveness of policy but also toward improving the image of politics and thus perhaps restoring the public interest in politics.

It is often said that advocating collaboration is ignoring the 'hard realities' of politics. It is claimed that 'it just doesn't work that way'. It may not work like that today in the United Kingdom but in some places it is working differently and it is working well despite its differences. Still, it's only Sweden, eh?

Zhiying Tseng



A total runway whitewash

Fashion Week suggests there's no new black - or any black at all

What happened to all the black people on the runway?" asked model Tyson Beckford at New York Fashion Week. "There are no blacks on the cats." While the 'size zero' debate has co-opted newspaper headlines as the controversy du jour of the fashion industry, there is a much more insidious problem going unchecked. Let Vivienne Westwood, grand dame of British fashion, put it this way: the fashion industry is "racist", pure and simple.

Despite the president of the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA), Diane von Furstenberg, issuing a memo to designers urging them to create fashion shows that are "truly multicultural", it was estimated that a whopping 88% of the models used in New York Fashion Week were white or European. A breakdown of individual catwalk shows themselves proves even more appalling: the Donna Karen show used 23 models, 22 of which were white or European. The one model who was not of white ethnic origin was Chanel Iman, an established black catwalk model. The Jill Stuart show was even worse; out of 20 models, not one was a woman of colour (meaning Asian, black or Hispanic).

If New York Fashion Week set the agenda, London went one step further - the only model of colour to appear repeatedly on the major runways was British-born Jourdan Dunn. As the curtain fell on London Fashion Week, Carol White, co-founder of Premier Model Manage-

ment, admitted that magazines and designers were reluctant to hire black models. White said, "We have had casting briefs which say 'no ethnics'". London, perhaps more than anywhere else in the world, prides itself on being a multicultural city, with ethnic minorities comprising over 29% of its population. It is laughably ridiculous when its

"The issue of race has political and social implications far beyond that of a haircut."

premier fashion event gives the impression that London is a Nordic wasteland of pale skin.

As with all controversial issues, it quickly becomes a blame game. Fashion magazines and designers blame model agencies that don't offer a diverse range of models. Agencies blame magazines and designers for not requesting them. Defiant designers murmur how girls of colour detract attention from the clothes and how a blank (i.e. white) canvas is preferable to allow the clothes to take centre stage. But if models are meant to be people second, clothes hangers first, why should anybody care if they aren't ethnically diverse? After all, the fashion industry is

powered by its exclusivity - not everybody can look like a model and not everybody can afford the clothes. Fashion has always eschewed reality in favour of the designer's vision - fashion is meant to be aspirational, not accessible.

Yet when fashion offers an aspirational world that is populated by white, European identikit girls, then something very disturbing is happening to the idea of beauty within the fashion industry. Even more disturbing is the idea that such standards of beauty are being exported all over the world, which is emphatically not predominantly white or European. It makes no financial sense for designers and magazines to alienate entire sectors of their consumer base by exclusively using white models.

While you might think that this has always been the case, people in the industry point to the catwalks of the 70s and 80s where designers like Azzedine Alaïa and Yves Saint Laurent sent equal numbers of Asian, black, Hispanic and white models down the runway. The fashion industry, despite congratulating itself on being the vanguard of modern style, appears to be regressing in terms of racial diversity. Even the unsaid assumption that models of ethnic minorities sell fewer magazine covers than white and European models proves untrue; when Ethiopian model Liya Kebede appeared on the cover of last year's Harper's Bazaar, it was one of their best-selling issues.

Some have said that the tendency towards white models is part of the capricious nature of fashion, in the same way that blunt-cut fringes were in fashion last season, and it is likely to fade out. But equating a trend towards using all-European, all-white models with a certain hairstyle is not only ridiculous, it's downright dangerous. The issue of race has political and social implications far beyond that of a haircut. Nobody talks about how people with fringes are marginalised in society just because their haircut is out of style, but there is a very real danger that entire ethnicities are being pushed aside in an industry that gets to dictate our ideas of what constitutes "beauty" and "style".

Fashion is in danger of becoming dangerously out of touch with the real world, where not everybody is from Europe and not everybody is blessed with a polysyllabic Russian name). But the answer isn't a kind of fashion affirmative action, where panicked politicians impose quotas on unwilling designers. The answer is for the entire industry - agents, agencies, designers and magazines - to take responsibility and make a concerted effort towards ethnic inclusivity. If the industry wants to get back in touch with what made it great - its willingness to adapt, its boldness in pushing forward the boundaries of style and fashion - it needs to start by being bolder about its models. And that means that white is emphatically not the new black.



I went to a Careers Fair the other night. It was a singularly disappointing event. The “careers” element was in full swing, but the “fair” aspect left a lot to be desired. I was hoping that all the respective features of a travelling carnival would be in place – waltzers, candy-floss, gangs of men smoking Benson and Hedges by the propane canisters, packs of stray dogs that looked like they’d survived a hot wash cycle in an industrial washing machine, pregnant thirteen year-olds with hoop earrings drinking WKD blue on the edge of the dodgems, and at least one monopod gypsy with arresting facial tattoos, who just stands there, watching you, haunting your dreams for years to come.

Needless to say, the Careers Fair did not live up to these impressive expectations. Instead of giddy children, the place was full of pale, nervous looking types, all desperately hoping that the elderly gentlemen with conspicuous sweat-patches over there would give them the £40,000+ bonus job they dreamed of. Guess what? He didn’t. He just told you about “the importance of work experience” whilst copping a cheeky look down your top. These days, that’s the only bonus he gets.

It all leaves a rather nasty taste in the mouth. The very concept of having a job is bad enough, but the thought that one should expend time and effort having to search for one is anathema to the idle. Isn’t this why we invented nepotism, to avoid these unsightly scums? (Having said that, search for “Max Gogarty” on the Grauniad website to see what happens when nepotism goes wrong).

I don’t want to find a job. I don’t want to have a job even if one is found for me. The only job I want to consider having is one prefixed with a word that rhymes with “slow”, though I’m not sure if that’s a legitimate career choice, or just a particularly enjoyable hobby (and if I can’t make a living from it, can I at least claim it on expenses?).

This also leaves a nasty taste in the mouth (for some, at least). The problem with jobs of all sorts is that after Cambridge, I feel like I’ve sweated my way through a professional life already, if only by proxy. So many people take their hobbies so seriously that the next logical step after graduation is surely a minor coronary, a cottage in Wiltshire, a Mondeo, and membership of the local golf club. JCRs, The Union, May Ball Committees – put an idiot in a suit and give them an important/impotent sounding title (Junior Vice Treasurer Elect, perhaps) and watch how concerned/conspicuous they look whenever they talk to you about it in conversation (and trust me, that’s all they ever will talk about).

However, despite their abounding awfulness, we need these people. The anonymous bureaucrats who populate committees and frequent careers events are the worthless cogs who keep the machines of life running. That’s why they’re so greasy.

And if they get carried away with their own abundant self-importance, so be it. The rest of us will be on the ghost train, having the time of our lives.

Lizzie Mitchell



Culture in classrooms

Giving children a dose of culture helps narrow social divisions

Last week, when the government announced a plan to give every child the right to “5 hours of culture a week” (trips to galleries, theatre workshops, music lessons) they were met with instant derision from many sides.

“We’ve turned our schools into jails”, said the architect Will Alsop in the Guardian. “They are proposing incursions into the time of precisely those children who need education most”, said the novelist A.S. Byatt. And the photographer David Bailey, claiming that “I learned nothing at school”, announced “I don’t like the idea of compulsory culture”. The Daily Mail, meanwhile, suggests that the money be used to tackle failing standards in the Three Rs.

I will set aside for the moment the fact that the last time I heard the phrase “Three Rs” was when I was seven and used to play at Victorian schools with my sister.

Why teach culture? What happens when you institutionalize Art (capital A, awe and magisterium and lyre-waving Muses)? Are you, as A.S. Byatt claimed, jeopardizing the teaching of far more basic and crucial skills? And are you destroying the magic of solitary discovery and individual appreciation by forcing “culture” down children’s throats, reducing it to a curriculum subject and thereby somehow equating Picasso with trigonometry?

Perhaps more to the point is what happens if you don’t institutionalize culture.

How many gobbets of Virgil could you reel off on demand? Have you ever spent an afternoon ruminating on Poussin’s Seven Sacraments? Is Satie on your iTunes? Did you even know there’s a Modigliani in the Fitz? Do you have any idea of the Canon? Frankly, my dear, where on earth was someone like you brought up?

Britain, like pretty much every other country in the world, has a huge class gap. If we don’t teach “culture” (however strange and imprecise a term that may sound to us advanced Foucauldian theorists at Cambridge) in our schools, if we leave these subjects the preserve of the elite and separate them from the formal education that every child receives, we will never narrow the gap between rich and poor,

posh and trash. There is a glass ceiling above those who don’t know their Raphael from their Rembrandt (and that’s more people than those who do know their Raphael from their Rembrandt would imagine).

Being “cultured” is not something which we judge on the same scale as we would success in a maths exam. It’s a marker of status. The type of music you listen to is likely to be visibly linked in with your socio-political background. If you visit art galleries of any sort there will be certain circles within which that fact will have a particular social cachet. And going to the opera, the theatre, the ballet, are so far out of

“Being cultured is not something which we judge on the same scale as we would success in a maths exam. It’s a marker of status.”

the reach of the many people who can’t afford to pay thirty pounds a head for an evening’s entertainment (and don’t have the ADC just down the road) that it’s impossible to separate the performances from their wealthy, expensively-dressed audiences and the hallowed and gilded boxes which house these spectacles. All these things are demonstrations of social worth. There is a symbolic value to the teaching of culture as well as an intellectual value.

If you leave it to children to discover art and music and theatre by themselves, the ones who do come across these things will be those from privileged backgrounds, whose parents take them to the Tate at the weekends and send them to bassoon lessons on a Wednesday evening.

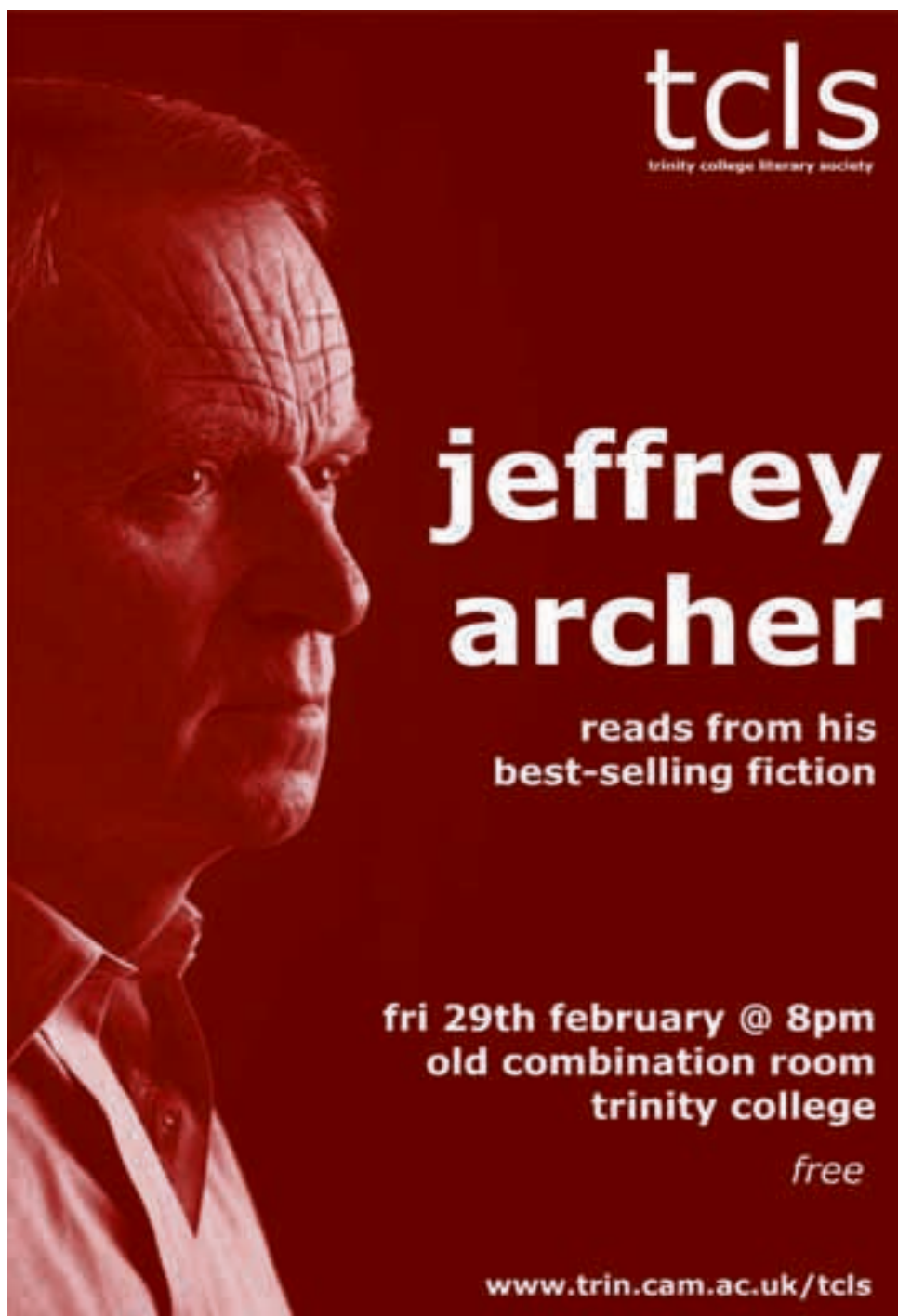
Bringing these things, these expensive,

prestigious things, into the mainstream education of every child is every bit as important as teaching them the “Three Rs”. This is a phrase which makes it sound as though school is about teaching by rote with the eventual aim of learning to add up enough columns of figures to become A Useful Member of Society who won’t scrounge off the taxpayer. But it is the very pointlessness of “culture” which is its distinction. The idea that something has, on one level, no value whatsoever beyond the performance and enactment and listening and viewing, that its primary purpose is not to teach but to entertain, is what makes “culture” a tool for civilization, for raising aspirations and encouraging freedom of thought.

Of course there is the potential for bad teaching. But any subject can be badly taught, and parents who take their sprogs round art galleries have just as much potential to nurture in their offspring a deep-seated hatred of art as any teacher. Even if our motive is to preserve the magic of a painting or a play, and protect children from the grey shroud which a bad teacher can throw over the most beautiful work of art, it is still dangerous and wrong to discourage the normalization of “culture” within mainstream education.

Give people a chance and an introduction to it and then let them find their own way through the labyrinth of culture. The idea that Art (capital A again, awe and gold paint and choirs of caterwauling cherubim) can never be associated with so crass a concept as formal education, that if Culture is meant for you then she’ll reach out her hand and assert herself in your life no matter how humble your status, is utter bunkum.

That eminent man of letters John Stuart Mill talked about the “higher pleasures” of culture as what separates man from the beasts. Whether or not you think that listening to Shostakovich is what keeps you from descending into bestial habits, by discouraging the teaching of art, music and drama for the sake of reading and rithmetic we are promoting ideologies which ultimately encourage social division on a scale of man to ape.



Careers Service event



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Cam Connect 2008

A Careers Service Event for students keen to stay in the Cambridge area.

A range of local organisations are participating – offering technical and non technical opportunities to undergraduates postgraduates, MBAs and post docs.
Details on www.careers.cam.ac.uk

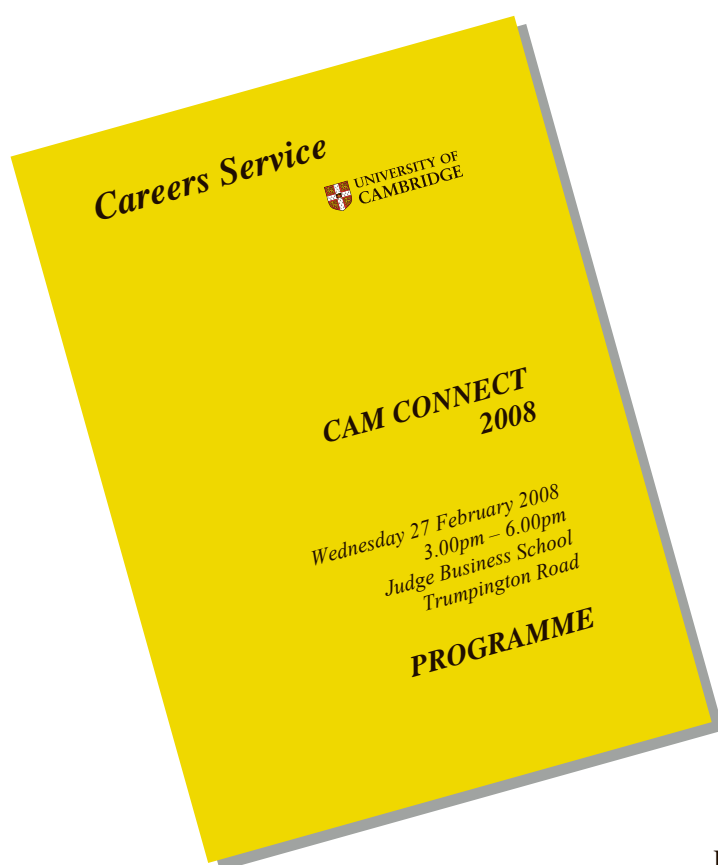
Wednesday 27 February, 15.00 to 18.00
Judge Business School,
Trumpington Road, Cambridge

Participating organisations include:

AIRSOURCE, ALERTME.COM, ANALYSYS MASON GROUP, AUTONOMY SYSTEMS, AZURO (UK), CAMBRIDGE CONSULTANTS, CAMBRIDGE DESIGN PARTNERSHIP, DISPLAYLINK, IMS HEALTH, INNOVIA TECHNOLOGY, JAGEX, JDR UMBILICAL SYSTEMS, MARKS & CLERK, MAX FORDHAM, MEDIMMUNE, PA CONSULTING GROUP, RAMBOLL WHITBYBIRD, RICARDO UK, SENTEC, TAKEDA CAMBRIDGE, TRANSART EDUCATIONAL MARKETING, TTP GROUP.

Entry is restricted to current University of Cambridge students (and recent alumni) – bring your University id card with you to this event
A cumulative, depersonalised attendance level from different years and courses allows us to improve our events in the future.

Personal data will not be passed to anyone outside the University.



“We inevitably feel more attached to That Mitchell and Webb Look. We feel more personal about it.”

MITCHELL AND WEBB
PAGE 21

Nick Hytner **Page 15**

Fetish Fun **Page 18**

Martin Rowson **Page 20**

The Go! Team **Page 22**

VIEW

My Cambridge Alberto, Purveyor of fine wine at Cambridge Wine Merchants

The lesser known haunts and habits of well known Cambridge people



>>Having not spent enough of his day around alcohol, Alberto winds down at La Raza

>> If you demand some booze, this Italian expert is your man

Face Off

They're fit, you're fickle. Who's fitter? There's the pickle

Round 3: Robinson versus Churchill



Chloe is a 1st year Vet and Guy is a 2nd year NatSci

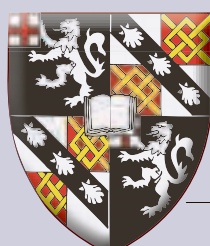


Charlie is a 1st year Philosopher and Laura is a 2nd year Historian



TO VOTE FOR ROBINSON,
TEXT 'VARSITY ROB' TO
60300.

Standard network charges apply.



TO VOTE FOR
CHURCHILL, TEXT
'VARSITY CHURCH' TO
60300.

Cumming On Flattery



They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Actually they don't. Someone whom I previously believed to have been Oscar Wilde said it, once, and he was presumably fairly confident that he was great and that loads of people wanted to be like him, so it wasn't a problem that people had started to make off and desecrate his image.

For the rest of us, drudging his aphorism from the pit of inanity, imitation is actually one of the more sincere forms of mockery. Sincere forms of flattery are forms which involve other people telling you how great you are, in terms which articulate an aspect of yourself you already know, indisputably, to be great. For instance, to a woman with nice eyes:

"You've got nice eyes"

"Thanks."

She knows she has nice eyes, and walks around thinking it most of the time. But just in case she was worrying that she no longer had nice eyes, this sincere form of flattery is just what she needed to pep her up. An insincere form of flattery would be going up to a woman with horrible eyes and saying:

"You've got nice eyes"

"Thanks."

I agree that superficially the differences seem limited. But imagine the poor woman, walking around not knowing she has nice eyes, being told that she does, and wanting to believe it despite it not being true. Eventually, the aggregate of other people's opinions will out, and she will be forced to concede, as before, that she does not have nice eyes. Probably after this she'll begin eating curry, alone, in front of the hit TV serial 'Skins', weeping quietly into an empty carton of Pop-Tarts. This must be worse than the first option.

But these are the sincere and insincere faces of flattery.

The faces of mockery are much harder to put one's finger on. Sincere mockery, as above, is very easy to achieve through imitation. All that is required is for the instigator to impersonate, crudely, the target of his offence with less wit and verve, more crude sexual slang, and a great deal more

cursing like a sailor. If we are feeling highbrow we might look to Iago in 'Othello', if not the Hollywood Actor Sylvester Stallone's impression of a human in the recent film 'Rambo' is



Mr T: not one to suffer fools lightly

another convincing example.

Insincere mockery, on the other hand, is very hard, as it requires the mocker to be secretly jealous of that which he attacks. For instance, in the above example I mocked Sylvester Stallone for impersonating humans, whereas in reality I would give loads to be like him, if just for a day. This is more on account of his close working relationships with Mr. T. and Lando Calrissian than his ageing, KFC-esque musculature. Watching 'Pride and Prejudice' the other day, I was moved to exclaim how much I would like to hit Keira Knightley in the face with a brick, if only to wipe that quasi-moronic Bend It Like Beckham half-smirk off her mouth once and for all. This, I concede in the colder light of day, was probably only insincere mockery. I would willingly swap (pre-brick) faces with Knightley, if just for two days, because it would offer an unrivalled opportunity to receive sincere flattery (see above), thanks to the exhaustive list of things Keira Knightley thinks are indisputably great about herself.

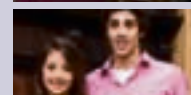
It is always better to be the real deal, rather than the tribute act. Just ask 'Noasis', 'Badness', 'Bjorn Again', 'Kasabian' or 'The Bootleg Beatles'. They'll tell you. But the won't be flattering or sincere.



Kiera: not yet been hit in the face by a brick

LAST WEEK'S RESULT:

Queens' 69%
Pembroke 31%



Nick knows

Nick Hytner, the highly acclaimed Artistic Director of The National Theatre, tells **Orlando Reade** what he thinks about the current state of British Theatre.

As we are led into the labyrinth of offices which operate out of the public eye above the National Theatre, our guide tells us to wait outside. "He'll be with you in five minutes." Immediately, Nick Hytner bounces into the room, full of energy despite having spent the entire day in rehearsal. It is six-thirty, dark now, and his office shimmers in the glittering lights of the West End, the effect doubled by the dark Thames.

The forthcoming season at the National boasts an impressive array of diverse and challenging plays. I am told this is due to there being so many different

"It's not our job to put young playwrights on the stage simply because they're young... Fuck off and learn how to do it"

artists working in the UK at the moment: "There's an opportunity to have a much more heterogeneous repertoire than the National Theatre may once have been expected to have."

He tells us of a visit he received recently from the new

French Ambassador with his cultural attachés, interested in the success of the National Theatre as a contrast to the intellectually elitist French theatre, overly dependent on government funding and apparently unable to achieve the commercial success of British theatre. He explains it thus, "The French theatre has always been cerebral... poetic... literary... About the interior world of its writers. I think ours is much less so."

Next season's best-known play being performed at the National is Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara*, a decision encouraged partly by the success of last year's *Saint Joan*. The National Theatre's brochure boasts that "Shaw may be our most provocative contemporary playwright". Interesting that they should attribute this to a playwright who died almost sixty years ago. Would such a claim suggest that they are struggling to find talent in the next generation? "Not at all", counters Hytner, "there is now so much energy in the exploration of what the theatre is, which wouldn't have happened fifty years ago, when everyone was confident they knew what the theatre was."

Why then, I wondered, is the National not giving more scheduling time to young writers notwithstanding the work it does to encourage young talent at the National's studio? "It's not our job to put young playwrights and young talent on the stage simply because they're young... Fuck

off and learn how to do it is what we say."

We ask what his advice is to aspiring actors and directors at Cambridge, his reply is simple – "they should be looking at the work of the most excited French theatres, the most exciting young companies, the most exciting young directors. They should write their own plays. If they're going to be directors they shouldn't just be directing they should be acting and writing too, or getting experience in craft departments. What you shouldn't be doing in undergraduate theatre is aping the National Theatre. In many ways it would be healthiest to be despising us."

Hytner reflects on his own experiences as a young director: "You're going to spend the first ten, fifteen years of your career subtly negotiating the awkward passage between total ignorance and a certain degree of experience and authority... It's just tough luck on the actors who work with you first time round".

However, Hytner's personal success story suggests that his supposed ignorance was belied by considerable natural talent. After leaving Cambridge he spent some time at the Manchester Exchange Theatre as an Associate Director before moving onto musicals and operas. Aged only thirty, he won the Laurence Olivier Award for Opera with Handel's *Xerxes*. In his four years at the National Theatre he has won the favour of critics,

partly owing to the success of the *Travelex £10 Season*, which encouraged a less traditional demographic of theatre-goers. That's saying nothing of his success on both stage and screen

"What you shouldn't be doing in undergraduate theatre is aping the National. In many ways it would be healthiest to be despising us"

with *The History Boys*.

Half-politician, half-director, he seems to be bearing the responsibility for the future of British theatre as well as just wanting to produce some entertaining plays.

He expresses this conflict in the desire to provide what "the audiences enjoy the most... big new plays that engage large numbers of people in something that really appears to hold the mirror up to the nation". A tall order, one might think.

"I belly ache all the time about the younger generation of writers who don't want to write muscular plays that can play

for six months for a thousand people. The senior generation of playwrights write them because they used to write them forty years ago. The younger generation are very happy to write for a hundred, two hundred people." That said, he is optimistic for the future of British theatre, with the gusto of someone who is hard-working and already successful.

"I'm quite optimistic about funding. It's always going to be a struggle its never going to be as much as we like. The thing that really encourages me is I think that there is cross party consensus. I get no sense that a Conservative government would attack the arts in a way the last Conservative government did - between 1979 to 97, in real terms, art subsidies were halved."

I ask if this accounts for the struggles of some of Hytner's predecessors.

"Yes. One thing that must be said for the last ten years is that subsidy has doubled; thereby bringing us back up to where we were before '79. That seems to me to be right. Encouragingly the Tories seem to be extremely reasonable and accept all the current arguments about the level of funding."

We have run overtime, and have to go. I stand up to shake hands. "Are you in theatre or journalism?" he asks. I mention that I've tried writing plays. "Good" he replies, "send them to us when you get better."





PAUL SMITH

The collection revolved around a smoky palette, accented with earthy hues and jewel tones.



HOUSE OF HOLLAND

Agyness Deyn graced designer friend Henry Holland's first solo collection. Holland marked the occasion by designing his own family tartan.

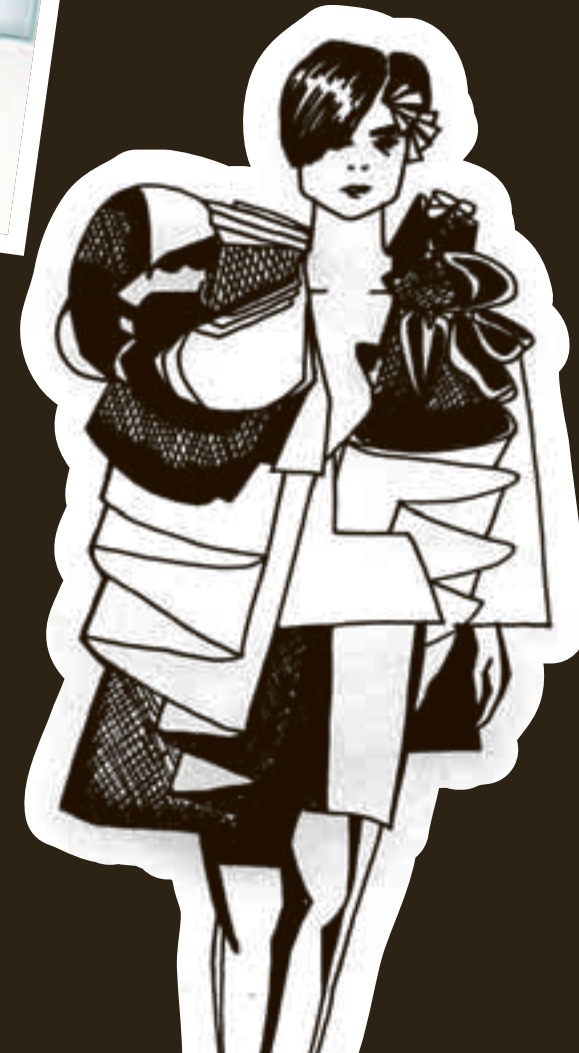


our london fashion week

Olivia Sudjic and Beatrice Perry's down-low from the front row

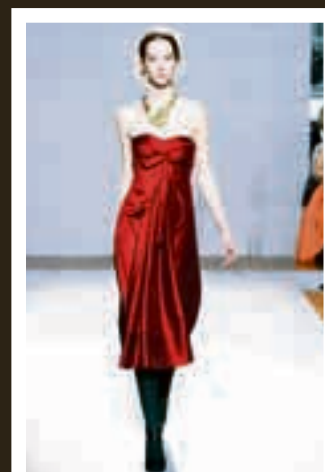


GARETH PUGH



ASHLEY ISHAM

Ashley Isham was inspired by Veronica Lake and early '40s elegance, whilst Nicole Farhi described her collection as "timeless, refined, charming."



NICOLE FARHI



AMANDA WAKELY

Spotted at LFW: jewelled and beaded tights; zips; "Yeti" jackets and knits; petticoats; crochet; Icelandic patterns; sequinned caps; bouclé, brocade, stretch tulle; extreme tailoring.



TODD LYNN

The London D

Tash Lennard spends an evening among the fun-seekers and fetishists at the most famous S&M club

The room is small, dark and crowded. Every inch of the banquette that runs along the edge of the wall, and of the cushions strewn on the floor is crawling with bodies. It's a blur of skin and PVC, and everywhere you turn there is a couple or a group of people having sex with each other in every which way imaginable.

Outside the small room a heavy-set, hirsute gentleman walks by. He wears a Little Bow Peep costume made of PVC, and is led around on lead by a small woman in underwear and a gimp mask. This room is larger and filled with dancing PVC, leather and scantily clad bodies. Amongst them are frames and tables to which people are strapped, whilst they are spanked or lightly whipped.

In case you are wondering, I am not describing my idea for the opening scene of a porn

film. (Incidentally my idea of a good opening scene wouldn't be like that at all). What I am

"Worthy of particular mention, perhaps, was a rather brave chap in nothing but a leather waistcoat and a cock-ring"

actually describing is my Saturday evening spent at one of London's best-established alternative club nights.

Torture Garden is perhaps the most famous fetish club in the

country, and has been organising events for well over a decade. Far from finding out about it from some discarded flyer outside Camden Town Tube Station, I had actually heard of the club from a number of trusted, decidedly normal friends who were themselves TG enthusiasts. So with my features page in mind, and a genuine curiosity of my own, I booked tickets for the TG Valentine's Ball for myself and an art student friend of mine with a penchant for the outrageous.

We found outfits (fetish or fantasy dress is required for entry), and headed to Brixton to indulge in a totally different club experience from anything we'd done before. The venue, a disused church, was a veritable fantasia of characters. Most women, and

a considerable number of men, wore lingerie, or PVC ensembles.

Men were on the whole donning leather trousers and bare chests, or

full military apparel. Naked breasts and buttocks were a plenty. Worthy of particular mention, perhaps, was a rather brave chap in nothing but a leather waistcoat and cock-ring (an awkward one to bump into on the dance floor). The crowd of 1,000 plus party-goers was composed of lithe young things and white-haired septuagenarians alike.

It is ostensibly a daunting thought: a three-floor club filled with fetishists indulging in bondage, S&M and group sex all to the heavy beat of industrial dance music. My evening at TG, however, was nothing but lovely. The environment was friendly, the people extraordinarily polite and easy to talk to, and even the whippings and spankings we witnessed seemed to be performed with the utmost care and, to an extent, gentleness.

It's not difficult to see the appeal: fetish clubs provide the ultimate in escapism. Costumes are required, cameras are banned, and strict rules of conduct are in place, which mean that although almost anything goes, safety, consent and communication

are paramount. Take for example, the following rules printed on the back of a ticket: Do not touch any one with-

out prior permission; Do not interrupt or walk through a scene. With such restrictions in place it is perhaps unsurprising that I felt far safer in this club dedicated to sexual exploration, wearing next to nothing, than I do walking past Cindies fully dressed on a Saturday night.

The atmosphere is so conducive to openness that I found myself easily making friends (after explaining excessively politely that, No, I did not want to have sex in the Couples Room); I danced more wildly than I have in recent memory; and found myself surprisingly un-phased by the scenes of live sex and mild S&M that I witnessed. One jarring thought did cross my mind, however, when standing in the room designated for having sex in (the Couples' Room) – no one seemed to be

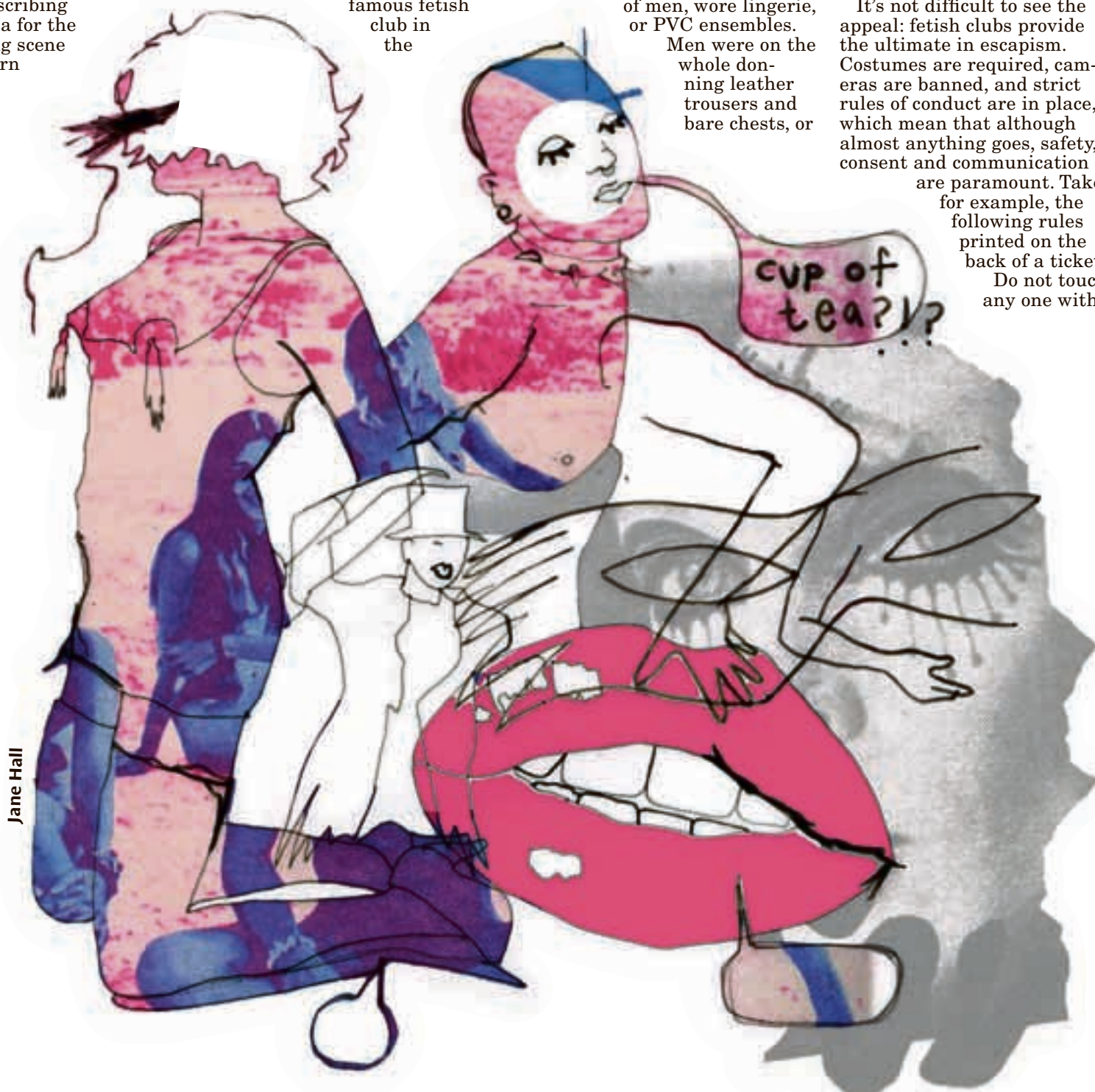
"I felt safer in this club dedicated to sexual exploration, wearing next to nothing, than I do walking past Cindies fully dressed on a Saturday night"

using a condom. Irresponsible and stupid of the individuals involved, I thought, but hardly an indictment of the club as a whole.

Fascinated by those indulging in sexual activity, or 'play', I enquired as to what was the appeal of performing sexual acts in the relatively public arena of a club, as opposed to in the privacy of one's own home. The answer from one couple was simple and to the point: "We like being watched, darling."

As we piled out onto the streets of Brixton at 6am (our fetish outfits hidden under layers of jumpers and coats), a small man lends me his lighter. "Can I kiss your shoes?" He asks politely. "Sure" I reply, "Why not?" He then kneels down and kisses each of my platforms gently. "What's the appeal?" I ask (for perhaps the fiftieth time that night). "I just like to serve women" is his response. And on that touching note, we left, returning somewhat reluctantly to the real world.

There are, no doubt, fetishists who are far less savoury characters than the one's I encountered. There are, no



Jane Hall

ungeons

night in London



WWW.TORTUREGARDEN.COM

doubt, clubs far too hardcore to appeal to the likes of the trendy young Londoners who frequent TG. The existence of a fetish club in the mainstream of London nightlife does illustrate, however, how much the public's attitude has changed towards sadomasochism and expressive sexuality in recent years.

In the International Classification of Diseases compiled by the World Health Organisation sadomasochism is still classified as a psychological disorder on the list, alongside paedophilia. This will no doubt shock anyone with an awareness of what is entailed in the practice of S&M. They will know, for example, that the aim of such activity is deriving mutual pleasure through the exchange of power

or pain. They will know the 'play' is necessarily consensual, unlike the case of paedophilia, which is, by definition, non-consensual (the object of desire is too young to consent). They will know that most people involved in S&M are above average in education (as notes Professor of psychology R.F. Baumeister). They will also note that sadomasochism involves a considerable amount of organisation, negotiation, awareness of social laws, and an ability to follow strict guidelines delineated before the commencement of 'play'. What sadomasochists find appealing – ritualistic practices, escapism, and the achievement of mutual catharsis through the subversion of social mores – will not appeal to everyone, but they

hardly seem the marks of a psychological disorder. Indeed it is only the sexual nature of sadomasochism that has led the public to find it morally impermissible, whilst accepting other instances of consensual violence, for example, in boxing matches.

It is refreshing, therefore, that the times they are a-changing, and open-mindedness is increasingly the order of the day. Torture Garden has an ever-growing fan base, and notions of fetishism and S&M are no longer as taboo as they were ten years ago. I, for one, am a convert, not to S&M per se, but definitely to TG. I look forward to donning my PVC and attending the next TG event, not under the auspices of journalism, but as a fully-fledged enthusiast.

Johnny & Luciana



In their search to find the golden mean between fashion extremes, Johnny and Luciana show an up-town girl how to dress down.

Mortal enemies and polar opposites, "The Sloane Ranger" and "Little Miss Edge", take to the fashion ring, for the first of a two-part makeover special. This week, Johnny and Luciana tackle contender

Smythson filofax crammed with addresses, lunch dates and 21st invites. Do you see a Jansport rucksack decorating her slender frame? No, Longchump's the champ for Grant.

Six hours later, when Zoe's hair had been successfully deratted and the last vestiges of SW3 had been powerhosed off, she emerged from the decontamination tank looking a little timid. She was feeling somewhat light-headed but we assured her that her flowing locks would suit the new rock-chick image we were about to create for her. Her porcelain visage turned almost translucent when we showed her the leather bomber jacket (Oasis, £110) that we were about to shove her into. We went for a ballerina - cum - biker look with this grey, sparkly tutu-skirt (Topshop, £32) and this Brokeback-tastic plaid shirt (Topshop, £25). We reckon shirts on girls can look great, just pick an interesting one and keep that col-

Before



number one, Zoe Grant. It's time for this Sloane Pony to receive her edge-ucation.

Now, even Johnny and Luciana have a few guilty items lurking in the back of their wardrobes (John used to be worryingly fond of his red Jack Wills trackie-bs and Luciana still lives in skinny jeans), but Zoe could fill an entire closet with her guilty (or guiltless) purchases. Take, for example, the most offensive item of all - the Jack Wills gilet. Alone, or as seen here teamed with the whole host of KR staples, the item never fails to simultaneously amaze and irritate. Amazingly, fans of the gilet often forget that Cambridge is cold and that people have arms. Irritatingly, they are very irritating. Zoe is perhaps making up for her cold arms with her toasty head. Is it a fur hat? Is it the animal itself? No, no, it's just her whopping great barnet. Johnny and Luciana can't even begin to fathom how long Zoe must spend in the morning making it look like she just got out of bed.

As a natural scientist, Zoe has a lot of books to carry around - we're betting the biggest of them all is her



After

lar down (take note, John). Legs can get as cold as arms, girls, so why not go wild with a nice pair of wooly leggings like these ones (H&M, £15). We finished off the look with these slouchy boots (Office, sale, £25) and some dark eye-makeup. Zoe steps straight out of the window of Jack Wills and onto her (motor?)bike.

Next week, Johnny and Luciana move to the other corner and bring out the softer sides of "Little Miss Edge".



Section from
The Wasteland
Martin Rowson

‘I spend every day drawing people I hate’

Anna Trench shares a pint with Guardian cartoonist **Martin Rowson**, the country’s most vicious satirist

As the cartoonist Martin Rowson buys me a pint at the University Arms I admit that I’ve already been to the pub today, and I hope I don’t get pissed. He tells me when he was an undergraduate at Cambridge and just about to interview someone himself, a mate left some weed in his pigeon hole, and obviously, as it would have been impolite not to try it, he smoked a bit before he left, and inevitably couldn’t remember much of what followed. I felt trumped.

Martin Rowson describes himself as a visual journalist, but he’s more; he’s a very vicious and visceral visual journalist. His political cartoons can be scathing, bloody, cruel and scatological – and also very funny. He says proudly that many found his take on Blair the most unpleasant, and he’s currently trying to do the same with Cameron by depicting him as Little Lord Fauntleroy. He contributes regularly to the Guardian, Time Out, the Scotsman and the Mirror, as well as having published a number of books including a novel, a memoir and some graphic novels. “The point of political cartoons”, he tells me, sitting at a table overlooking Parker’s Piece, “is they’re a kind of voodoo. The point is to do damage from a distance with a sharp object – in this case a pencil or a pen”, and to illustrate this he whips out a pen and brandishes it menacingly. Sometimes politicians buy his drawings and hang them in the loo, attempting to “diffuse the bad magic by flushing it down with the shit.” His book *Mugshots* is a compilation of 60 caricatures of leading political

figures drawn over lunch at the Gay Hussar. Charles Clarke was a “joy to draw...fatty big ears!” Alistair Campbell sat scowling cross-armed, before finally shouting across the restaurant “you just won’t be able to stop yourself making me look like a really bad person!” Rowson replied, “Alistair, I draw what I see.” But later he admits he actually quite likes Campbell, perhaps because he once complimented him “you’re the only one of these c*nts who can actually draw me.”

This picture of politics is not a pleasant one. It is bitchy and cruel and the damage from the pen seems to be partly a stab in the back. Although he reluctantly votes Labour, Rowson is adamant the role of political cartoonists is always to be oppositionist and that it’s healthy for politicians to be depicted as the “liars, knaves and fools” they are. But does he ever feel some sort of moral obligation? “The purpose of satire is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. It is the job of the satirist to point out the idiocies, absurdities, wickedness and immorality of the people in charge... allow the led to laugh at the leaders, to think this man is an imbecile or he’s just got a big nose.” His cartoons are cruel and perceptive visual rants which continue the tradition of the eighteenth-century caricaturist Gillray, who set the template for what Rowson and Steve Bell are doing now, appropriating and transforming recognizable figures. But he feels that cartoonists get a bad press. Cartoons are strange – they are “the mutant child of text and image” – and cartoonists “should actually be somewhat excluded,

treated as though we’re not quite decent, because what we’re doing is visual bugging, being vicious and unpleasant and not quite the sort of person you’d invite round for dinner because we’d probably throw up on your food.”

It seems that for Rowson, what he does with the subject is more important than what he does with the image. “I’m not particularly interested in art,” he states nonchalantly as I almost spit out my Grolsch in shock. “Well,” he

Alastair Campbell once told him “you’re the only one of these c*nts who can actually draw me.”

corrects himself, “not that interested in *doing* art.” He has no formal art training and, although he knew since he was ten that he wanted to be a cartoonist, he never thought an art school could teach him how to be one. Instead he read English at Cambridge. It was the late 70s: the “winter of discontent”. I probe him to reveal some Cantabrigian adventures. “What japes I got up to?! Christ Almighty!” I sit forward on my chair in anticipation, but what he tells me is actually quite sad. He remembers it as “cold and miserable and dirty; everything falling to pieces.” Once, when Andrew Marr (then an intense

lefty with a Trotsky goatie), came canvassing for CUSU at Rowson’s college, the boat club threw him in the pond, and Rowson proudly remembers out-singing the Rugby boys at the bar with revolutionary songs.

Maybe the reason Rowson’s Cambridge experience was so bleak is because he drew for Varsity’s rival paper ‘Broadsheet’. He has since seen the error of his ways, and this week has very generously drawn the Varsity editorial cartoon. Flick to page 11 to see his inspired take on Cambridge life. I ask him about his process. This one was drawn in pencil, gone over with Pelican Indian ink (the same as the Nazis used for tattooing people in concentration camps – slightly creepy), then all painted over with a gouche mixed up wash of burnt umber and Prussian blue before picking out details by highlighting. “Cartoons are very complicated in how they work and what they do; it should look like a fight between the cartoonist and the paper.” Rowson used to buy his nibs from the same man that Ralph Steadman bought his from. And this old man thought it scandalous, the way “Ralph uses the nibs like chisels”, but Rowson happens to think “it’s incredibly sexy”. In terms of what comes first – text or image – it’s a marriage of the two. He listens to the radio all day, hoping at some point to get a flash of inspiration. “The discipline of a deadline is great for concentrating the mind; a strange kind of terror pumps the adrenaline.” He’s lucky that he gets complete editorial freedom at the Guardian. The only thing the editor Alan Rusbridger doesn’t like is “shit...actual shit.”

But Varsity isn’t so fastidious.

Rowson’s appropriation of recognizable figures transcends the political world, into the literary. His graphic novel of *Tristram Shandy* was “a labour of love”, and aimed to “take the piss out of the academic response” to a book rarely read but often called a classic. The purpose of Rowson’s take on *The Wasteland*, however, was to mock the poem itself. He transformed it into an incomprehensible film noir nightmare of exciting, if exhausting, details. Eliot’s poem is apparently a “terribly turgid, bloody behemoth of Modernism... I can’t stand it.” I’m a little too scared to voice outright opposition and only wonder why he spent a year on something he hates. “I spend every day drawing people I hate.” Fair enough.

As our drinks become dregs I ask him one last question, downing my glass to give me confidence: would you say you’re quite angry? “No, I’m just as pissed off as everybody about most things. My current feeling about politics is boredom. But then the one thing which would be really bad for me is if everything suddenly became wonderful. A world of universal happiness would be incredible dull and I’d be out of a job.” As we leave he tells me about his new book, out in October. It’s called *Fuck: A World Odyssey*. There are 67 full colour pictures of life on Earth, each containing the word “fuck”. His arms become animated as he grins “so you have the big bang – ‘fuck!’, creatures crawling out of the Earth going ‘fuuuuck!’ I think it’s quite nice. It’ll be interesting to see if it gets stocked in W H Smith’s. But the publishers are happy with it.” I bet they are.

That Mitchell and Webb Interview

Thanks to Peep Show, **David Mitchell** and **Rob Webb** are the most recognisable double act since Fry and Laurie. But, as they tell **Patrick Kingsley**, there's more to David and Rob than just Mark and Jeremy

Rob Webb and David Mitchell seem a bit bored of Peep Show. Of course, they'd be too diplomatic to say so themselves, but after an hour's conversation with them both, there is a lurking suspicion that they're slightly tired of the offbeat Channel 4 sitcom that made them A-list comedians, paved the way for Magicians, their first feature film, and led to their notorious appearances in those hilarious Mac adverts.

It's easy to see why: they have no direct involvement in Peep Show's writing process. Sam Bain and Jesse Armstrong are the writers behind those perennial no-hopers Mark Corrigan and Jeremy Usbourne, and, perhaps most tellingly, they, not Mitchell and Webb, are the show's Executive Producers. And, contrary to popular belief, it's Sam and Jesse, not Rob and David, who bear the most similarities to Peep Show's antiheroes.

"Mark and Jeremy are a little like us, but they've got a lot more of Sam and Jesse in them," Rob explains. "So we're more detached about Peep Show. Jesse and Sam talk to us at the beginning about the plot, but they still do about 98% of the script."

Which is probably why Rob and David are so excited about the second series of BBC2's *That Mitchell and Webb Look*, which started last night. Says Webb, "We inevitably feel more attached to *That Mitchell and Webb Look*. We feel more personal about. We write three-quarters of it and so tend to feel more rewarded when it goes well, and more depressed when it doesn't." Mitchell clarifies: "We're very proud of Peep Show, but we simply have more emotional investment in *That Mitchell and Webb Look*."

So what have we got to look forward to in this latest edition of the emotionally-invested, awkward-

ly-acronymed TMAWL? Mitchell again: "Content-wise, the new series contains a lot more stand-alone, one-off stuff. There aren't many recurring characters and we've got rid of a lot of last year's content like Big Talk and Ted and Peter, the snooker commentators. We felt those ideas had run their course."

"We're very proud of Peep Show, but we simply have more emotional investment in *That Mitchell and Webb Look*"

Hang on! Is Numberwang no more? And what of Barry Crisp? And that Chicken Salad chappie? "We're keeping Sir Digby Chicken Caesar and we're doing a kind of history of Numberwang in episode six, but apart from that, everything's new. There's one sketch about a robotic man who loses his sense of smell to the extent that he can only smell petrol and cheese. And there's another about a film-maker who's basically the antithesis of a dramatic director; he insists on eve-

show called Bruiser – surprising given their collaborators included Ricky Gervais, Martin Freeman, Matthew Holness and Alan Titchmarsh; from 2003 onwards, they broadcast *That Mitchell and Webb Sound*, the radio show that laid the foundations for many of the sketches in the first series of TMAWL. And, Webb continues, "we're planning a pilot sitcom of our own for the end of this year. It'll inevitably be compared unfavourably to Peep Show, but we're prepared for that, and we're going to try and make sure it's as different as possible. We'll write it in a much more fruity way. It'll be more like *Father Ted*."

Yet, slightly bizarrely, the production that really shot them into the national consciousness was not a sitcom or a sketch-show but an advert for Apple in which Webb played a Mac computer and Mitchell a PC. The pair attracted a great deal of flak for their performances; the Telegraph criticised them for seeking "corporate ends", the British Sitcom Guide accused them of "selling their souls" whilst Nathan Barley's Charlie Brooker hated their "smug" tone.

"The almost vitriolic reaction genuinely surprised me," declared a surprised David Mitchell. "We weren't advertising McDonalds or Exxon

or anything like that. We were doing it for what is quite a cool company. I think people assumed that because we were the stars of Peep Show, we had a duty to be anti-capitalist."

"And I've owned a Mac since 1998," Webb interjects. "It was a natural choice."

Indeed, the Nineties were

after we left Cambridge. That was horrible. And we were both ushers at the Lyric Hammersmith, which has left me with a phobia of middle-class theatre-goers." David elaborates on their travails: "We were just putting on shows in the London fringe. We were very low on money and we had no idea how to go about finding an agent."

Many ex-Footlighters are reluctant to lend their support to their comedic alma mater, but, to their great credit, Mitchell and Webb are quite possibly the most supportive alumni, regularly showing their faces at Footlights events and often supplying Cambridge comics with positive quotes for their Edinburgh posters. So what do they make of Mark Watson's suggestion in Varsity last month that ex-Footlighters are somewhat stigmatised within the comedy industry?

Mitchell certainly agrees. "When I was in Footlights," he says, "it was at its least fashionable. Rob and I had to pretend we hadn't been in it. You'd often hear people say, 'Oh we're not going to see that bunch of fucking toffs,' because they'd assume that it has some sort of nepotistic link with the comedy industry. But that's just not true. To be a comedian, it helps to be bright and Cambridge simply has lots of bright students. I think the Footlights situation has now reached a happy equilibrium. Agents and producers will still go see the show but they won't be biased in their treatment of it. It's OK to be in Footlights again." Numberwang, evidently.

That Mitchell and Webb Look in on Thursdays at 9pm on BBC2 and BBC HD.



Next Big Thing The Tings Tings



The Ting Tings asked me to bring three 7"s to our interview; I brought Petula Clark's Downtown, Madonna's Crazy For You and Thin Lizzy's Parisienne Walkways. "We're going to turn them inside out and use them for our own release," explains drummer Jules; "It was all an experiment. We thought it would be interesting to have a Ting Tings record on the outside and a Rolling Stones one on the inside."

This particular idiosyncrasy is just one example of the band's approach to making music. They see the process as highly organic, design their album artwork themselves, and even hand-make their own records. "Columbia kept pushing us to release Great DJ, and told us they were going to release as many as possible in order to make a hit out of it. But we said we didn't want to do things like that, so we limited the number of records to two thousand, because that's how many we could physically make. I guess people are sceptical about our approach."

At this point, singer Katie joins us, wearing super skinny black jeans and a hoodie pulled over a wide-brimmed hat, hair poker straight and blonde, and face made-up. Her immaculate appearance doesn't seem to fit with her ballsy rock-chick credentials.

The duo are tipped to be the sound of 2008: their debut album is complete and awaiting release. Katie begins to explain how the band's name was decided upon. "I used to work with a Chinese girl called Ting Ting, and I just loved the sound of it. In Mandarin it means 'bandstand'." "But it also means the sound of innovation," Jules pipes up, intellectually.

Their MySpace page defines their sound as 'Melo-dramatic Popular Song', an emerging new genre that begs for clarification. "I liked the ring of the words," Katie explains, mouthing the phrase to herself. "But we're quite dramatic ourselves, so I suppose it sums us up quite well."

When I asked them to define their sound themselves, they were evasive, claiming they didn't like the idea of compartmentalising themselves. "It's an easy way of marketing bands, isn't it," Jules contemplates, "If you say 'they sound like the Cribs' or Craig David or someone. We don't like being compared, but sometimes you've got to accept that's the only way of reaching out to people."

Amara Sophia Elahi



Team Players

The Go! Team sound like some cheerleaders having a sand-fight set to a soundtrack of punk-cum-funk-cum-hip-hop. **Andrew Spyrou** spoke to their frontman **Ian Parton**

Named after the quick-response crews that are sent out to car crashes to pick up stray limbs off the motorway so that they are not run over before they can be sewn back on, The Go! Team started off in Brighton around the year 2000 as a one man "band". Originally treating music very much as a hobby, Ian Parton would come home from work and record sounds that he liked and layer them on his 4-track recorder, creating busy sound-clips, but one day he decided to pack everything up and go to Wales to record his first album. After a month of messing around with "shitty microphones" in his parent's kitchen, and no doubt growing a beard, out popped the Mercury Music Prize-nominated album *Thunder, Lightning, Strike*, a title which very much summed up its frantic sound. After realising that he would never be able to perform his

songs live on his own (having been offered wedges of cash by Franz Ferdinand), Ian decided to recruit a band in order to recreate his dense recordings for a live audience. The band, who are "visually and musically very different" from each other and are essentially a cobbling together of musicians from around the globe, fulfilled Ian's dream of an anti-"indie-band", with Ninja, a female rapper and others with passions for noise rock and electronica. These days Ian says he doesn't really see himself as the leader of the band any more, but prefers to let the eccentric relationships between the members carry the music in whatever direction they take it, be it taking after girl-gang chants or air-raid sirens.

Citing influences anywhere from Bollywood soundtracks to Underground Hip Hop, the Go! Team sound is pretty diverse; somehow, however, the band

manages to retain the same energy across all their EPs and even right into their most recent album *Proof of Youth* last year. I would say, perhaps with a little disappointment, that the band's sound has not progressed one semi-quaver since its outset, but perhaps reasons behind retaining this very lo-fi sound is Ian's dislike for the way modern music is going, with him suggesting that much of music is losing its inventiveness, with Rock churning out "Franz Ferdinand-descendents" and Hip Hop moving from the raw old school sound to today's "buffed-up Hummer" beats.

Apart from using hoards of vintage samples clogging up their sound board to create the party-vibe of the past, the band also featured high-profile guests on some recent tracks including one of Ian's biggest idols: Chuck-D of Public Enemy. In so doing, Ian fulfils one of his aims, name-

ly creating an obvious overlap between traditionally "White" and "Black" music, filling the Grey area. However, on paper, this description given by Ian in no way distinguishes the band's music from the crowds of other groups who strive to transcend musical and cultural boundaries; it is the bands explicit energy which sets them apart from the rest.

Endeavouring to create the most "violent" sound possible, a feeling which certainly comes across when seeing them live, Ian, has now threatened to make an "even noisier" album, a feat which, on hearing some of their songs, you may think impossible. But, having experienced Mr Parton's stubborn "stick-it-to-the-critic" (copyright Andrew Spyrou) attitude, he no doubt will. Look out for a wall of sound coming your way soon.

The Go! Team play the Junction on Monday 25th February



Phone Cape. Meet Cape. Talk.

Oli Robinson has his Cape and eats it

I broke my glasses last week so I'm trying to find some new ones. I have discovered, however, that most shops sell frames that either cost silly money or that make you look like a paedophile. Nothing else. So when I meet Sam Duckworth, the brains behind Get Cape. Wear Cape. Fly, and he is sporting a rather nice set of specs, I dive straight in and ask where he got them. "I dunno, some shop in South-end" he says. "They're made by Hackett. I think they cost about eighty five quid". I moan that this is rather a lot. "Yeah, but it's worth it for something you're going to wear every day." He probably has a point.

Anyway, I have a bit of soft spot for the music of Get Cape. I got into his first album just as I was coming to the end of a rather unpleasant break-up (yadah yadah self-indulgence yadah) so I probably like it more than I should. But nevertheless, his brand of electro acoustic emo has undeniable appeal. I saw him live for the first time at Soul Tree a year or so ago. "Yeah, I've played all over in Cambridge," Sam says; "in fact I met my current manager at a gig in the Portland Arms."

His tours have seen him move to bigger and bigger venues. We are now chatting backstage

at the Junction, Cambridge's second largest venue. "I like the size of this place," he says, "I like being able to see the whole audience. Some bands write songs for stadiums, but that's not what I'm about. I just want people who like music to like my music". So what can we expect from the new album? "Well, it's more drum and bassy," he says; "I'm as proud of it as the last, if not actually a bit more."

So, a couple of hours later I am on the other side of the stage and watching the first support, a band called the Xcerts. My friend Ian suggests they sound a bit like Biffy Clyro. I agree. The second support is a girl called Emmy the Great. I spend her entire set trying to decide if she is pretty or whether seeing a petite girl playing a guitar makes her seem pretty. I think the answer is a bit of both. Then Get Cape. Wear Cape. Fly eventually come on. The last time I saw Sam perform he had a trumpeter, laptop and drummer: now he has added a sax and guitarist to the line up.

The gig is a mix of old and new songs. Some of the new ones have been re-worked with the addition of new brass parts and tweaked rhythms. Rather than simply changing them be-

yond recognition, this refreshes them. They sound at once familiar and excitingly unknown. This is a rare experience. Often bands ruin tracks with wholly unsuitable live changes, but not so with Get Cape.

And the crowd seems to agree, as there is an overwhelming warmth towards the band. It is a magnificent experience when the crowd sing along to the start of Once More With Feeling, but even more so when the crowd join in with Find The Time. Sam seems genuinely surprised at the latter, given that it hasn't been released yet, but such is the power of MySpace.

In fact all of the new songs are hugely enjoyable. Often crowds bay for old tracks and then stand immovable during the new, but not tonight. Sam had told me that he would finish the show with a new song and so he does. And it is brilliant. It starts with a piano riff that I'm sure has been lifted from somewhere and builds to a massive high.

We leave the gig elated and with huge expectations for the new album. I can't wait. I also can't wait to get some new glasses. What do you reckon? Should I get the ones from Hackett? Or would that be a bit weird?

Great Works of Art in Cambridge #6: *The Light of the World* John Piper and Patrick Reyntiens *Robinson College Chapel*

Cambridge is filled with stained glass. From the glass sculptures in Newnham to the Pugin lancets in Jesus, from the medieval panes of the Round Church to the nineteenth-century German windows in Peterhouse, we live and work in a glass museum. King's College Chapel alone is a gift for glass-lovers; aside from the mammoth Renaissance windows, new roundels and shards are always being bought and placed into the side-chapel windows.

The earliest mention of Robinson College's addition to this corpus was in 1977. The context was complicated; there was much debate as to whether the college should even have a chapel. John Piper had gained accolades as an official war artist; after the war he became well known for his stained glass, most notably at Coventry Cathedral, which work alone is said to have inspired Robinson to hire him. Piper was introduced to the glass-maker Patrick Reyntiens in the 50s by John Betjeman, a life-long friend (the poem Myfanwy is about Piper's wife). Reyntiens was an expert and an experimentalist, and one of his extraordinary, self-designed panels is on show at the Stained Glass Museum in Ely Cathedral.

Piper would make large designs

(cartoons) in watercolours, inks, collage and pencil, which Reyntiens would then transform into the windows. For Robinson this required huge quantities of flashed glass from Germany. Reyntiens went himself, taking with him strips from Piper's original cartoon. Then there was the leading, the thick black lines between the panes, which entirely transforms the aesthetic. After collaborating for thirty years on glass (with Piper having received all the credit), the Robinson commission proved to be the last Piper-Reyntiens *grand projet*.

Staring up at the glass from the floor of Isi Metzstein's awkwardly shaped Chapel, you can just about glimpse the cracked yellow light of God, surrounded by the blue of the sky. At eye level, twisting green leaves and small, bright orange roundels intermingle, while the deep green at the centre washes over the red chapel bricks. Based on William Holman Hunt's painting of the same name (a glass version of which can be seen in the Round Church), the Robinson window shows Piper exploring his faith and fascination with 'pleasing decay'. But contrasted with this are the dramatic, traumatic lines of Reyntiens' metal, glaring through the glass darkly.

Richard Braude



view from the
groundlings

Oscar Wilde famously said “We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars”, an observation which can be extended to the glamorous world of theatre reviewing. Each production reviewed in these hallowed pages gets awarded a number of stars, but how useful or effective can such an ambiguous grading system be?

Stars are emotive symbols in theatre, tapping into vague dreams of fame and Hollywood Boulevard; however, the use of this particular symbol in grading each production tells you nothing more than whether a particular person liked or disliked a particular production or play. It is a subjective judgement, but this is not why I object to the tradition, for reviewing itself is highly subjective; the problem is that the star grade implies an objective judgement, based on unspecified universal criteria. Furthermore, there is no nuance in the star system: no distinction can be made between play and production. In no other context would anyone dream of comparing *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* with *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*, or, as will happen next week, *Hedda Gabler* with *Sweet Charity*; and yet this is what the star grading system forces both the readers and reviewers to do. Not only does it necessitate gross generalisation with regard to a single play but it forces a comparison between plays or shows which should remain incomparable: the star system implies a universal standard where no such thing exists.

I understand why we use it: in our daily attempt to prevent the numerous plates we’re spinning clattering to the floor, we do not have time to read a full review, so the star system is the accepted solution. But though I can comprehend this reasoning, I believe it to be flawed: in this rag (and indeed, in the other one) plays are rarely rated below two or above four stars, further restricting an already ineffectual system. How many stars a play gets tells you nothing: by far the hardest part of being a reviewer is squeezing what you’ve expressed in four hundred carefully chosen words into a mute grade and knowing that this is all many of your readers will look at.

This is a topic which needs to be considered and debated – the star grade is so well established in reviewing culture that it is rarely questioned, though I’m sure many acknowledge its fallacy. Perhaps an alternative, more flexible system is available but until we find one, my opinion chimes in with Auden’s: “the stars are not wanted now: put out every one.”

Lizzie Davis

Entertaining
Mr Sloane
ADC

Dir: James Lewis

Theatre

★★★★★

Entertaining Mr Sloane puts the ‘Amateur Dramatic’ into the ADC. It’s the sort of production that would have bored you at school.

Joe Orton’s script is a fantastic piece of black humour and biting social critique. ‘Mr Sloane’ comes to lodge with a working-class family, the two grown-up children fall in love with him and the result is a weird parental/sexual ménage à trois. Director James Lewis should be praised for his selection. Sadly, the production fails to deliver any of the script’s promise.

The actors are successful in knowing their lines and not bumping into the furniture. Beyond that, Lucy Marks as the frustrated Kath is from the eyebrow-contorting, gesticulatory school of acting. As for Adam Drew, the eponymous and supposedly Mr Ripley-esque figure, he doesn’t personify sex appeal so much as repeated pelvis thrusting. Ade O’Brien, as the brother, deserves credit for trying to salvage the production but there’s little he can do in the face of amateurish sound cues and a powder-haired parody of the supposedly sympathetic old

father. The end result is such a caricatured cast of characters as to be almost patronising in its attitude towards the lower classes. Cambridge actors are an over-worked group, but surely a cast of four could have produced a stronger showing than this.

Perhaps it seems unfair to deliver such a damning report on a show within student drama: bearing in mind how much work goes into the central ADC shows, this is disappointing. To give the play credit, it does use the Velvet Underground as a soundtrack. Otherwise, not entertaining.

Imogen Walford



VIN SHEN BAN

The title role of Don Giovanni is notoriously difficult to get just right. The beauty of Ashley Riches’ performance was that it combined Mozart’s music effortlessly with the modern production, providing a seamless juxtaposition between the two. His broad and mature voice combined with some magisterial acting to produce an effect which dominated the minds of the audience as much as it dominated the lives of the other characters on stage. The exit of the Don was therefore perhaps a disappointing

anti-climax, as indeed was the relatively diminutive voice of George Dye as Il Com-

“The orchestra provides sensitively wrought accompaniment”

mendatore, although both, it must be remembered, lie in comparison with the highest standards achieved elsewhere. Katy Watson provided a mov-

ing portrait of Donna Elvira, whilst at the other end of the spectrum Edward de Minckwitz’s subversive wit played off marvellously against the Don, his master. The orchestra provided some imaginative and sensitively wrought accompaniment, albeit spoilt by occasional blemishes. The cast, on the other hand, was vocally superb throughout, combining with a well-judged interpretation to produce an immediate and moving renovation of what is often a deeply stereotyped piece.

Toby Chadd

and amused as they rollicked through Shakespeare’s 38 plays and 154 sonnets. If anything, it was the fear that we might not follow too outrageous or prolonged an improvisation that led more obscure attempts to fall flat. Rather than trusting in their capacity to excite the audience and create comedy through collaboration, the cast’s desire to please was excessive. This seems wholly unnecessary for a cast with a striking potential to please on their own terms. Hopefully this will be realised over the run if their audiences increase and remain open to playing along with Shakespeare in a way that would not be condoned in a supervision room.

Helen Duff

Don Giovanni
West Road
Concert Hall

Dir: James Hurley

Opera

★★★★★

Happily Ever
After
Corpus Christi
Playroom

Dir: Jamie

Pleydell-Bouverie

Theatre

★★★★★

Happily Ever After is up against it. Not only is it a new piece of student writing being performed in the notoriously quirky Corpus Playroom, it comes from a genre already suffering from a glut in Cambridge: the fairy tale farce. With the ADC panto and *The Grimm Tales* in the community’s recent memory, and *Into the Woods* looming on the horizon, arriving a year earlier or later would give it a warmer reception.

Jamie Pleydell-Bouverie’s production focuses on Cinderella, instead of tackling the whole canon. The play opens on Cinderella (Patricia Burns, a major

highlight) and Prince Charming (Axel Rendahl) honeymooning in the Bahamas. We find the real Cinderella is a rude chav rapidly grown fat on fast food now that her stepsisters no longer feed her only celery; the real Prince, a staid man interested in growing leeks.

Instances of meta-commentary occur several times throughout the play, each to the show’s detriment, except once. Chaos erupts at the end as all the characters, fed up with being killed off and manipulated, take turns voicing their grievances to the ‘director’; this passage got the most laughs,

as if the audience agreed with one character who called the play ‘a second-rate farce by a second-rate author’.

This ‘light piece of theatre’ has a moral: even though life is no fairy tale, we need not take ourselves too seriously. The notes also explain that the play is solidly a farce through and through, although it often can’t quite find its footing – does it want to be meta-theatre? Outrageously campy like a pantomime? Subtle and satirical? A mess, despite the talent and enthusiasm of a promising cast and crew.

Cathy Bueker

Glasvegas

The Graduate

Gig
★★★★★

They appear out of the blood-red stage smoke, pallid Glaswegian complexions ghost-like in the mystic aura. There is an air of the psychedelic about the whole setup. And then a wall of sound hits me. I watch arms pump away at low-slung guitars, thrashing out meaty chords. I can't even see the drummer, Caroline McKay, whom critics have called "that cool girl who stands at bashes at the back". The ear-bursting noise continues. I wait, and wait some more, for a tune to come through.

The key to pop music is a catchy riff or memorable lyrics: something that fans can sing along too and think "Fuck yeah!" Glasvegas seem to take the notion of 'artistic license' a little far, because none of what I heard has stuck in my head, niggling me as I write this piece.

But then maybe James Allan, lead singer and songwriter for the band, feels no need to subscribe to this generally accepted model for successful music. I ask him about the recent BBC Sound of 2008 Poll, in which 150 journalists and music writers made their choices for the most promising talent of the year: Glasvegas came fourth in the top ten. All I get in response is "What's thaaat

then?" Ah. "No, it's all fine man. I mean, I feel like I've already experienced myself man. Five records or a million. It dinnae matter to me, man. I've already won." This 'winner' is a blend of 60s doo-wop with the harshness of heavy punk. Allan is certainly keen to express his deep regard of Elvis, as is his cousin, Rab Allan, who plays rhythm guitar. They both have something masquerading as quiffs, and a permanent pout.

At least Glasvegas have a distinctive sound, even if they are not technically proficient; I noticed the drummer struggling once or twice to maintain a steady pulse. Perhaps the most refreshing thing about the band is their attitude to music. Allan considers that his songs embody the Glaswegian spirit, which he describes as "cool and exotic". He goes on to say that "people want to hide their natural spirit. There is the East-West divide in Glasgow, with some kids thinking that Snoop Dogg is cool, and others on Amélie. I think we're searching other people's worlds too much. I wanna search my own world." But is philosophy enough to ensure hit success? Surely not. Wherever, then, do the critics get such a rosy image from?



"We're not trying to tell anything new," Allan confirms. So if there is no particular message, no catchy riff, no transcendental middle eight and no technical prowess, where might they find success? Allan and the band should read the paper more, maybe find out when they have won things. Otherwise, the Job Centre, which Allan calls "not my best friend", but which has supported his earning capacity hitherto, might have to become a better companion.

Guy Kiddey

Dangerous Liaisons

Robinson College Auditorium

Dir: John Mifsud

Theatre
★★★★★

Productions of Dangerous Liaisons often strive in vain for originality, but this version successfully brings its own flair to Laclos' enthralling plot and Christopher Hampton's brilliantly pithy dialogue. The play can be interpreted in several ways: eternal battle of the sexes; stark political statement on its aristocratic protagonists, whose personal playground is soon to be shattered by the French Revolution; or charting the emotional development of Valmont, who begins as a lothario and ends seemingly redeemed by his experience of true love.

Stefan Haselwimmer glitters as the Vicomte, delivering his lines with panache, and imbuing the character with just the right mix of nonchalance and subtlety. Nicola Marsh is good in her role as the contained and controlling Marquise de Merteuil, managing to suggest enough brittleness and vulnerability to engage our sympathy. At times the play's tangled web becomes incestuous, and the excellent set, adds to the production's sense of claustrophobia, explaining why the characters try to escape the confines of their salon society. Well worth the trek to Robinson.

Rebecca Wall

Low Level Panic

Corpus Christi Playroom

Dir: Robyn Hazel Hoedemaker

Theatre
★★★★★

Set in a bathroom, the Corpus Playroom is particularly aromatic for this production of Clare McIntyre's drama, featuring three attractive 20-somethings baring all about their female angst.

For most young men, finding a porn mag in your bin would be for highlight of the week. However, for Jo and Mary this rag sparks a session of extreme naval-gazing. When it was first performed in 1988, Low Level Panic may have seemed brave to cover masturbation, pornography and sexual assault so frankly. However, by the end of the play, one is quietly hoping not to be subjected to yet

another monologue about weight loss or reprehensible males.

However, whilst the script starts to drag, and though too much of the script is delivered in high-register exasperation, the performances keep you hooked. Amelia Viney shines as Jo, while Brooke McGowan takes on traumatised Mary well, and Emily-Jane Swanson's neurotic performance as Celia is unnervingly natural. If you can handle a seventy-minute bludgeoning of this simple message, then it's hard to imagine anyone doing it better than this dynamic threesome.

Robert Peal

Clark

Turning Dragon

Album
★★★★★



Now. Eastern European Motorway. Grey sky. Large truck. Passenger seat. Head glued right; eyes whirr. Passing factories. Power stations. Reactors. Cooling towers. Smoke rises. Sharp right turn. Eyes forward. Destination looms ahead. Looms. Security gate. Pumping pistons, pistons pump. Circular motion. Vertical movement. Space Shuttle. Tank tracks. Volcano spillage; Molten lead. Cast iron.

Warp Records have been busy recently. After a while without releasing anything notable, two monsters are unleashed on the same day: Autechre's rather stubborn Quaristice and this other, more elegant, beast.

Chris Clark's music is Industry. His sounds could have only been manufactured at the aforementioned secret plant developed by the collaboration of plastic-uniform-clad Russian and German physicists experimenting with the mixture of Uranium Tetrafluoride and various heavy metals, all under the supervision of a Berlin-residing, Bristolian headcase. Each Soundblock created there is transported to a modified distillery deep in the Urals, where they are randomly sorted into manageable groups. Each group is then shut into a holding cell along with an electroplated slab of black lacquer. Three days later all that remains in each cell is a vinyl disc. Groove and all.

All that is left is for these tracks to be projected through our eardrums on a scale unprecedented by years worth of IDM composers. Class-mates with bassmaster Steve 'Milanese' Milanese, Chris must have always had someone to talk to about his love for musical mentalisations. One wonders however what those two talked about over their grasshopper sandwiches and crisps, let alone what their conversations actually sounded like.

Clark has come a long way from his experimental 2001 album Clarence Park, made at a time at which he was still using his forename. Beats replace any decibel lapse to create this layered triumph. Never unpleasant, but often difficult to delve into, Turning Dragon, as the title suggests, represents Chris's love for brutal dance music, and never lets this fade.

Andrew Spyrou

films

every right-minded person should own



Casablanca

Dir: Michael Curtiz

"Of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world, she walks into mine." So says Rick Blaine, played with alcoholic cynicism by Humphrey Bogart. The gin joint is Rick's Café Americain, the town is Casablanca, the world is a war-torn 1942, and she is Ilsa Lund (Ingrid Bergman), wife of the Resistance leader, Victor Laszlo (Paul Henreid). Casablanca is a film one loves, rather than a 'great' film. It can be spectacularly sentimental: Ilsa whispering, eyes dewy and lips trembling, "Is that cannon fire? Or is that my heart pounding?" Essentially the film is a love triangle; but it is also comedy, a thriller, and one of the best black-and-white films ever made.

At its heart, Casablanca is about sacrifice. The plot hinges on two letters of transit that ensure safe exit from the Vichy-controlled no man's land of Casablanca to freedom in America. Rick is forced to "do the thinking for both of us, for all of us", and his noble conclusion is that the fight against the Nazis takes precedence over love. More importantly, though, this was what viewers needed: a film which mocked and defeated the Nazis, with some Parisian champagne kisses thrown in.

There are a host of brilliant caricatures in supporting roles, from the fat Moroccan owner of the rival nightclub who spends his time chuckling dirtily and swatting flies, to Captain Louis Renault, the camp, corrupt official. One of the things which makes this film so powerful is the casting: refugees were used as extras, German actors played the Nazis they'd fled; only three cast members were American. The scene in which the Nazis begin a rowdy recital of their national anthem, only to have Laszlo march up to the orchestra and demand "Play La Marseillaise!" is spine tingling, and the tears in the eyes of the actors are genuine. Music plays a crucial part: the score was based on La Marseillaise, interspersed with Jazz Age songs, while the classic As Time Goes By serves as a symbol of Rick and Ilsa's lost romance.

The blurring and glittering of faces (particularly Bergman's), shadows and smoke, and recurring sight of planes roaring away to Lisbon are iconic images. But the best frame is surely the last, as Rick and Louis stroll into the fog: "Louis, I think this is the beginning of a beautiful friendship." The viewer must surely feel the same.

Anna Trench

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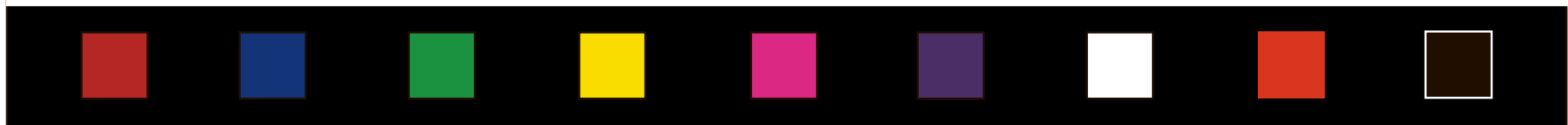


ELECTIONS

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WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR?



	film	theatre	music	other	going out
<div><div><div>pick of the week</div></div><div><div>friday 22</div><div>saturday 23</div><div>sunday 24</div><div>monday 25</div><div>tuesday 26</div><div>wednesday 27</div><div>thursday 28</div></div></div>	My Blueberry Nights Friday 22nd Feb onwards, Arts Picturehouse, various times.  The title might sound as saccharine as the eponymous blueberry (Michael says they're tangy, Tom doesn't agree), yet Wong Kar -Wei's English language debut promises to be intriguing. Starring Jude Law, Rachel Weisz andNorah Jones.	Romeo and Juliet Tues 26th - Sat 1st Mar, ADC Theatre, 19.45 (Sat 1st Mar, matinee, 14.30) Rich with the finest of Cambridge's acting talent, Romeo and Juliet will be one of this term's must-see plays. With the tag-line "two young people fall in love. Accidents will happen," we should already expect more than a mere re-hashing of a plot-line familiarised by Baz Luhrmann. Indeed, we've been promised "an energetic, hot-blooded production which will strip down the play in order to re-examine it afresh." Should be marvellous.	Metronomy Sat 16th, The Graduate, 19.30, £8 Metronomy is the nom de plume of Joseph Mount. He has remixed loads of tracks from artists as diverse as Kate Nash, DNTEL and Roots Manuva. Someone on the Varsity team says she had 'a thing' with his younger brother. Apparently she used this phrase to mean that he is her friend. I find this a little odd - surely 'a thing' implies some form of romantic liaison? Anyway, hopefully this gig will be banging.	Momentary Momentum: animated drawings (Part 2) Wed 27th Feb - Sun 30th March, Kettle's Yard, free After the rapturously received first round, this exhibition returns with a new set of animations. It's an international survey, including work from Takashi Ishida, and French collective Qubo Gas, who have used meterological data to create a digital drawing that is updated according to the weather.	Soundclash: Jehst Thurs 28th, Fez, 22.00-03.00, £7/£5  Jehst is a British rapper renowned for the quality of his lyrics. I was once told by a dubious source that he studied English at Cambridge, so this might be a coming-home party. He's appearing as part of a Soundclash night, which also features the wonderfully named Micall Parknsun.
	Be Kind Rewind Vue, 13.20, 15.50, 18.20, 20.40, 23.00 My Blueberry Nights Arts Picturehouse, 12.30, 14.40, 19.10, 21.15	Entertaining Mr Sloane ADC Theatre, 19.45 Low Level Panic Corpus Playroom, 21.00 Don Giovanni West Road Concert Hall, 19.45	Metronomy The Graduate, 19.30, £6.50 See pick of the week.	Richard Friend: 'Serendipity in Physics' Lady Mitchell Hall, 17.30-18.30 CUTAZZ Mumford Theatre, ARU, 19.30	Equalizers Clare Cellars, 21.00, £4 Equalizers are a young break-beat duo from London known for their energetic DJ sets.
	There Will Be Blood Arts Picturehouse, 14.15, 17.30, 20.45 Ma Vie En Rose Old Labs, Newnham, 20.00, free.	Dangerous Liaisons Robinson College Auditorium, 19.30 The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged) ADC Theatre, 14.30, 23.00	Snowboy and the latin section The Junction, 19.00, £15 Snowboy make latin funk music. Apparently someone on the Varsity team has a child with someone in the horn section.	Cambridge Brass Band Annual Charity Concert Wesley Methodist Church, 19.30, £6/£4 CUTAZZ Mumford Theatre, ARU, 19.30	King's Bassics King's Cellar, 22.00-01.00, free Viva Latina Trinity Hall, 21.00-01.00, £4. Expect spicy fun Gold Queens' Fitz, 21.00-00.45, £5
	Lady Chatterley Arts Picturehouse, 11.00 Rambo Vue, 10.00, 12.10, 14.20, 16.40, 18.50, 21.10	Try 4 On Demand. The new series of Skins is out; you could watch it and think 'that's definitely not what I was doing when I was 17.'	Cam Sight Wesr Road Concert Hall, 19:30, £20 Dvorak and Brahms.	Songs in the Dark Clowns, 20.00, free Acoustic music night featuring Cambridge students.	The Sunday Service Twenty Two, 22.00-03.00
	Belleville Rendez-Vous Arts Picturehouse, 16.30 Be Kind Rewind Arts Picturehouse, 12.15, 14.30, 18.45, 21.00	Today, why not have a look at BBC iPlayer?	The Go! Team The Junction, 19:00, £14 They have an exclamation mark in their name. I have been lead to believe that this is treacherous in Varsity circles.	Charity Fashion Spectacular Chamber, dining room, bar, Cambridge Union, 17.00-23.00 Wolfson Howler Wolfson College Bar, 20.00. See www.myspace.com/wolfsonhowler.	Fat Poppadaddys Fez, 22.00-03.30, £3 before 11, £4 after
	An Angel At My Table Arts Picturehouse, 13.30 Russian Ark Arts Picturehouse, 17.00 Be Kind Rewind Vue, 13.20, 15.50, 18.20, 20.40	Romeo and Juliet ADC Theatre, 19.45 Hedda Gabler Corpus Playroom, 19.00 10 Minute Festival Friends of Peterhouse Theatre, 20.00	Tina Dico The Junction, 19.00, £10 One of those acoustic style female singers who make music to make girls cry about their dickhead boyfriends.	Jazz Piano: A History (Hines to Taylor) Lecture Room 1, Concert Hall, 11 West Road, 19.30-21.30, £6/£4	Ebonics Fez, 22.00-03.00, £2 before 11, £4 after
	There Will Be Blood Arts Picturehouse, 14.15, 17.30, 20.45 Be Kind Rewind Vue, 13.20, 15.50, 18.20, 20.40 Sweeney Todd Vue, 19.00, 21.40	Murder in the Cathedral Jesus College Chapel, 19.30 Alice: A Fresher's Tale Selwyn College, 19.30 Conviction Corpus Playroom, 21.30	The Delays The Graduate, 19.30, £10 Apparently someone in the Varsity offices knows someone who once fitted a kichen for one of the Delays.	Richard Dearlove Chamber, Cambridge Union, 19.00-21.00, members CU Wine Soc presents Chateau Branaire-Ducru of Bordeaux See www.cuws.co.uk	Cindies I'll spare you the details.
	Rock, Paper, Scissors: The Way of the Tosser Arts Picturehouse, 17.00, 23.10 Russian Ark Arts Picturehouse, 17.00 The Bank Job Vue, 19.00	Romeo and Juliet ADC Theatre, 19.45 Hedda Gabler Corpus Playroom, 19.00 Sweet Charity Fitzwilliam Auditorium, 20.00	I was a Cub Scout The Graduate, 19.30, £7 I was a Cub Scout make electronic emo. Apparently they used to be cub scouts. Someone in the Varsity office was once a cub scout.	French Tapestry and Illustration Fitzwilliam Museum, 10.00-17.00, free Cambridge University Ballet Society: The Planets Mumford Theatre, ARU, 19.30, £4.50	Jehst Fez, 22.00-03.00, £5/£7 See pick of the week.

More...

Music

Cambridge University Brass Band's annual concert

23rd Feb, Wesley Methodist Church.

19:30

A load of wind and metal in aid of Cambridge RAG. I like brass bands.



Theatre

Happily Ever After

22nd and 23rd Feb
Corpus Playroom,

19:00

The publicity says that this is a 'second rate play... a second rate author'. Quite how this is supposed to encourage you to attend is beyond me. Perhaps go along and find out.



Going Out

Retro Gaming All Stars

Wed 27th Feb

The Graduate,

19:30

You pay a pound and then get to play SNES and Megadrive games in a tournament. The winner takes it all. Like what you used to do when you were 8 but with hard cash and beer.



Free Stuff

Ma Vie En Rose

Free Film, Sat 23rd, Newnham Old Labs 8pm

Underground

Free Film, Sun 24th, Queens Fitzpat 8pm

Songs in the Dark

Free Music, Sun 24th, Clowns, 8pm



Sports Round-up

Honours shared at inaugural Indoor Varsity Athletics

The first Indoor Varsity Athletics competition at Pickett's Lock saw mixed results for CUAC. As a relay competition, the meet requires strength in depth, with each event decided by the total combination of individual efforts. The men dominated in both the track and the field, beating Oxford 4-2 and 7-1 respectively. In turn, Oxford's particularly strong group of female middle-distance runners meant that the Dark Blues were successful on the track, and with the Cambridge women not quite matching them in the field, the overall results of the meet added up to a tantalising draw: 14-14.

The tighter and shorter dimensions of the Indoor track intensified the occasion. On the 60m straightaway, Ben Richardson (Churchill) got the start he needed and finished strongly in a personal best of 7.07, over two-tenths of a second ahead of the Oxford runners. In the men's 4x800m Oxford chose to put their best runners on the opening legs, and Cambridge were left to chase them home. Andy Owen (Selwyn), who had been out since November with a knee injury, ran a remarkable leg to keep Cambridge in contention. Sam Dobin (Trinity), the Great Court run expert, intelligently measured his run to haul Oxford back



within striking distance for John Cook (Jesus) who was able to ease past the Dark Blues in the final stages.

Elsewhere, the Cambridge women set a new match record in the Pole Vault, with Sarah Williams (Kings) breaking the individual record. In the men's Triple Jump, Humphrey Waddington (St. Catharine's) leapt over 14m for the first time, comfortably over the Blues distance. Indeed, out of the field events it was only the High Jump that prevented the Cambridge men from clean sweeping Oxford.

In the penultimate event of the day, the Cambridge women ran an exhilarating 4x400m relay. With both sides fielding

strong teams, Lucy Spray (Newnham) and the final Oxford runner were practically tied together on the final leg and through the finishing line. Almost too close to call visually, the automatic clocking showed that she had held off the Oxford runner by one hundredth of a second, the time only just off the match record.

With the overall result exactly equal across the women and the men, the summer's Varsity Match this year looks like it will be an extremely close and tense affair – exactly how a Varsity Match should be.

2nds Varsity Netball

The seconds got off to a slow start, allowing the Oxford Roos to capitalise, their goal shooter demonstrating some impressive accuracy so that at quarter time Cambridge were down. The second half saw Cambridge grow in confidence across the court, with some key interceptions at the defensive end, particularly from player of the match, Dean. The attack, too, began to penetrate the Oxford defence, with precise feeds up to the shooters, Williams and Womersley, who really found form. Although Cambridge went into half time behind, the force was most definitely with them and taking the lead was certainly within their grasp.

Fresh legs in the form of Wilson to defence and Brenner and Keppe into the attacking centre court allowed Cambridge to pick up where they left off, leaving Oxford startled and struggling. Within minutes they levelled and immediately followed up with a goal from Womersley to take the lead for the first time in the match. At this point Cambridge looked unstoppable, however, an injury to the Oxford Goal Attack allowed a time out for them to recuperate. Their useful substitute, keen to prove her worth, led the Dark Blue attack, which the Cambridge defence, Bill and Wilson struggled to adapt to. Going into the final quarter the game was open for either team, but some fine interceptions from defence notwithstanding the Oxford comeback was completed with a win, despite Cambridge's valiant efforts.

CONTINUED FROM BACK PAGE

Luckily for Cambridge Mackay's superiority reasserted itself just in time, and he was able to pull out a fifth-game 3-2 victory, an effort that later earned him the man-of-



The victorious Squash Blues

the-match award. 2-0 Cambridge.

With the fifth seeds' match still ongoing, captain Douglas took to the court knowing that if he could win quickly at number 2 he could be the one to seal a Cambridge victory by giving the team an unassailable 3-0 lead. Douglas it seemed was competing with Russell to see who could lose fewest points, and a one-sided match ended not long after it began with Douglas a very comfortable 3-0 victor, having engaged at times in what seemed like on-court mockery of his opponent. So the match belonged to Cambridge; the only question that remained was whether it would be the white-wash that the light Blues desired.

On Court 1, immediately after the Mackay marathon, was number 3, Nick Sutcliffe. His squash-playing ability cannot be questioned, but theatrical commitments and ongoing injury had meant that his preparation had not been as thor-

ough as it might have been. Nevertheless, Sutcliffe's superior class proved enough to get the job done in 3 games in reasonable comfort; a close second game was followed by a very straightforward third, putting Cambridge 4-0 up and ensuring that Sutcliffe's flowing locks did not become unduly sweaty.

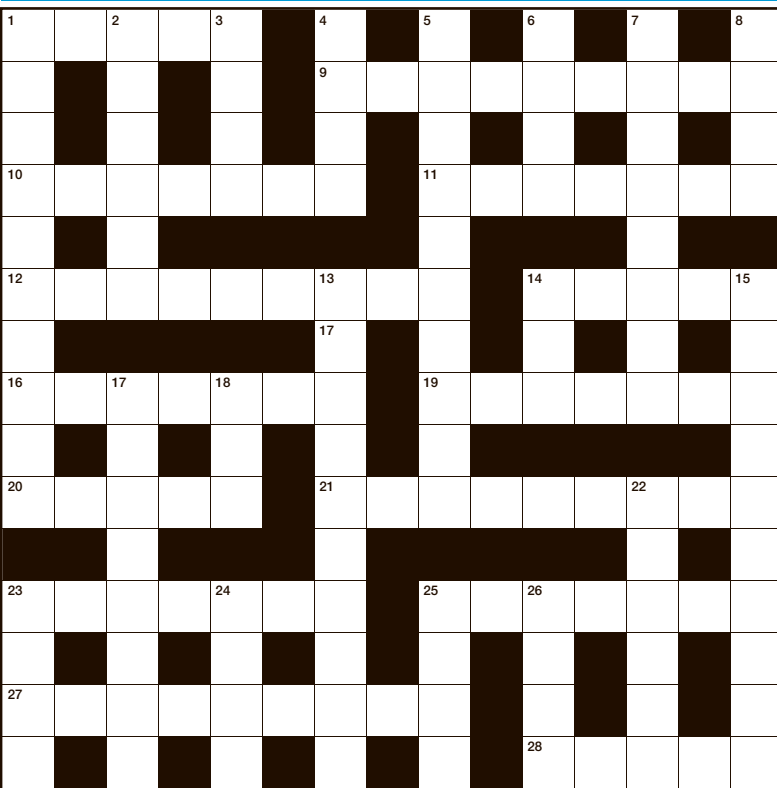
So only the first string match remained to be played. A mild-mannered and very friendly chap off court, Harry Leitch was described by one spectator as "a raging bull" on it. His machine-like fitness, and ability to hit the ball harder than most men could with a battleship mean that the Scotland international will always be a handful for any opponent. This year's Oxford number 1 was an unknown quantity, a slight man from Hong Kong who turned out to be rather quick and to have some exceptional racquet skills. The match at times resembled nothing so much as a pantomime, with an angry Leitch the villain being booed by the Oxford supporters in the crowd. It was all great entertainment though, and the squash was of extremely high quality. After taking game 1, a slight wobble from Leitch in game 2 meant his opponent was able to take the game, and for a while it looked as though the match could go all the way to the wire. But Leitch turned things up a notch in games 3 and 4, and ended up a 3-1 winner in relative comfort.

So Cambridge had their white-wash. Any victory over Oxford is always sweet, but a 5-0 one is especially so. No doubt the other place will be gunning for revenge next year, but at least until then the Men's Varsity squash trophy is safely back with its rightful owners.

Games & puzzles



Varsity crossword no. 482



Across

- 1 Gravelly Dog? (5)
- 9 Lie in unorthodox lover's pee. (9)
- 10 There's nothing in a large bra size until American soldier meets her majesty and becomes a bit stranger. (6)
- 11 Switches teams and stays. (7)
- 12 Formless pub in erotic sur-

roundings. (9)

- 14 International Baccalaureate ban is lifted by religious leader. (5)
- 16 Fool the French, run slowly. (7)
- 19 Buffalo sperm is messy. (7)
- 20 Sprint north for countdown. (3-2)
- 21 Injured in leg: man is indifferent. (9)

- 23 Artist almost has instrument to make pasta. (7)
- 25 Pasta disrupts anal gas. (7)
- 27 'Thus towards southern summit' in a manner of speaking. (2,2,5)
- 28 Odd geezers see they are the property of the Queen. (5)

Down

- 1 Owner of ship's toilet is a top teacher. (10)
- 2 Bachelor I apparently owe an apartment. (6)
- 3 Bear and I go back after the end of the day. (4)
- 4 We hear it's because of a number. (4)
- 5 Bleak ode loses nothing important. (10)
- 6 Egyptian Goddess exists twice. (4)
- 7 In knob-end a blemish is flexible. (8)
- 8 Choose zero points. (4)
- 13 Reliance on faulty seafaring vessel. (10)
- 14 Even-up rhyme. (3)
- 15 Sadly Italian BSE is incurable. (10)
- 17 During November headless pirate becomes pioneer. (8)
- 18 Sleep at the bottom of a skip. (3)
- 22 Empty head takes premier narcotics, British booze and ecstasy. Powerhouse! (6)
- 23 Acts too quickly and volatile share drops a point. (4)
- 24 Throw out, almost out on the street. (4)
- 25 The French kept bottomless pool. (4)
- 26 Shoots-up to be comfortable. (4)

Set by Ed and Rich Thornton

Answers to last week's crossword (no. 480)

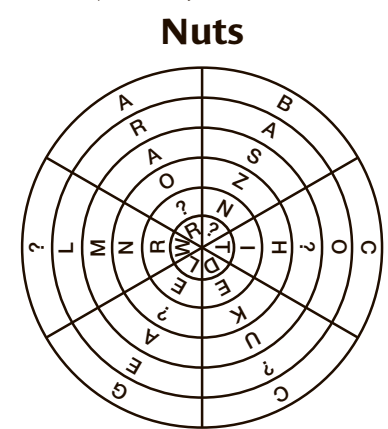
Across: (1) vulnerabilities, (9) cannibal, (10) biters, (11) meal, (12) coordinate, (14) snip, (16) aggressive, (20) reassessed, (24) tuna, (25) truckloads, (28) mind, (30) minute, (31) lookouts, (32) double standards.
Down: (2) usage, (3) nonslip, (4) Rebecca, (5) biltong, (6) lobed, (7) tetanus, (8) egret, (11) muskrat, (13) emerald, (15) IRA, (17) gas, (18) rye, (19) IOU, (21) succumb, (22) scarlet, (23) disjoin, (24) tombola, (26) rhino, (27) liege, (29) noted.

rotations

COMPETITION

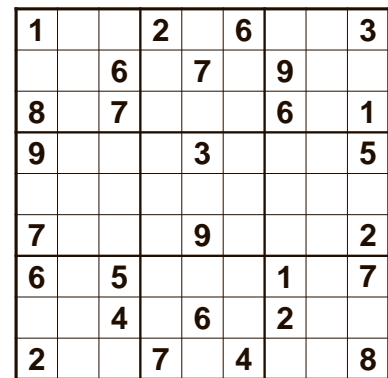
Win a bottle of wine from our friends at Cambridge Wine Merchants.

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



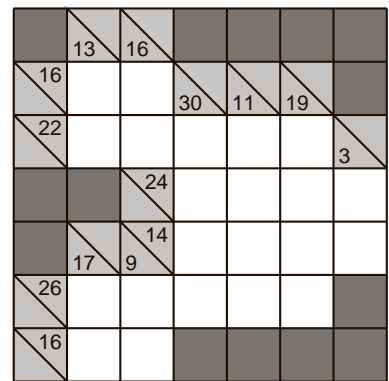
Sudoku

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



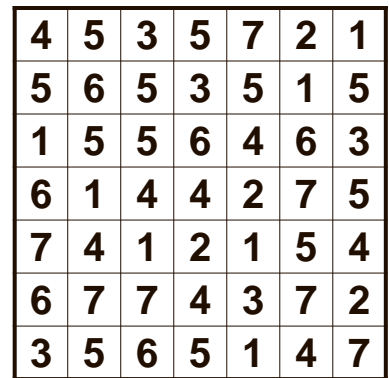
Kakuro

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

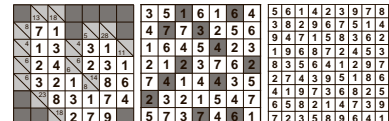


Hitori

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



Last issue's solutions



Catz buoyed by Blues' presence

» 'Battling' Magdalene fail to deal with extra attacking options Catz put forward

ST CATHER- INE'S	20
MAGDALENE	0

ANDY RYAN
Sports Reporter

St Catherine's secured their place in the third round of Cuppers after wearing down a battling Magdalene side. Despite being a division below Magdalene, Catz were strengthened by the presence of two Blues, Chris Lewis and Andrew Stevenson, as well as Charlie Rees, an under-21 player. Magdalene were looking to

Catz were making better use of their share of the ball and looked more likely to score

build on their success in holding onto first division status, while Catz saw a chance to make up for the disappointment of missing out on promotion.

The game's beginning was cagey, with neither side able to make an early impact. Catz were making better use of their share of the ball and looked more likely to score. The breakthrough came through Lewis. He received the ball just inside Magdalene's half and a series of missed tackles allowed him to score in the corner. He then managed to complete the conversion from the tightest of angles. Magdalene responded well, launching their first real attacks. Their best

attempts came through the surging runs of their number eight, Dan Grabiner, who broke through the Cat's line on several occasions. Despite this strong period for Magdalene, it was Catz who scored next, through a Lewis penalty. Rees then caused confusion in the Magdalene defence with a high kick. Moments later, he nearly rounded the move off himself but was pushed into touch by a desperate tackle from Kwaminah Korsah. The end of the first half saw a constant assault by the home team, but Magdalene made their tackles and managed to hold out until half-time. For all their pressure, Catz had only created a ten point lead and Magdalene knew that an early score could put them back in the contest.

The second half, however, started much as the first had ended, with Catz firmly in control. Magdalene continued to defend with organization and ferocity, defying attack after attack. Catz kept pounding away and were eventually rewarded with Rees piling over from close range. Lewis failed to complete the conversion. The game now became something of a stalemate. The second Catz try seemed to have ended Magdalene's belief that they could still win and all attacking ambition went out of their game. With the lead extended, Catz attacks lost some of their previous urgency. Perhaps more than anything, the brutality of the game had left both teams exhausted and happy to let the pace of the game slide.

The win was eventually sealed with a clever but simple move. Catz chose to take the aerial route rather than attempt yet another charge at the wall of purple shirts and a well-placed kick found Rees poised just outside the Magdalene line. He nonchalantly held the catch and went



Chris Lewis - a one man wrecking ball of a player

over for his second of the afternoon. The large contingent of Catz fans greeted the score with loud approval, knowing the game was safe. Lewis then sliced the kick wide. The final phase of the game followed the pattern of what had come before, with

Catz controlling possession and Magdalene defending desperately.

Magdalene can take heart from their impressive defensive efforts, which for long periods of the game kept the Cat's backs quiet. If they can offer more in attack, then they are

likely to be serious contenders for the shield. Catz can be pleased with a professional display in which they rarely looked troubled. Aside from the big performances from their key men, the side look strong in all areas and can go into the next round with confidence.

Hungry Oxford munch hockey girls

CAMBRIDGE	1
OXFORD	4

BECCA LANGTON
Sports Reporter

Having solidly beaten Exeter University in the first round of the BUSA play-offs the Cambridge Ladies Blues drew Oxford University at home, an unwelcome result so close to Varsity. Cambridge entered the game as the underdogs, having not won at Varsity in the last five years. However, fielding the strongest Light Blue team that there has been for several years there was everything to play for. With the Wilberforce Road pitch crowded with spectators keen to cheer on the Light Blues to victory, pressure was mounting on the Cambridge team and nerves were undisguised. The game opened with Oxford making a confident start, threading strong passes through the Cambridge midfield and pressing the home team into their own circle. Quick and precise passing from the Oxford attack left Cambridge on the back foot and it was only with an athletic save from keeper Lucy Stapleton that the Dark Blues were prevented from taking the lead in the first five minutes.

Pressed into their own half it was vital that Cambridge fought their way into the game, and with

silky stick work from defender Sarah Baggs, determined running by Anna Stanley and the familiar tenacity of midfielder Alex Workman, the home team were able to begin to readjust the balance. Great distribution around the backline proved that possessive simple play was more important than the individual skills and tactics of aimless legwork that Oxford was employing. Tash Close, unerring as usual, sent the opposition chasing after meticulously placed passes to the forwards, and although unable to convert, Cambridge looked menacing on the attack. Oxford, however, surging forward through the midfield won a series of short corners ten minutes into the first half, and with a precision strike placed solidly into the bottom left hand corner, the dark blues took the lead in a game which had looked like Cambridge's to take.

Tash Fowlie's resilient side responded excellently to the Oxford goal however and after a prolonged period of pressure sent an exact replica of the conceded goal into the back of the opposition's net, captain Fowlie showing off her notorious first strike from the top of the circle.

With the game once again even and Oxford marginally looking the

stronger side, only mass defending from Cambridge kept the dark blues at bay. Flick Hughes's determined tackles on the wing and striker Emma Goater's defensive

conceded a short corner. A woefully mis-hit strike at the stop sent a way-ward ball bouncing towards the goal and Oxford took a lucky lead just two minutes from

and a period of prolonged pressure on the Oxford goal followed. Denied by the post, Jenny Hall was unlucky, and the opposition, aware of the danger the young striker posed seemed keen to remove her from the game - physically if necessary. Hard working Lisa Noble gave Cambridge a number of opportunities and Anna Stanley was unlucky to miss the far post by a matter of inches. Against the run of play a confused umpire gave the Oxford team a penalty stroke, converted to make the score line 3-1.

The opposition keeper was given no rest in the game, however, as Cambridge surged forward determined to make their mark on an otherwise uninspiring game. However, with confidence high, Oxford were able to continually turn the ball over and with a third goal from



Oxford stretched ahead in the second half

work in her own circle interrupted Oxford possession. With the intensity of the game taking its toll, the Light Blues seemed flustered on the pass; Oxford pressured the players like bees, and Cambridge seemed unable to extricate themselves from the dark blue press. As pressure mounted Cambridge

half time pushing the score to 2-1.

The second half began with the arrival of striker Jenny Hall, the first year injecting some much needed calm into a frenetic Cambridge game. Unable to save the game resting on her own ability however, the home team was forced to step up the quality of the play

a short corner secured their win with four goals to the light blues' single effort. The score line was no reflection of the game however, and although Oxford were undoubtedly sharper on the finish, Cambridge are in no doubt that come Varsity nothing will be certain.

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UnanimousED PEACE &
NIALL RAFFERTY

Anyone in the Market Square on Monday night may have noticed two inebriated males chanting 'you're not singing anymore' at a bookmaker's shop window. This was us in the closing stages of a night that, up until about 9.45pm, was looking pretty uneventful. Then Bristol City squeaked a late equaliser against Palace and gave us our third winning bet of the week. How quickly the mood changed...

This week our banker travels to Ewood Park, where Blackburn play host to Bolton Wanderers. While Rovers' recent loss at the Emirates made it four games without a win for Mark Hughes' men, there were enough signs to suggest Blackburn can now go on a decent to re-ignite their push for a Uefa Cup place. Meanwhile, Bolton are in real danger now that Nicholas Anelka has departed, scoring in just three of their seven matches since he left. They also arrive here on the back of a potentially gruelling encounter with Atletico Madrid, so we're backing Blackburn to bag the points.

The League Cup Final on Sunday afternoon promises to be an enthralling affair.

Given Tottenham's dramatic turnaround under Juande Ramos, it was strange to witness such a limp performance from Spurs when they went to Stamford Bridge last month. However, readers shouldn't be too quick to back Chelsea. Jermaine Jenas, one of the most improved players under the lean and mean Ramos regime, was absent then, and although hard to believe, he has become the driving force of Spurs midfield this season. Meanwhile, Avram Grant has a tricky defensive decision to make: whether to rush a semi-fit John Terry back into the side, or risk facing a red-hot strike-force without his captain. Ramos and Grant will both be desperate to get their hands on their first piece of silverware, but in a game that could be decided by a moment of individual brilliance, chase the longer odds and back Spurs to lift the Cup.

Our racing selections have enjoyed an upturn in form in recent weeks. With successive winners at 9-4 and 7-1, the pressure's on to make it three in a row. Ungaro looks to have it what it takes to land the Racing Post Chase at Kempton on Saturday. This course was the scene of his biggest win in 2006 and, with conditions predicted to suit, there's no reason why he shouldn't notch up his first win of this campaign on Saturday. PaddyPower must have heard us coming, as they've already trimmed his odds from 7-1 to 6-1. It's worth snapping up what's left of this while it lasts.

THE BANKER 4-5
BLACKBURN TO BEAT BOLTON £4

PREDICTION 12-5
TOTTENHAM TO WIN THE CARLING CUP £3

THE LONG SHOT 6-1
UNAGURO TO WIN THE RACING POST CHASE £1.5 e/w

RUNNING TOTAL: £52.44

“Exactly how we want

» England director of Rugby and ex-Cambridge triple Blue Rob current state of English rugby and his plans for the game

After winning the World Cup in 2003, the English rugby team went into a downward spiral of the sort not seen since the last days of Atlantis. Within the space of a year they lost their five-year unbeaten home record, the Six Nations, three excruciatingly embarrassing tests in the Southern Hemisphere and their mercurial coach, Clive Woodward. It then got worse. The tenure of the willing but obstinately meat-headed

Andy Robinson yielded a mere 9 wins in 22 before he resigned as the suits were waiting for the ink to dry on his P45. Amidst the turmoil in August of 2006 Rob Andrew, the star fly-half of the England's last amateur generation and Director of Rugby at Newcastle Falcons, the world's first ever fully professional rugby club, became the RFU's first Director of Elite Rugby.

It was not a completely unchallenged appointment. Throughout his career Andrew had been criticised not only for his defensive playing style (after his international debut former captain John Scott labelled him “the worst player to ever represent England”), but also for his activities off the pitch. When he was signed up as Director of Rugby at Newcastle, he lured many of his amateur Wasps colleagues up North with professional contracts despite still being a member of the London Clubs playing staff, and became an outspoken critic of the Woodward regime in the years before the 2003 World Cup. It was no huge surprise, however, that the RFU did end up overlooking the potentially divisive and spotlight-hungry Woodward, who the game seems to have overtaken judging by the humiliation that was the 2005 Lions Tour.

The position he holds within the game now reflects his strengths. As a former club director himself, and with a business background managing commercial real estate, he has capably handled the renegotiation of the contracts releasing elite players from clubs for international duty. “It's a very good agreement for the professional game in England,” he agrees. “In my opinion it benefits not only the union and the clubs, but also the players themselves.” He realises, however, that after three years of internecine bickering between the various parties, the future of the agreement is not guaranteed. “In 2001 there was an agreement that everybody thought was satisfactory that was supposed to last for eight years, but half way through it became obvious that it wasn't good for anybody. We're sitting here now thinking that this new agreement is the answer,



but maybe in four years time we need to think again - the game may have changed again.”

His function within the RFU, although he grates that “the media still don't seem to understand it”, is not only administrative, however. It is his job to oversee the long term development of English representative rugby, which entails not only negotiating

the release agreements, but also the recruitment and retention of coaches for every single team. It is only by investing this kind of power in one position that any kind of continuity can be reached throughout all levels of the game. In addition to the powers placed at his feet, however, Rob Andrew has been incredibly lucky with the quality and number of excep-

Captain's Corner Women's Rugby Laura Britton

So how did you get into rugby?

I came here as a county-level netball and tennis player, but wanted to take the opportunity to do something completely different. I turned up to one of the development days and really enjoyed myself and so continued playing. What I love about rugby is the depth of the camaraderie that is not found in any sport. I think a lot of it comes from the nature of the game, since on the field everybody has to look out for

everyone else and prevent their team-mates getting isolated.

Where do you play?

I was a centre throughout last season, but have moved to fly half this year. I really love the freedom of running with the ball, and also enjoy the contact. I've had to really work on my kicking this year, as I'd never had really to kick anything before playing rugby and it is now central to our game plan. On a personal level, the necessity to always be communicating has really helped my confidence as well.

How's the season been going?

We've had a really excellent season so far. We had a lot of new players at the start of the year and have gone on a very good run in BUSA, only losing once

all season, and also in our senior league, where our development side has played a few games as well. It's a really good set up as we get to play against young and physically demanding teams in the one league, and wily experienced sides in the other.

What're your prospects for Varsity?

We haven't won since 2003 and last year lost 37-7. However, despite being in the league above us in BUSA, Oxford haven't been having a brilliant season so far and we will definitely give them a game. The Lehman Brothers, our sponsors, have given us a lot of money and we've been able to train really well. It being a one off, it all depends on whether we step up.

Women's Rugby Varsity is on 1st

March, at Iffley Road, Oxford. For further information visit the website: www.srccf.ucas.org/cu-wrfe/



England to play”

Andrew talks to Henry Stannard and Luke Thorne about the

tional young English players just now poking their heads out in the international arena for the first time. Mantra-like, he ran through his favourites three times during the interview – “Strettle, Flood, Tait, Cipriani, Haskell, Geraghty, Borthwick, Stevens” – names already well known to most rugby fans, although they should come with the caveat that three of them play most of their club rugby at fly-half, a position currently held by the oft-criticized Jonny Wilkinson.

Indeed there is a certain symmetry to the two men’s careers, with Andrew having acted as the young Wilkinson’s mentor and protector at Newcastle. Both achieved the accolade of becoming England’s highest international points scorer despite being maligned in some quarters for playing too negative a game by neglecting to use the other backs. More memorably, both also achieved their career-defin-

“On the new rules: “It looks like they want the ball in play more and a quicker game... What we have to do with England is to look at what type of player we want to be able to play the rugby that we want England to play, but also how the laws are going to effect it” ”

ing moments by slotting winning drop goals against Australia in injury time at World Cups.

Andrew is still unequivocal in his praise for his protégé’s career, but will not get drawn into matters of team selection. In fact he seems to disdain the much-publicised debate over whether Wilkinson or Cipriani should get the starting berth.

“Although the media coverage in the last few years has been fantastic, especially in the last two World Cups, I just think that what we have to understand is that there is far more coverage of the game than there ever has been. There are pressures within the media to deliver more coverage, more stories, more angles on things. That means that there are pressures maybe to try and create stories that aren’t there.”

It is definitely true of his reign so far that some storylines seem to have had a life of their own. When Brian Ashton guided his unfancied team to the World Cup final in what was, to Andrew’s mind, “in many ways, a bigger achievement” than 2003, chapters from players autobiographies criticizing the him for what Mike Catt infamously called the “pub team” approach of Brian Ashton caused an unprecedented furore. Andrew, however, dismisses the reports from training for what they were – “words written at a time early in the tournament went those guys were not in the team and not playing very well.”

However that generation of players is now well and truly out the door. Andrew admits that whilst the remnants of the 2003 side may have “really dug us out of a hole this time round”, there really will be no way of bringing Italian cry-baby Laurence Dallaglio and chums to the jamboree in four years time. The immediate plan is to “look over during the next 18 months the guys who will really stand up in the next four years.”

That said, he baulks at the idea of the next year and a half being a long development phase where results don’t matter stating forcefully that “there’s not an England team that’s ever gone onto the field and decided ‘we’ll try and lose this one – it’s all part of development.’” Despite that, however, neither results nor per-

formances have been particularly inspiring in the first two rounds of this year’s Six Nations. Although he may put the surrender to Wales and near-catastrophe in Rome down mainly to “individual errors” caused by the inexperience of players being brought into the side, both commentators and fans are bemoaning the utter fecklessness that seems to be so ingrained in English attacking play. Nevertheless he betrayed no signs of wavering over whether the current set-up is right for England, stating in no uncertain terms that “Ashton’s vision for the game is exactly how we want England to play.”

Despite all this, Andrew maintains that “a country the size of England should be looking to be competitive at every World Cup, which means that you have to look at a four year cycle,” hinting as much as he ever will that, although this year’s Six Nations is by no means meaningless, now is the right time to start creating a new team. France, who England face tomorrow, are doing the same thing with their own golden generation of U21 World Cup winners, yet with more initial success. They played with typical élan in victories over drudging Scotland and Ireland sides despite seemingly substituting almost all their key players midway through both games. If there was ever a time for Andrews’ young charges to show their unquestionable potential, it is now.

“On Argentina: “They have to help themselves in all of this... Maybe it’s time for them to go professional there as well so some of their international players can go back there and their international team stops being a roaming group of players. Argentina belong in the southern hemisphere.” ”



News from the River



Last weekend we traveled to Nottingham to hide out in Sherwood Forest, stealing from the rich in order to give to the poor. Actually that’s not the reason at all, but my previous knowledge of the city was limited to the Robin Hood tales, so I imagined something much more interesting than the bleak surroundings I encountered. Please don’t get angry if you’re actually from Nottingham. Your home does feature the only Hooters in England, and a rowing venue that was wisely turned into a lake after being deemed too windy to support an airport.

Anyway. The real reason we traveled north was to contest the Trent Head, a 6km race against an array of university and club crews from throughout England. Although I can only speak for one of the boats, I believe the entire team had a strong showing, with the Blue Boat and Goldie placing first and second, respectively, in the overall standings. Situated behind them were crews from Oxford Brookes University – arguably the best student crew aside from those fielded by Oxbridge – and a Leander Club boat composed of British Olympic hopefuls.

The past few days have seen the two boats diverge in training plans for the first time this year. Moving on from the success of the Trent Head, the Blue Boat must prepare for a fixture against the Canadian Olympic squad – featuring 2006 and 2007 Blue Kip McDaniel – on Friday. Goldie, meanwhile, will remain in Cambridge, logging as many miles as possible in what will be one of its last heavy weeks of training this year.

The previous paragraph should beg the question of what a fixture actually is. At two-week intervals leading up to the Boat Race, each crew will race an invited boat, usually composed of foreign internationals or British team triallists. Last year, the Blue Boat raced the German national team and a British contingent training for that summer’s world championships. This year the German’s have been replaced by the Canadians but the second fixture featuring the British Eight – a traditional final opponent – has been retained.

The fixture itself will consist of two separate race pieces, which added together would comprise the full Boat Race course. The two boats will line up at the start under Putney Bridge and race to Hammersmith where the race concludes. Times are taken, results recorded, and the two crews are started evenly again for the final piece.

This format is beneficial in that it allows for international crews unaccustomed to the Boat Race distance to be competitive over a shorter course, one more akin to the 2000 meter pieces that characterize international competition. Additionally, it provides immediate feedback, as changes to rhythm and race plans can be made during the rest interval.

All the training and preparation in the world means nothing without the hard-earned ability to win on the day. Friday will be the first opportunity to do just this.

Spencer Griffin Hunsberger

PROFILE

ROB ANDREW

- **St John’s College 1981-1985 – 3 Rugby Blues, 2 Cricket Blues**
- **Wasps 1985-1995 1 National Championship (1990)**
- **England 1985-1995 – 71 Appearances, 396 points, World Cup finalist (1991)**
- **Newcastle 1995-2006 – 1 National Championship (1998), 2 National Cups (2001 and 2004)**
- **Director of Rugby: England 2006 – won 11, lost 12 – World Cup finalists**

SPORT



Interview

p 31-32

Blues legend
Rob Andrew

Netball Blues fall short

» Blues fail to catch up after surrendering early advantage

CAMBRIDGE	25
OXFORD	30

LUKE THORNE
Sports Editor

A strong finish by the Cambridge Blues saw them fall five points short despite dominating the closing exchanges, netting the last three, and in fact winning the second half of the match. Unfortunately, the Dark Blues swarmed over what was a tentative start from Cambridge, leaving them with a cushion that eventually proved too substantial, and Oxford with a double Varsity victory for 2008.

Despite energetic and clearly well-rehearsed warm-ups, both sides appeared nervous to start with; Oxford missed their first three shots, whilst Cambridge appeared slightly off the pace, particularly in the middle of the court, their slow movement allowing Oxford interceptions and preventing them from getting shots on goal. Cambridge's first goal eventually came after Oxford domination had already put them two ahead. The pattern continued for the rest of the first quarter. Oxford's ability to pressurise

Oxford's ability to pressurise Cambridge gave them the wealth of possession

Cambridge on the ball gave them the wealth of possession, and consequently more chances for their shooters to put away, despite the efforts of Warren and Rowley in defence. The Blues trailed by five at the first break.

The second quarter continued to see Oxford control the midfield, the Wing Attack particularly proving as much a menace as Japanese tourists are for cyclists on Trinity Street. But Rowley and Warren were now really coming to the fore, a good interception by Warren leading to a goal for Nicholson. But Cambridge's inability to keep possession was hurting them

more and more, particularly as they began to miss the few chances that came their way. Oxford's ascendancy soon began to show on the scoreboard, as the best efforts of the defence, who did well to keep Oxford's superior possession down to six goals could not keep up with the squandering of chances by the Cambridge shooters, and Cambridge were left trailing 17-8 at the halfway point.

Cambridge really needed to up their game and confidence, which seemed to be wilting in the face of Oxford supremacy. To this end Bloxham, Darke and Crawshaw, recently returned from injury, subbed on, with Nicholson moving out to Goal Attack. Two goals in the opening minute from shooter Crawshaw seemed to have the desired effect and Cambridge were suddenly much more competitive in midfield. The Cambridge support even seemed to notice the difference, their cheering drowning out any Oxford retaliation. Oxford seemed to become more sloppy, often giving away the ball easily in the last third, although considerable credit again has to go to the Cambridge defence, Rowley in particular throwing herself about with little regard for life or limb. The momentum was now with Cambridge, and they took the quarter 10-7, largely thanks to Crawshaw's shooting, but also a step up in the team's energy generally.

All lay on the potentially tight last quarter, with Cambridge still six points behind, but beginning to look the stronger team. Much depended on their ability to keep the momentum they had developed in the face of certain Oxford defiance. A great interception from McGrath from the restart, leaping high and to her left, which led to Crawshaw slotting home from right at the top of the D seemed to promise this. Both crowds sensed the tension, sending noise resonating around the hall as Oxford clawed one back. The Oxford midfield, so superior until the third quarter, upped its game again, and possession interchanged frantically, with interceptions and dropped balls from both teams as they tired. However, three Oxford goals on the trot effectively put the match beyond the range of Cambridge's



Blues Captain Sarah Warren leaps to thwart an Oxford shot

final surge, which nonetheless did see them win the final quarter 7-6. The second half demonstrated just how closely matched the two teams were, and Cambridge may be disappointed that they allowed Oxford to

set the tempo of the early part of the match so easily, notwithstanding the committed performances from captain Warren and Cambridge's player of the match, Rowley, in defence.

Seconds report page 28

Oxford comprehensively Squash-ed

VARSITY SPORTS REPORTER

After months of training, and two extremely close-fought sets of play-off matches to determine the team, last Saturday saw the latest instalment of Varsity squash. The first was played over 80 years ago, and, as is traditional, the event was held at the RAC Club in Pall Mall. Having won 9 years in a row, Cambridge were unfortunate to lose out 3-2 last time around, and skipper Jamie Douglas and his team were determined to restore the natural order of things. Pre-match confidence was high, as reports filtered through that Oxford might not be as strong as in previous years, but Cambridge were taking nothing for granted, with tough fixtures against Nottingham and the Army in the week preceding Varsity completing meticulous preparations.

First on court on the day itself were Renwick Russell and Mike Mackay. The Oxford and Cambridge reserves play each other on the day, but the match doesn't count towards the final team score. One would never have known this though from the quality of 'Flair' Russell's display; his poor opponent was unable to get the slightest semblance of a foothold in the game as Russell piled on the pressure from the first. Suffice to say the game didn't last long, as Russell's all round dominance gave Cambridge the perfect start and a psychological boost with a 3-0 victory.

Continuing on Court 2, Cambridge number 4 Chris Lion was making his Blues Varsity debut, against an opponent of undoubted shot-making ability but whose movement and fitness were not perhaps as sharp as they might have been. There was nothing wrong with Lion's fitness however – one member of the crowd was moved to volunteer that Lion was "the fittest player they'd ever seen on a squash court". The Oxford man fought valiantly, but ultimately Lion's superior accuracy and fitness meant that a further Cambridge victory came 9-5, 9-5, 9-5 putting Cambridge 1-0 up.

Meanwhile Mackay, also gaining his first Blue, at number 5, raced out to a 2-0 lead with some fine play, but then seemed to forget that squash matches are played over five games. His opponent's play improved as Mackay began to feel the pressure, and suddenly the match was tightly poised at 2 games apiece.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

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