

VARSlTY

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The Independent Cambridge Student Newspaper since 1947

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One in ten takes drugs to study

» Survey reveals extent of students' medication usage
» Prescription-only drugs readily available online

Natasha Lennard

Ten per cent of Cambridge students have admitted to taking medication without prescription to help them work.

A *Varsity* survey, completed by 1,000 students, has revealed that one in ten Cambridge students has taken drugs such as Modafinil, Ritalin and Adderall.

Meanwhile one third of respondents admitted that, given the opportunity, they would take concentration-enhancing medication.

Modafinil has been the focus of media attention, including a BBC documentary, in recent months, as off-prescription use of the drug is growing in popularity.

The possession of prescription-only medication without a prescription is "a serious criminal offence" according to the Home Office. It is, however, easy to obtain prescription-only drugs, like Modafinil, via online pharmacies based outside the UK.

Varsity spoke to five Cambridge students who have recently tried Mo-

dafinil for the first time. All of the five reported increased alertness on the day of taking the drug, with four of the five stating that their ability to concentrate on work improved.

Two students reported that they also felt more motivated. Furthermore, none of the five students trying the drug reported detrimental side effects.

One third-year Sidney student, who has taken a 100mg Modafinil tablet every day for a number of weeks, did report a feeling of "despondency" in the evenings. "Although Modafinil has undoubtedly aided my concentration, after a Modafinil-fuelled library day I find it very hard to engage with people socially," she said.

The stimulant, prescribed by doctors to treat patients with chronic sleep disorders such as narcolepsy, has a broad non-medical use. Shift-workers, the military, pilots and nurses have been prescribed the drug to prevent tiredness and enhance alertness.

Students can obtain generic versions of the drug from the Internet, which are sold under brand names Modapro and Modalert. The drug is officially manufactured under the brand names Provigil and Alertec.

Under both the generic and brand names, the content of the drug should be the same: Modafinil. Generic versions of the drug are not subject to regulations, however, and concerns have been raised about their purity.

On one online pharmacy, 30 pills, manufactured by Cephalon under the brand name Provigil, are sold for £17 with an additional £10 shipping charge.

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**Something to build on
New sabbatical team celebrate their victories
in this week's CUSU elections » p3**

Cambridge report attacks state education

Beth Staton

State school students are failing to get in to top universities simply because they don't get good enough grades, according to research by Cambridge Assessment.

Social mobility in education will struggle to improve until "the pernicious link between deprivation and educational attainment is broken," Cambridge's admissions chiefs have said.

"State school students are not, by and large, being deprived of places at leading universities by their choice of A-level subjects. The critical obstacle for them is achieving the highest grades," Geoff Parks, the University's director of undergraduate recruitment, and Richard Partington, the chair of the Cam outreach steering group, said in a joint statement.

The study, carried out by Cambridge Assessment at the request of the University, examined the educational backgrounds of students achieving three or more A grades at A-level.

The findings reveal that state school pupils make up only 64 per cent of those achieving three A grades at A-level, despite constituting 86 per cent of the A-level candidacy.

Furthermore, 17 per cent of the highest achievers attended grammar schools, meaning just 47 per cent of pupils achieving AAA were from comprehensives.

The report also discredited common claims that choice of subject often disqualified state school pupils from the best universities, further highlighting the grades themselves as the problem.

Of the 24,580 AAA students, only 1,011 took combinations including more than one of the 20 less traditional subjects which Cambridge believes provide "less effective preparation" for the University's academic courses. 224 of these 1011 were students at independent schools.

Continued on page 8

Government cuts funding for Cambridge research

Caedmon Tunstall-Behrens

Cambridge research faces a funding cut next year, the government announced yesterday.

The allocation of £1.6bn of funding to universities is based on the findings of the Research Assessment Exercise, a

government study into the quality of university research, carried out in December last year.

The results, published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, reveal that the total recurrent grant received by the University has increased by 3.1 per cent to just under £181.3m.

Research funding, however, has only increased by 1.89 per cent from last year to £113.7m. This level is below the current rate of inflation of 3 per cent, resulting in a cut in real terms. The increase in Oxford's research funding was 4.7 per cent.

A University spokesperson said that

the amount of funding that Cambridge receives continues to be the highest in the country. "The funding was in the band that was expected, so all research planning for the next year has already taken that into account. Oxford has more funding as there are more researchers there," she said.

The Russell Group has warned that the funding announcement is unsatisfactory for many universities. "This settlement does not go far enough for many of our leading research-intensive universities to meet these tough [economic] challenges," the group said in a statement.

VARSITY

A special preview issue of Pomegranate, an online poetry magazine, can be found inside the centrefold. It is the fifth in a series of magazine previews in Varsity.

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Get involved

E-mail editor@varsity.co.uk to find out more.

Modafinil: be careful

The growing use of Modafinil and other cognitive-enhancing drugs is a worrying trend. They are new technology, and as with any new innovation, great care should be taken in their application. Modafinil's long-term effects are completely unknown; just because they appear safe in the short term, we cannot assume that such a powerful drug is truly harmless. Beyond those concerns, there are also ethical implications for the use of Modafinil. Its use has been compared to the use of anabolic steroids in sport, and it is undeniable that it gives users a great advantage in their ability to revise and process information. This advantage is not available to everyone, not only because some are unwilling to risk their health, but also because it is relatively difficult to obtain. It is unfair that those who are less careful with their bodies should be able to get ahead academically.

This is not to say that the University should explicitly ban the use of Modafinil and related substances, except insofar as their legality is dubious. We are all adults, and should be able to grasp the implications of our actions. However, all of us should think very carefully before taking the plunge with a drug of which so little is known.

Chigbo has work to do

Congratulations to Tom Chigbo and the other new sabbatical officers. CUSU is not the most exciting place in the world, but it has important jobs to do, and it was heartening to see students recognise that by coming out to vote. The election's online presence was well overdue, but it had the desired effect.

The new team's priorities must be to lobby the University over the construction of a new sports centre, and to sort out the perennial mess that is CUSU Ents. Those ents are often so low-profile that it could damage CUSU's reputation; Chigbo and friends should not regard them as simply a cash cow, and should not be afraid to scrap any that threaten to embarrass the organisation.

Finally, congratulations also to Mark Fletcher and the outgoing sabbs. Despite some troubled times, they have kept a steady ship, and CUSU has rarely looked anything other than a stable and well-functioning union.

Edit this newspaper

Applications are currently open to edit Varsity in May Week or in the Michaelmas term, and to become a section editor in Michaelmas. For more information see p31 or visit www.varsity.co.uk/jobs

letters@varsity.co.uk

Submit your letter for the chance to win a bottle of wine from the Cambridge Wine Merchants. All letters may be edited for space and style.

Orwell's OK

Dear Sirs,

Ben Slingo's use of the words "jejeune" and "cachet" in one sentence highlight



exactly why he doesn't like Orwell [Issue 692, March 27th]. The essayist fails to note that while complexity can be beautiful, used unnecessarily it is little more than intellectual masturbation, serving

the author's own desire to show off his vocabulary more than to communicate with readers. There is a place for intensity of language, but Orwell's brilliance is in his ability to convey such powerful ideas with the crisp precision that allows their speedy and accessible dissemination. Because, after all, isn't the *Daily Mail* – circulation 2.2 million – far more fascinating as a concept of communication than anything more high-brow?

Yours faithfully,

Dan Barker
Downing College

A Churchill correction

Dear Sirs,

In 'Great Works of Art in Cambridge' #25, Churchill College was not only unflatteringly portrayed aesthetically, but also inaccurately said to have been originally "a women's College". The College was the first men's institution to admit women, but has never excluded men.

Yours faithfully,

Laura Andrews
Churchill College

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

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Sam Wakeford (Education); Clare Tyson (Co-ordinator); Joe Farish (Access); Tom Chigbo (President); Natalie Szarek (Women's Officer); and Amiya Bhatia (Welfare)

Chigbo's slate in clean sweep as Wakeford & Bhatia elected

» Chigbo elected CUSU President after highest election turnout in recent years

» Farish wins battle for Access; Wakeford elected as Education Officer

Andrew Bellis

Tom Chigbo pledged yesterday to achieve "something really meaningful" in his term of office, after being elected CUSU President on Wednesday.

Joe Farish's election as Access Officer and Clare Tyson's uncontested election as Co-ordinator meant that the Chigbo slate of 'Vision, Ideas and Experience' won all three of the posts it contested.

In a closely-fought race, Sam Wakeford was elected Education Officer, narrowly beating his nearest contender, Ed Maltby. Although Maltby was ahead after first preference votes were counted, he fell behind Wakeford as other preferences were taken into account.

Amiya Bhatia was elected Welfare Officer while, in an uncontested sabbatical race, Natalie Szarek was elected Women's Officer.

A referendum on creating a sabbatical Ethical Affairs Officer reached the

two-thirds majority needed to be valid.

This year's election saw one of the highest turnouts in recent years, with 21.2 per cent of eligible electors voting either online or in College. The comparable figure for last year's elections was 17.1 per cent.

Chigbo, whose only opponent, Guolong Li, pulled out earlier this week amid accusations of homophobia, will take over the presidency in July, though he insists that the task of getting to grips with his job starts now.

Given that he was unopposed, Chigbo told *Varsity* yesterday that he was "not surprised but definitely very pleased" by the result.

"The coverage so far from the elections has been really positive and I think people – not just us, but students in general – are a lot more excited about CUSU than they have been for a long time, and I think we can use that opportunity to do something really mean-

ingful for next year," he said.

"I think students want to get involved, which is good, and that's shown by the high turnout and the high number who voted for us."

Li, a second-year mathematician from Churchill, withdrew from the presidential race late on Monday night after he made controversial comments relating to the LGBT autonomous campaign. In hustings at Caius on Saturday, which were streamed live on the internet by *Varsity*, Li was asked for his policies related to the LGBT campaign. He replied: "I think it's more important that we provide help to them, to persuade them to be normal, to no longer be LGBT – to change them."

Over 500 students joined a Facebook group expressing concern over his comments. Li subsequently announced that he was pulling out of the race for President. "I never thought that I could win in the election, but I

participated in [it] because I want to let more people see the hustings and to make the election more interesting," he said.

Li also pulled out of last year's presidential election after he breached the rules by failing to seek tutorial permission to take a year out if elected.

Chigbo was quick to welcome to high turnout. "We had really good attendance at all the hustings, which was really good. Most candidates appeared at most of the hustings, which was very different from last year, where many candidates just did their 25 per cent quota [required by CUSU], and that showed a real desire to engage with the student body, which is promising for next year."

Commenting on the election rule change allowing candidates to use Facebook, Tyson said, "It's quite a simple thing but it meant that it got the elections out there to the wider student body."

In Brief

New mistress for Girton

Girton has announced its choice of a new Mistress, Professor Susan J. Smith, to replace the College's retiring head, Professor Dame Marilyn Strathern. Professor Smith, currently Professor of Geography and a Director of the Institute of Advanced Study at the University of Durham, will assume the position in October this year, the most recent achievement in an illustrious academic career which began with a degree in Geography at St Anne's College, Oxford. Her work addresses issues of inequality, taking into consideration concerns such as residential segregation, housing for health and fear of crime.

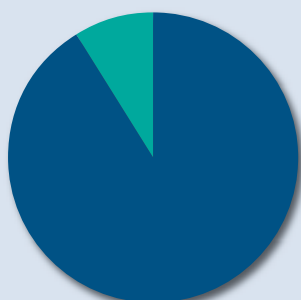
Cambridge celebrates run

Last weekend saw the 60th anniversary of the Cambridge Boundary Run, the traditional University run held by members of the Hare and Hounds group since 1949. The start line for this year's race was the David Lloyd gym off Coldham's Lane, and the finishing line at Coton Countryside Reserve. The Hare and Hounds' senior treasurer Nick Mather said, "Most people think of Cambridge as being really small – you can go for a short run and find yourself in the countryside – but when you run around the boundary of the city it's really quite long." One of the first students ever to run the race, Old Petrean James Hasler, explained his own association with the race: "My running partner and I discovered that in 1924 three men and a dog had run round the borough boundary. It was perfectly obvious to us that the run had to be done again."

Congestion scheme rejected

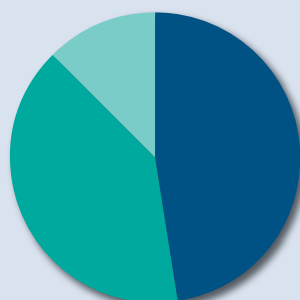
South Cambridgeshire District Council last week formally opposed plans to implement a congestion charging scheme in Cambridge. A special commission has been set up by the county's transport chief to consider the proposed scheme and the final pitch involves a £3-£5 charge between 7.30 am and 9.30 am on weekdays. If enacted, the scheme would constitute an attempt at "demand management" and would thus enable the council to bid for £500 million of the government's "Transport Innovation Fund" – a ten-fold increase on the county's current transport budget. Criticisms of the scheme are mostly economic, with councillors stating that the fee would lead to a loss of employment. *Avantika Chilkoti*

PRESIDENT



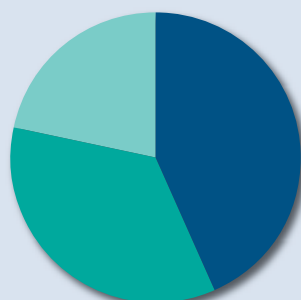
CHIGBO / RON

ACCESS OFFICER



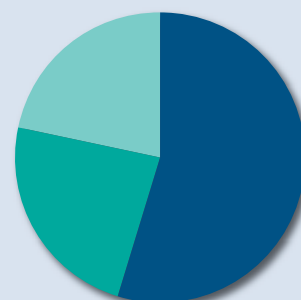
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In Brief

Nappies away

Police were puzzled earlier this week by the theft of forty pallets of nappies from an unattended lorry just outside Cambridge. En route to Portugal, the vehicle's driver had pulled into the Bar Hill layby on the A14 for a nap when thieves cut three holes in the parked trailer's curtain, clambered in and made off with the nappies, leaving only six out of forty pallets of Huggies Superdry behind. Having unloaded the pallets of their extra-absorbent cargo, the thieves stacked the empty pallets on their sides in the rear of the trailer to make room as they worked. Police believe the offenders did not completely clear the lorry of its load during the raid, which took place between the hours of 7am and 7pm on Wednesday, because they ran out of room in their packed vehicle.

Stinking mess

The dispute over ongoing sewer repairs in King Street and Jesus Lane continued this week as a councillor declared himself "disgusted" and businesses began calling for compensation for lost trade. The repairs to the King Street sewers have now been completed, but work is still being carried out in Jesus Lane, prompting Councillor Colin Rosenstiel to criticise Anglian Water, the company responsible for the repairs. "This is causing major disruption to the business district of the city," he said. "Anglian Water have not got the message. They should do these jobs as emergencies and get out. I'm disgusted." He suggested Anglian Water's contractors should have worked longer hours. Sara Rowland, of Anglian Water, said the company is trying to do the "vital repairs" as "quickly and safely as we can", but pointed out that the company must take into account working hours directives and noise pollution. Several King Street shop owners have stated their intention to claim compensation for the disruption to trade.

Christie not Christie's

A selection of Agatha Christie's furniture and writing implements is to go on sale in Cambridge later this month. Personal effects, including the writing desk at which she penned some of her most famous murder mystery novels, a black lacquer breakfast table, chairs, pictures and an address book are due to go under the hammer at Cheffins auctioneers on March 25th and 26th. The items come from the London mews home the writer shared with her husband, the archaeologist Sir Max Mallowan, before she died in 1979. The travels which formed a major part of their married life were key influences on her novelistic career, which spanned over half a century and involved the writing of around 80 novels in total. Other items up for auction include a William IV library table, Christie's desk blotter and a copy of the Golden Fleece by Robert Graves, signed "love from Robert, 1944." Lisa Freeman-Bassett, of Cheffins, said, "From a tea pot to Agatha's desk, estimates range from £100 to £4,000."

DRUGS SURVEY

VARSITY SPEAKS TO MODAFINIL USERS

Jacob, Trinity



I'm so glad I've discovered Modafinil. It's the best discovery I've made here, the elixir of life, and it is always the first thing on my shopping list when my allowance arrives each month. Gone are the days of lethargic wallowing and procrastinating in the UL. Now I'm free to party into the early hours whilst feeling reassured that a

little pop of the pill in the morning will put me on tip top form to deal with the day ahead. It hasn't only helped my enthusiasm for academic life but also keeps my mood high. There's no more nodding off in lectures for me and I look and feel great. As for my sexual endeavours, well let's just say: Modafinil keeps you up at night but my girlfriend doesn't seem to mind. Yes it makes my bladder control a little weak (fortunately my bedder is pretty understanding), but it's a small price to pay to ensure an awesome social life and top academic results. I don't take it every day, but it's a slippery slope and some of my more ethically-minded friends have expressed concern. But I just tell them they're silly not to try it – once you pop you'll never want to stop.

Christopher, Emmanuel



I was initially sceptical, but taking Modafinil really did help me concentrate. It didn't make me more cogent or anything like that, but it did give me more stamina and I was only ever distracted by obvious diversions, like my phone ringing, or hunger. I took the tablet at 11am and didn't feel particularly different at first, but

when I started to focus on a particular task, I noticed that I found it very easy to concentrate. I felt really motivated about my work and spent the afternoon in the library working, only checking Facebook once. I felt no need to have a break, check my e-mails, or even look out the window. I didn't work any quicker than usual, and I wasn't writing better arguments, but I just felt so much less inclination to stop working. I finished one 1500-word essay at 9pm and immediately started another one, pushing through a tiredness barrier at about 1am. The only downside was that I couldn't get to sleep until 6am and I ended up singing songs to keep me occupied. I was very pleased with the experience; I never do 14 hours of solid work in a day. I know there are probably ethical problems with taking it but, to be honest, it's just like drinking coffee. Isn't it?

Thomas, Corpus Christi



I have always had trouble concentrating, particularly in the afternoons. Neither power naps nor Pro Plus solved the problem. Modafinil did. Last week I took the psychostimulant for the first time. I found the effects to be fairly subtle: my work seemed to be more interesting, my awareness of the passage of time decreased, and I didn't get tired. It was not a new experience; rather an induced experience of alertness and diligence that my brain usually rations

when Modafinil is taken chemicals from a group called monoamines are released in the brain, including dopamine and noradrenaline. Noradrenaline affects the part of the brain that controls alertness and so may account for the ability of people who take the drug to concentrate for many hours. As well as releasing chemicals the drug blocks the uptake of some compounds related to sleep, allowing users to stay awake for long periods of time. The main conclusion of research so

WHAT THE SCIENTISTS SAY

Arthur Turrell

Modafinil belongs to a class of drugs known as stimulants, the most famous of which are amphetamines. It was developed in France in the 70s as a treatment for narcolepsy, and this is what it is mostly prescribed for today. Unlike amphetamines, which have been comprehensively studied, little is known about the exact way in which Modafinil works. Recent studies have determined that

Lucy, Fitzwilliam



Fifteen minutes in and I set off to my College library. I looked up the subject of my essay in the indexes of all the books I'd taken out, noted the page references and returned to my room. So far, so good. Half an hour in and I began to feel a bit odd. I think this may have had something to do with the spring roll,

cabbage and curly fries medley I had had at Buttery though. After an hour, and in the library, the pill had kicked in full-throttle and I worked there for about four hours – four times my usual attention span. A group of people sniggering at the other end of the library began to get on my nerves: strange, because usually I'm one of them. During an hour's break friends kindly observed that I wouldn't shut up and that my facial expressions were verging on manic. We looked up Modafinil on the internet and discovered that it usually wears off within 12 hours – I had taken it at 7pm. My boyfriend tactfully suggested that we spend the night apart. Back in my room, I worked robotically until 3am, ploughing through pages and pages of notes. Then I ran out of work, but sleep was still not an option – I watched 5am come and go.

Isobel, Trinity Hall



Modafinil lulled me into a false sense of security – because I thought I'd be working really hard, I didn't make any effort to stop myself being distracted. When my alarm went off on the morning I was planning to take the pill, I figured I'd be working twice as fast as normal on Modafinil, so I al-

lowed myself to go back to sleep. In the first hour after popping the pill, I managed to read four pages of a fairly basic history book, and despite staying in the library all night I only managed to read and note one forty-page article. I took more notes than usual, but I still kept checking Facebook repeatedly. On the upside, even though and should have been upset at my inefficiency, I felt really happy the whole time. I'd never normally do an all-nighter unless it was essential, but this was easy and I didn't have to bribe myself with bars of chocolate. To sum up, Modafinil didn't make me concentrate more, work faster, or any cleverer. It did slightly mess with my stomach. Wikipedia said it could lead to weight loss. Excellent. Except it seems to include a lot of pooing.

to a couple of hours each morning. At times I wondered if the drug was working: after the first three hours - a 200mg pill is thought to last for up to 16 – I felt like I wanted to keep taking notes, but it seemed a genuine scholarly appetite. The absence of jitters and tension, which caffeine tends to induce, made me suspect a placebo at work. After a day spent in the library with only a short lunch break, during which I was eager to return to my desk, I spent the evening chatting to a

friend and then finished a book. I worried that my use of Modafinil would detract from my ability to concentrate without the drug. But it seems instead to extend and to guarantee my natural alertness. It enhances what is already there and induces a work ethic that is not unfamiliar. If I get up in the morning after a good night's sleep and don't take the drug, my concentration level is much the same for the first few hours than if I had popped a pill. I will be taking Modafinil again.

far is that the process of Modafinil's action on the brain is synergistic; the effects produced come from a combination of factors working in union. As the exact way this happens is not understood, the reactions of Modafinil in combination with other drugs are not understood either. It is always wise to avoid mixing drugs and with Modafinil this is especially true; there is evidence that combining Modafinil with oral contraceptives can make them less effective. In the UK it is only available as

a prescription drug and, like many prescription drugs, there are a range of possible side effects. The most alarming of these is a severe skin reaction requiring admission to hospital, although this has only happened in a handful of cases. The other, more common, side effects of the drug are headaches, nausea and anxiety as well as elevated blood pressure, a feature common to most stimulants that has many other risks associated with it including heart disease.

DRUGS SURVEY



MICHAEL DERRINGER

Students turn to drugs to cope with academic pressure

» Experts warn that full effects of academic stimulants may not yet be known

» University says students should seek official support rather than taking medication

Continued from front page

The long-term risks of taking Modafinil are not fully known, since doctors are unsure of exactly how it acts on the brain. However, it reportedly lacks the agitation, irritability, nausea and comedown associated with amphetamines such as Ritalin.

William Shanahan, Consultant Psychiatrist and Medical Director of the Capio Nightingale Hospital in London, told *Varsity* that "there is a risk of addiction" that comes with taking Modafinil.

Lisa Halpern, a Senior Counsellor with the University Counselling Service, said that no students or colleagues have approached her with questions about the use of Modafinil. Regarding the safety of taking the drug, she commented: "Drugs like Modafinil are relatively new, so we cannot, as of yet, judge the long term risks."

She added: "Modafinil is not listed in the Misuse of Drugs Act, hence doctors can prescribe it widely to patients without medical sleep conditions, whose jobs require they stay awake and alert for prolonged periods. The drug is, however, a banned substance in sport. It was added to the list of prohibited substances in 2004, and a number of high profile athletes, including Dwain Chambers, have since tested positive for Modafinil use.

"It would seem that for a number of students, however, risks to their bank account and potential long term health risks are of little concern when it comes to getting a possible extra edge in Tripos," she concluded.

Ant Bagshaw, CUSU Education Officer and member of the Board of Examinations, said, "I am surprised that so many people have taken such drugs. The use of concentration-enhancing drugs is not really something I've come across before."

When asked what he thought about the use of drugs like Modafinil in exams, Bagshaw responded: "In principle, I am against it. I think students should do everything possible to perform as well as they can in exams, but this should be limited to operating within legal means." Were the possession of Modafinil without a prescription legal, however, Bagshaw admits that he would reserve judgement until it could be proven that taking the drug would put a student at an unfair advantage.

"There is a rule in the University statutes relating to unfair means. Taking notes into an exam, getting someone to take the exam for you and plagiarism are all disallowed under this rule," he said.

The "biggest problem" Bagshaw finds with applying the same rule to taking a drug like Modafinil is a practical one:

"It's not clear what sort of drug testing process would have to be put in place. Can you imagine the proctors walking around exam halls with urine samples?"

The University has not commented on whether taking concentration enhancing medication could be considered a form of cheating. In response to the results of the *Varsity* survey, Rob Wallach, the Secretary of the Senior Tutor's Committee, offered the following comment:

"The use of prescription drugs without the approval of a qualified medical practitioner is not to be recommended under any circumstance as unforeseen side effects can be serious. Hence we would advise any student to take appropriate medical advice before considering taking any prescription drugs, including those such as Modafinil, Ritalin, or Adderall.

"More generally, we would encourage students to talk to their supervisors, Tutor, Director of Studies or Senior Tutor if they're having difficulties with their studies for any reason. By sharing any problems, they together should be able to develop improved academic good practice and appropriate confidence. These should do away with any perceived need for performance enhancers of any type other than those developed through expertise and academic study."

The *Varsity* survey did not show dra-

matic differences in the use of stimulants between students in different subjects. Results did, however, show that students taking essay-based subjects were marginally more likely to take the medication. 16 per cent of respondents studying Philosophy admitted to having taken either one of Modafinil, Ritalin or Adderall, as did 15 per cent of SPS respondents and 14 per cent of lawyers responding. Meanwhile, only five per cent of the NatScis who took the survey, and four per cent of the engineers, had taken a prescription stimulant.

Disparities between uses of the drugs in different Colleges were starker. Christ's, Corpus Christi, Homerton and Peterhouse all had 18 per cent of their respondents admit to having taken Modafinil, Ritalin or Adderall. Only three per cent of King's students, and four per cent of Magdalene students who took the survey admitted to taking the drugs.

The way in which the drug is commonly distributed amongst students may explain the inter-College disparities. A third-year Corpus student told *Varsity*: "One person will order Modafinil in bulk from the internet, and will sell it on to their friends and acquaintances. Many people are unhappy to give over their bank details to a potentially dodgy website, and would rather buy from another student."

From the Archives



Week 8: November 9th 1979
Stop Press with Varsity reveals a Cambridge dons' drugs ring

Several dons are heavily implicated in a ring supplying hard drugs to undergraduates, according to well-informed sources in the University. Both the Cambridge police and, we understand, an unofficial group of concerned University representatives are investigating the affair.

The activities of the ring have claimed a number of victims over the last three years at least. It is alleged that students are first drawn into a tightly knit circle, and then initiated into the use of dangerous drugs, predominantly Cocaine, Amphetamines and LSD. In more than one case this process has led to nervous collapse, and admission to either the Addenbrooke's Hospital Drug Rehabilitation Unit, or Fulbourn Mental Hospital.

One don in particular, it is believed, began his contact with potential users via seduction, creating a pattern of emotional dependence that then took on a material aspect. One student, with "a brilliant academic future" before him when he entered his college is now permanently confined in a psychiatric institution. Another, who was involved in both supply and consumption, suffered a nervous breakdown and dropped out of her Part 2 course.

These cases, and others under review, point to a distinctive pattern of abuse centred on two individual colleges.

We understand that one man connected with those involved was arrested earlier this year, but was released later. Also under investigation are suggestions of political links. It's not clear how far the network extends, but one source confirmed that 'a very senior' University man was warned by police that unless he desisted from trafficking in hard drugs they would be forced to charge him. He stopped.

We put one set of allegations to a don, said to have supplied drugs to his undergraduate pupils. "These stories are completely untrue, and the result, I should think, of malicious rumours", he said, "if you print this I shall be forced to sue."

Now, however, allegations are beginning to surface against people still supplying drugs, who hold positions of responsibility, some in the English faculty. Some sources claim that inquiries into previous generations of students at one city college demonstrate a horrifying sequence of disturbance traceable to one don who, according to our informant, "enjoys breaking people". As attempts to trace those involved continue, it is clear that Cambridge may be on the brink of a major scandal, which seems to have been ignored or covered up by college authorities.

The allegations were never proved, and a subsequent police investigation was dropped.



Varsity Profile

» Week 8: Mark Fletcher, outgoing CUSU President

With the CUSU elections in full swing, you might expect Mark Fletcher to be on the verge of a frantic meltdown. This however, is far from true. Any stress or chaos that may exist is well hidden by his immediately engaging and friendly introduction when I meet him in the CUSU office.

Fletcher has presided over the Cambridge University Students' Union for the past two years. Having risen through the JCR ranks at Jesus, starting as welfare officer and becoming president of the JCR in his second year, Fletcher is passionate about student politics. His ability and desire to listen to the views of students has gained him considerable popularity both within CUSU and the college JCRs.

He reflects that representing student views "seemed natural" to him, he felt he could "do a good job as CUSU President". This certainly seems illustrated by the changes seen in CUSU since 2007.

Fletcher recognises that some students see CUSU as irrelevant; however, he sees this as "quite a naive view" that fails to recognise the importance of CUSU in influencing the direction of the academic, extra-curricular and social aspects of the University as a whole.

The eternal political conundrum of the public/private life balance affects not only John Prescott and croquet, but is a constant problem for those such as Fletcher, who essentially "give themselves up" to student politics.

"You know what you are letting yourself in for if you apply for this job", and Fletcher seems to enjoy being accessible to the student body. "It is difficult to switch off," he says, but he quite likes the unpredictability, and "the buzz". Ultimately "you are a representative of, and paid for, by the student body: you owe it to them."

In the little spare time that he does get, Fletcher – an Arsenal fan – avidly follows football. He is also passionate about music, and spends time with his boyfriend, an aspect of his life which he feels has been somewhat neglected during his time as president.

"I don't think there is a balance," he remarks of the job that has him in the office at all hours, balancing numerous tasks whilst being consistently cheery and motivational. However, he sees this challenge and pressure as the most productive aspect of his work: "Something has to be challenging and uncomfortable, otherwise it's not fun."

It is this enjoyment of pressure and organising people that Fletcher hopes to carry on in his post-CUSU life. "I would like to be involved in politics at some stage," he says, but this is not the next step: "I need something totally different to do first."

For a successful and busy person he is surprisingly modest and is careful to constantly attribute successes to his team. You cannot help but feel that this president will be a hard act to follow. *Lizzy Tyler*

2

number of terms Fletcher has served at CUSU

1

number of CUSU hoodies Fletcher owns

35

number of hate mail letters Fletcher has received as during his career

6

number of May Balls Fletcher has attended

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The scene of the stabbing, the Five Bells pub in Cherry Hinton

Dispute 'over £40' ends in violent murder

Paul Coles

A man died last Sunday evening as a result of injuries sustained in an attack outside a Cambridge pub.

The exact nature of the attack remains unclear, although the incident took place early on Friday evening, at around 7pm. The victim was rushed from the carpark of the Five Bells pub in Cherry Hinton to Addenbrooke's hospital, where he later died.

It is similarly unknown whether the assailants were armed, although a post-mortem examination has confirmed head injuries as the cause of death.

The victim has been identified named as Paul 'Monty' Mansfield, 39, an electrician from the local area and a regular at the pub. Flowers have been placed at the scene of the crime in tribute to the popu-

lar man, whose family have described him as "the life and soul of the party".

Police have launched a murder inquiry, and have already made four arrests in connection with the case. Two unnamed women, aged 22 and 48, and two men, aged 21 and 25, will return on police bail on March 31st and April 14th respectively. All of the arrested are from the local area.

On Tuesday, police said that an unpaid debt of just £40 could have been the motive for the fatal attack.

Detective Superintendent Tom MacKinnon has appealed for information about the incident. He would especially like to hear from anyone witness to "a car driving off at high speed from the Five Bells pub on Friday evening at around 7pm". Those in possession of any relevant information have been asked to contact Parkside Police Station.



SIR RANULPH FIENNES

Thousands of polar photographs put online

Cambridge's Scott Polar Research Institute this week made 20,000 images freely accessible online as part of a £420,000 project to digitise its huge photo library. The project, which began in 2007, will continue until the entire archive, containing more than 100,000 images, has been published. Sir Ranulph Fiennes, one of Britain's greatest polar explorers, said: "This is an extraordinary collection filled with remarkable images." The picture above, which has been published as part of the collection, was taken by Sir Ranulph on his three-year journey around the globe from 1979 to 1982. All of the images from the archive can be seen online for free at www.freezeframe.ac.uk.

Heroin dealer jailed after hiding wraps in Kinder eggs

» Two dealers jailed after unconnected trials this week

» 44-year-old sentenced to three years after stashing drugs in confectionery

Anna Harper

Two Cambridge drug dealers have been locked up following appearances at the city's Crown Court this week in unconnected trials.

The first, 44-year-old Ann Lupton, elaborately stashed heroin wraps inside chocolate Kinder eggs. She was spotted in the street by police, who suspected she might be about to embark on a drugs deal. Sara Walker, prosecuting, told Cambridge Crown Court how Lupton had tried to run off but was "rugby tackled" by the officers.

During the fray, Lupton dropped a Kinder egg containing 11 wraps of heroin. Officers also seized a mobile phone and £60 cash, and another four wraps of heroin were found in a nearby vehicle. When her home in St Peter's Road was searched in March, empty Kinder eggs, scales, cash and heroin were found.

When arrested and interviewed, Lupton said that the 11 wraps found in her possession belonged to her. She claimed she had purchased 30 wraps for £70 and had passed on and personally consumed some of them, but swallowed others when the officers approached her. Walker told the court that the street value of the drugs was believed to be in the region of £10 a wrap.

Steven Gray, speaking for the defence, described Lupton as "a long-standing heroin addict" of more than 20 years. Although Lupton has previously been

convicted of possession with intent to supply of crack cocaine in 1992, she had since been dealt with solely in relation to possession.

Judge Jonathan Haworth told Lupton: "You were caught fairly and squarely red-handed dealing class A drugs for cash." Lupton was sentenced to three years in prison, and must take part in a drugs rehabilitation programme.

Also sentenced this week was Adekun Abajide, a renowned drug dealer on the streets of Cambridge. During November and December last year, Abajide sold wraps of heroin to an undercover officer several times for £20 each. On December 9th, he was arrested and found in possession of heroin and crack cocaine.

Abajide had previously pleaded guilty to 11 offences including one count of being connected with supplying class A controlled drugs, eight counts of supplying class A controlled drugs and two counts of possessing class A drugs

with intent to supply.

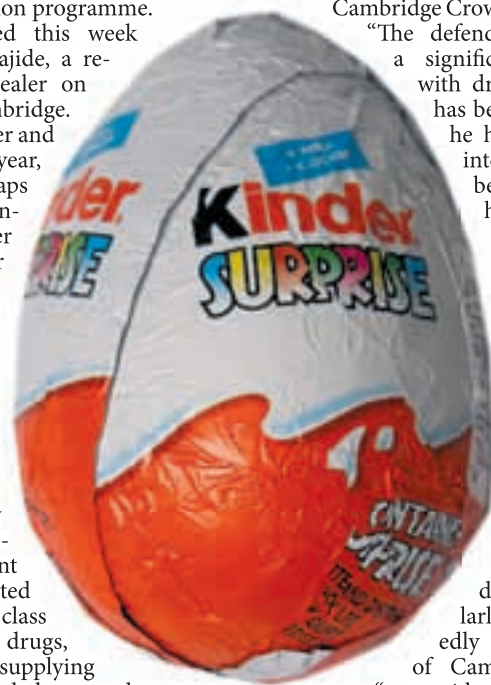
When interviewed, Abijide said that he was "a crack and heroin addict who supplied to feed his habit".

After his arrest, he admitted to have dealt five wraps, keeping one for himself, after obtaining his drugs from London.

Sally Hobson, mitigating in Cambridge Crown Court, said:

"The defendant has had a significant problem with drugs. Since he has been in custody he has shown his intentions not to be a user when he is released and to move away from the lifestyle he has been leading."

Haworth sentenced Abijide to four years imprisonment, describing the defendant as "a man dealing regularly and repeatedly on the streets of Cambridge" with "eyes wide open, dealing for cash".



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Cambridge Spies



Homerton

Pom-pom sandwich

A group of boys from the far-flung outskirts of the city met for a night of merriment with the prancing cheerleaders this week, an evening of golf on the cards for the night. But the 9th hole proved rather too much of an endurance test for the gaggle of girls, who felt the need to relieve themselves of their loads in various splatterings across the pavement. Two rather more heavyweight members of the posse then took it upon themselves to continue the entertainment for one fine fellow back in their bedchamber. One can only hope they were able to stomach things slightly more successfully during their *ménage à trois*...

Jesus

Porn again

This most red-blooded of males, having successfully lured the evening's target back to his abode, was shocked to find that he was not aroused by her nymphomaniac behaviour. Flag still at half-mast, our prey soon tired of his inactivity and fell into a solemn slumber. Not wanting to end the night as it was, the scoundrel tapped in his favourite adult site into the World Wide Web and promptly found himself standing to attention. Rousing his bedmate, she was soon squealing in ecstasy, but as things drew to a finale, she was turfed out into the cold to make her own way home to allow him fine form for his work the next day.

Christ's

Future aspirations

This ungentlemanly fresher has been signing his guests into formal hall under the most unsavoury of titles. His entries in the past have certainly raised eyebrows in the past, including "John's Gash 1". But his latest outing, sporting his date, "Future Rape Victim", on his arm, provoked a lecture from the Senior Tutor before the start of the meal about unacceptable behaviour. The authorities asking for a "Miss fishy fingers" to please stand up would perhaps transcend the boundary between suggestive humour and crassness, especially as they seem to represent his hopes for the end of the evening.

Cambridge report highlights state sector failings

» Admissions bosses attack link between 'deprivation and educational attainment'

Continued from front page

The findings also exposed vast inequalities between different local authorities. Although those which retain grammar schools tend to dominate the top of the league tables, clear exceptions do exist, including Cambridgeshire itself, where good sixth-form colleges contribute to high grades. The results have suggested that, rather than state school organisation being the main factor, success in A-levels is closely related to the affluence of a particular area.

Reading, for example, topping the tables with 27 per cent AAA pupils, represents a much more affluent catchment than Southwark, where none of

the 111 state sector A-Level students got AAA. More strikingly, a report last year revealed that, of nearly 30,000 students achieving AAA in 2007, only 176, or just over half a per cent, received free school meals.

The study by Cambridge Assessment was commissioned by the University's outreach steering committee.

Parks and Partington emphasised that "the real reasons for the differences are almost certainly social and economic rather than educational."

"The proportion of maintained-sector students achieving top A-level grades is patently closely correlated with the socio-economic demographic

of the local authority," they said.

"Social mobility through education in the United Kingdom will continue to struggle to improve until the pernicious link between deprivation and educational attainment is broken."

"This Cambridge Assessment study of A-level achievement provides evidence of the symptoms at age 18; the cure has to lie in much earlier educational interventions in our young people's lives."

Joe Farish, who was elected CUSU's Access Officer this week, told *Varsity*: "We really need to look at how we can raise aspirations."

"A big problem is that parents often

have a lot of misconceptions about universities and especially Cambridge. Many people don't realise that you don't pay any of your tuition up front or that there are grants and bursaries available."

"We need to work with organisations such as Aim Higher and Teach First to reach out to schools in deprived areas in order to challenge perceptions and raise aspirations."

"If young people are going to succeed at A-level they need to have a goal and we need to ensure that they know that university is within their reach, that it is achievable and that it is realistic."

Editors quit in racism row

Christos Lavidas

The editors of Oxford's independent student newspaper were forced to quit last week after an offensive spoof edition of the paper was leaked.

The fake issue of *Cherwell* was produced at the end of last term and around 50 copies of the edition, called *Lecher*, were distributed during an editorial team meal.

One extract from the edition apparently read: "KILL ALL THE BLACKS... Can't they just stay in their own communities? They have sex with monkeys, don't they? We can't have stuff like that in a white upper-class male commune like *Cherwell*."

One photograph showed one of the paper's ex-editors dressed in the style of the Klu Klux Klan, giving a Nazi salute.

Sian Cox-Brooker and Michael Bennett, *Cherwell*'s editors, were forced to resign despite only taking over the reins at the beginning of this term.

In a statement, the editors said: "The tone and content of *Lecher* was clearly intended to be satirical, and was received as such by its intended

recipients."

"We understand that satire can be misconstrued, and as this term's editors of *Cherwell* we apologise for any offence which might have been caused, and have now resigned."

A statement from the newspaper's publishers said: "This week, a spoof of *Cherwell* has been released into the public domain. This document was not produced by Oxford Student Publications Ltd; we deplore its contents and condemn it in the strongest possible terms."

"We have held the editors of *Cherwell* accountable for this document and they deeply regret any offence caused. In light of these developments, we have asked for and received their resignation."

Lewis Iwu, president of Oxford's students' union, said: "The abhorrent humour portrayed in the *Lecher* is in no way representative of student opinion in Oxford."

"As a black student I believe that Oxford is a tolerant, vibrant and welcoming place."

Cherwell, like *Varsity*, is one of a very small number of student newspapers which are independent from their university's students' union.

Man found dead in Cam

Gemma Oke

The body of a missing man has been recovered from the River Cam.

Michael Ian Roper, 45, had been reported missing by a friend from the Downham Market area of Norfolk in January.

His body was spotted by members of the public trapped among buoys in the lock and weir next to Jesus Green, Cambridge, on Wednesday morning.

Speaking at the scene of the body's discovery, Detective Inspector Adam Gallop said that police had not ruled out suspicious circumstances. He said, "We are not ruling anything out at this stage."

"We received three separate calls from members of the public who saw the body at around 9am [on Wednesday morning]."

The area where Roper was found was cordoned off to allow specialist divers to recover the body, and as a mark of respect for the deceased.

The body broke free of the buoys before becoming lodged in the lock wall at around 11am, before specialist divers from the Spartan Rescue team pulled it out of the river nearly 20 minutes later.

The incident provoked sadness and



shock among eyewitnesses. Speaking to the *Cambridge News*, one onlooker said, "It's shocking and quite frightening, and also very sad. It's such a peaceful spot where people feed the ducks. It's the horror of it all."

Another witness, whose boat was moored yards from the body, described the tragedy as "a bit eerie and a murky business. We didn't notice it until all the police came".

Norfolk Constabulary formally confirmed the identity of Roper on Thursday. The death is being treated as unexplained, while a post-mortem examination will be held on Friday March 5th to establish the cause of death.

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Students wanted for research study

Students who are clinically diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Condition are invited to take part in a computer-based visual perception experiment in the Department of Experimental Psychology. The task involves identification of modified images and participants receive £15 for two hours. Please contact Clare on cap55@cam.ac.uk if you are interested in taking part.

Thank you!

The Essay



An Atheist's Bible Matthew Kramer

Why would a long-standing atheist want to write a commentary on the Bible? Matthew Kramer has spent twenty-six years doing so, despite not believing in God. Here, he explains what the Scriptures have to offer to non-believers.

I became an atheist at the age of eight. After one of my Hebrew school-teachers devoted a 90-minute class to recounting her experiences in a Nazi concentration camp during the Second World War, I went home and read a lengthy encyclopaedia article on Nazi Germany. Within four hours of reading that article, I had irretrievably lost my belief in God. Over the years, my disbelief in God has become even more robust than my disbelief in Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy.

However, unlike some atheists and most agnostics, I am hardly uninterested in God and religion. For one thing, my attitude toward God is not one of indifference; rather, it is one of revulsion. That attitude stems partly from my systematic study of the Bible for the past 26 years.

Although my main areas of scholarly expertise are political, legal and moral philosophy – rather than theology or the philosophy of religion – my principal avocation since the early 1980s has been the writing of a commentary on the Bible. Why would an atheist engage in such an endeavour?

I began to read the Bible systematically in early 1982 because I wished to enhance my understanding of philosophy. From the mediaeval period through to the early twentieth century, virtually every Western philosopher of any consequence presupposed that his readers were intimately acquainted with the Bible.

While studying Philosophy as an undergraduate, I was particularly struck by the fact that nearly all the great figures of the early modern era – Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Baruch Spinoza, George Berkeley, and so forth – were thoroughly grounded in the Scriptures. Their philosophical works invoke Biblical passages and characters with easy familiarity. Even the fervid atheist Friedrich Nietzsche in the nineteenth century displayed an impressive knowledge of the Bible. (Nietzsche's *The Antichrist* is a *tour de force* of Biblical exposition, however far-fetched some of it may be.)

Thus, while I was still an undergrad-

uate, I recognized that I could not fully understand many of the premier texts of the Western philosophical tradition without an excellent knowledge of the Bible.

I began to study the Bible systematically (for two to three hours every day) during my first year as a postgraduate. I had acquired a pretty good knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures as a boy, but now I was setting out to read both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament with the eye of a philosopher. During the first eighteen months, I read the Bible from cover to cover three times without writing anything beyond marginal annotations. Thereafter, however, I began to compose a passage-by-passage commentary to make sense of the text as I went along. The commentary – which for the first several years was handwritten – has now grown to approximately 3,000 pages. I've written it purely for my own edification, but over the years I've gradually polished it into something that might eventually be suitable for publication.

At very few junctures in my commentary does my atheism become apparent. Poking holes in Biblical claims about God is far too easy and is thus uninteresting. Instead, my commentary seeks to understand those claims from the perspectives of the people who advanced them. I'm continually asking why the writer of some book of the Bible would think that the ascription to God of a certain quality or command or action or accomplishment is so important.

My original aim of improving my understanding of Western philosophy has been realised. Though I don't write on theology or the philosophy of religion, my study of the Bible has significantly shaped my thinking about a number of issues in the areas of philosophy on which I do write.

Over the years, however, that original aim has come to be supplemented by other reasons for my avocation as a Biblical scholar. Such an avocation not only improves one's understanding of Western philosophy, but also greatly

enhances one's understanding of Western culture more broadly. While the Bible has heavily influenced many philosophers, it has likewise heavily influenced countless artists and writers and composers (among others). Some of the richness of Western art and literature and music is lost on anyone who does not possess a good knowledge of the Bible.

A further benefit of Biblical study lies in the literary magnificence of many parts of the Bible. The exquisite story of Joseph and his brothers in the final quarter of Genesis is itself sufficient to ensure the Bible a place among the greatest

honesty cannot fail to be aware of its many shortcomings, some of which are egregious.

One's awareness of those shortcomings can temper one's criticism of other religions. Consider, for example, the current propensity of Muslim extremists in various parts of the world to engage in murderous mayhem. On the one hand, the claim that their evil acts of carnage have nothing to do with Islam is simplistic at best. Anyone who has perused the Koran with intellectual honesty will be aware of the hideous passages on which the Islamist fanatics can and do seize in order to "justify" their terrorism.

On the other hand, the perception of a basic divide between the Koran and the Bible in this respect is likewise simplistic. The Bible teems with as

many ghastly passages as the Koran. It lends itself to being cited in support of iniquities just as readily as does the Koran.

Hence, given that there are no grounds for thinking that the sacred texts of Christianity and Judaism are indissolubly linked to terrorism, there are no grounds for any corresponding accusation against the sacred texts of Islam. An acquaintance with the Bible enables one to recognise this point clearly.

The abundance of rebarbative passages in the Bible is another reason for atheists to familiarise themselves with it. Although my commentary seldom gives voice to the atheistic repugnance that I feel toward God, my systematic study of the Bible has made me thoroughly familiar with the numerous discreditable aspects of the Biblical texts.

Thus, I can retort knowledgeably

to believers who suggest that moral principles are in need of God and the Bible as their foundations. Even if the correct basic principles of morality were somehow in need of foundations, the Bible would be too nefarious for the purpose. Those principles would not be strengthened by being associated with the genocidal directives of the God of the Hebrew Scriptures, or with the scurrilous fulminations of Christ against his opponents, or with the Stalin-like gloating of the God of the New Testament at the thought that everyone who has not been sufficiently deferential toward Him will suffer torture for all eternity.

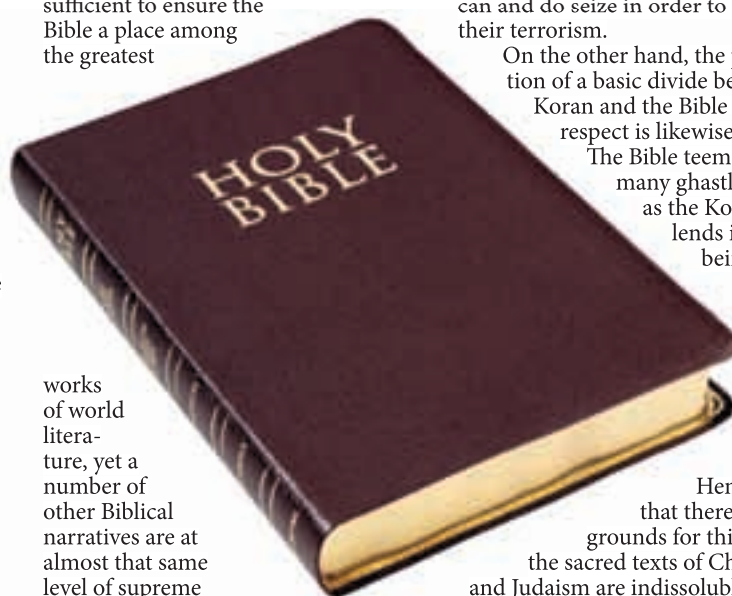
Lest the foregoing paragraph may seem too glum, I'll conclude with a relatively light-hearted reason for studying the Bible. A perusal of the Biblical texts reveals a host of common sayings that have taken on meanings very different from their original meanings.

Hence, a knowledge of the Bible is invaluable for anyone inclined to be pedantic. I could offer more than twenty examples of the sayings that I have in mind, but I have space here for only one. In Deuteronomy 8:3 and in Matthew's and Luke's gospels (with Christ's response to the first temptation), we encounter the aphorism "Man does not live by bread alone." In the present day, that maxim is almost universally taken to mean that bread is necessary but not sufficient for human flourishing.

In its original Biblical context, by contrast, the maxim means that bread is sufficient but not necessary for human flourishing. (In Deuteronomy, bread was unnecessary because God sent manna instead; in the gospels, bread was unnecessary because Christ was able to survive on purely spiritual sustenance.)

In sum, I recommend Biblical study not only for the serious reasons recounted above, but also because it is a wonderful basis for pedantic one-upmanship!

Matthew Kramer is Professor of Legal and Political Philosophy and a Fellow of Churchill College.



Foreign Correspondence

Cambridge goes all over the world in a riot of semi-imperialist journalism



Week 8: *Cuba*

The Castro succession trundles on in Cuba. Raul has removed some of Fidel's favourite ministers. Fidel, like his revolution, is dying on his feet. Fidel then endorses Raul's political movements a few days later, either by accident or under compulsion. (It seems unlikely that he is *compos mentis* enough to make such decisions or proclamations himself.)

The geriatric nature of events is entirely unsurprising. Cuba is not an exciting place anymore. It is an old country, dense with decay. When I visited there last year, I expected somewhere rumbustious and entertaining, with people dancing in the streets and singing gloriously. I was anticipating seeing the world-class healthcare system and a state where the spoils of the economy are shared between all. In short, I was clinically naïve.

Instead, I found a society shrivelled up into itself. People walk with a stoop; prostitutes (female and male) are everywhere; licentious behaviour is expressed quietly and with a gentle sneer. Pictures and murals of Fidel and Raul are encountered every now and again. They have an odd effect on the tourist, and on Cubans. They confer a sort of benevolent glow on everything, a fatherly and patriarchal sort of sensation.

But they also inspire a silent malcontent. One senses people shifting resentfully past them as they move around their hometowns. Fidel and Raul Castro are not liked. They're not hated either; but they're not liked. It's rather like Gordon Brown's status in British electoral politics – they call up a sort of beige neutrality, a boredom. But, unlike the Prime Minister, they can't be voted from office. Cuba is trapped in ennui.

It's a disheartening thing. People have no life left in them anymore, and yet they're too tired to inspire themselves anew. I spoke to one man who told me, with hushed frankness, that "Cuba has seen better days." I asked him if things were worse than they seemed. "Not worse...but more dull." A distressing thing to contemplate. That Cuba has lost its way is accepted by everyone (even student revolutionaries). What it needs, in a weird kind of way, is another upheaval. Moving to straightforward democracy won't bring blood back to the country's veins. So what will?

Jack Cervantes

Charlotte Runcie



The Patois of the Privileged

Cambridge language is archaic, repulsive and sort of necessary

In a recent issue of *Varsity*, Dan Hitchens discussed the problem of vagueness in language. My issue is that, in Cambridge at least, the language we use is actually far too particular. When we talk to each other about uni life, we use a range of ultra-exclusive slang terms, an extension of public schoolboy terminology impenetrable to anyone outside the bubble. Is it any wonder that Cambridge University is still seen as a bastion of superiority when the way we talk is so insular?

It's over halfway through the academic year now, and most of us freshers have comfortably settled into a new town, pinned up our Tournée du Chat Noir posters, and spent many a night tripping happily between Cindies and the College bar.

The mysterious lingo of these parts has already burrowed deep into our vocabulary, and we have gone from haltingly ordering a baguette and describing our best friend in Cantabrigese to sustaining a lengthy debate about the current ADC show with flawless grammar.

But what about when we head home for the summer? If I don't drop the Cam slang sharpish, my sister will only stare at me in dumb revulsion when I tell her about that fateful night I burnt the pasta in my gyp room after getting off with a Tit Hall Mathmo at super-hall. (Anecdote may have been falsified for illustrative purposes.)

Everything about the way we speak

here is rooted in odd, obsolete tradition – and we drink it in. It's part of the Cambridge package, and we accept it as a quirk. I suspect a significant proportion of current undergraduates came here just as much to behave like a Victorian dandy as they did to invest in a future of academia.

We want to speak the language spoken by the famous before they were famous; the successful alumni 'hit' parade of everyone from Hans Blix to the Monty Python team. And if we start to talk like they once did, we might just become like them in other ways. Maybe Monty Python's surreal humour even has its roots in the oddities of Cambridge slang. Maybe Milton needed those years of exposure to Cambridge vernacular to inform his diction in *Paradise Lost*:

"Of man's first disobedience, and the plodge..."

Nevertheless, for many of us it's

just thrilling to get our first taste of the privilege embodied in that strange linguistic overworld operating between Eton and Oxbridge, beyond the radar of the OED. It's epidemic. By day two of Freshers' Week, teenagers from inner-city comprehensives have started talking like Prince Charles.

Cambridge is weird.

You can't describe it without using the words it has invented for itself. When we arrive – sorry, 'come up' – we're planted somewhere we don't yet have the tools to explain, so we grab onto the slang and that has to do.

Before I got here I never thought I'd use the word 'bop' seriously and yet, every Friday night in Queens' bar, I find my mouth closing ineluctably around that terrible word.

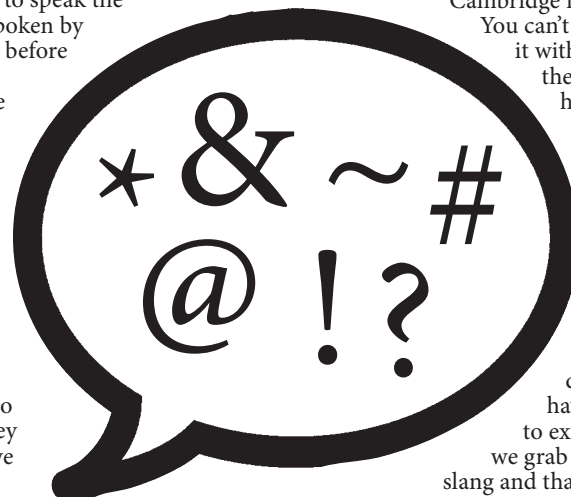
But how else can you describe a bop? It is categorically not a club night or a party, and even 'disco' can't quite convey its distinctive sense of cheesiness and disappointment. There's something about the way I have to

cringe slightly every time I say 'bop' that sums up how I feel when I go to one and dance, inevitably, to 'The Final Countdown'. As you say it your mouth takes on the same shape as it does just before you vomit which, for many revellers, is how bop night is brought to a close anyway.

This everyday argot pales to a tint rather than a blot on Cambridge's character when you consider the archaic, elitist dialects of its secret societies: its Adonians, its Pitt Club, its Freemasons. Cambridge has a long way to go before it can claim to be inclusive and open to everyone. Straight talking is a start, but these fruity little clubs (as *South Park* would call them) act as refuges that keep jargon and snootiness alive, despite our best efforts to modernise the University and make it more accessible.

At Cambridge, slang and snobbery are wrapped up in one another, and as long as we use one, we perpetuate the other. Let's go back to a term I used earlier: the 'gyp room'. This was originally the room where your 'gyp', or manservant, used to sit and await your instructions. The word 'gyp' comes from 'gippo', or 'scullion' – an abusive nickname for a menial worker.

So it's not just that using a language that is unintelligible to the outside world keeps Cambridge exclusive. It's that the language itself embodies the Oxbridge elitism that refuses to die. Remember that next time you're chatting about your bedder in the buttery.



Rob Peal



Bring Back Morality

Good values, proudly declared, are essential to a healthy society

On a recent trip to London I was leafing through the news and read that a city banker in a West End club spent £35,000 on champagne in one evening. Whilst overheard to say "Fuck Gordon Brown: there's no recession", he splashed out in one night significantly more than what the average British worker earns in a year on jeroboams of Dom Perignon and magnums of Cristal.

I took this alarming news back to the bubble that is Cambridge, and in outraged tones told my friends. "When did this sort of behaviour become acceptable?" I asked, before condemning it as frivolous and morally wrong. My lamentations fell on deaf ears.

It made me realise the extent to which the moral register of the political liberal-left has shrunk. In Parliament, the newspapers and the pub, those in Britain who see themselves as 'progressives' are extremely wary of speaking in moral terms, a habitual aversion which has become extremely counter-productive.

This was not always the case. For centuries, the landmark achievements in advancing social justice were made by people unafraid to voice the moral nature of their purpose. William Wilberforce was driven towards realizing the abolition of slavery in 1807 not by a belief in abstractions such as human rights, but instead a human compassion for the suffering of African slaves.

Similarly, Gladstone, who did so much to advance the causes of democracy and Irish Home Rule, built his career as Prime Minister on the claim that the British working class were "morally entitled to come within the pale of the constitution". As recently as 1947 Clement Attlee, founder of the Welfare State, also became president of Toynbee Hall, a London settlement house that epitomises the Victorian spirit of philanthropy.

"Our human impulses have been rebranded"

So when did this all change? Trite as it may sound, this paradigm shift in political justifications has to be located in that watershed conveniently called 'the Sixties'. In this period, the philosophical dry rot that is moral relativism was conveniently wedded to the anti-authoritarian spirit of social liberalisation, and a new age was born. All of society's moribund taboos were rightfully torn down, but a sole taboo was regrettably put in its place: a taboo against morality itself.

In public discourse, respect for honourable and decent behaviour has been replaced by contempt for the smug do-gooder, and derogatory terms such as 'righteous' and 'preachy' epitomise this new spirit. If you still need convincing,

next time you see your right-on friend snorting cocaine ask them how they feel about the untold damage such a habit does to South American communities. In their reaction, you will witness the extent to which respect for personal responsibility has given way to respect for personal freedom.

Our very natural human impulses have been rebranded and renamed with morally neutral terms to make them pal-

atable to the tastes of post-sixties Britain. Thus, a movement against the use of disrespectful and hurtful language has to masquerade as the spurious and euphemistic 'concept' of political correctness. Similarly, consideration for the well-being of others has been codified and transformed into the ideology of Health and Safety. Paperwork has replaced consciences as the regulatory force of our society. Obviously, the aims of Political Correctness and Health and Safety are admirable, but it is the dehumanised way in which we have to refer to them which makes them unappealing.

Received wisdom now states that morality solely implies conservative values such as sexual purity or respect

for authority. This forgets values such as consideration for others and toleration which are crucial to the functioning of a social democracy.

As a result, morality is now the preserve of the political right, taking the distasteful form of tabloid hysteria against paedophiles and criminals. Cameron has been extremely savvy in recognising this with his mantra of 'Broken Britain'. This summer he captured the public imagination with his claim that we have become a society "where nobody will tell the truth any more about what is good and bad."

However, for progressives there are some glimpses of hope for building a moral code in a secular nation. One of the least recognised features of Obama's whole campaign was that it shone with soaring moral rhetoric. He claimed that the fundamental belief which makes America work is compassion – the idea that "I am my brother's keeper." Lastly, as easy as it is to laugh at them, the radical environmentalist movement should be admired. It is infused with a self-sacrificing willingness to live lightly on the land in an age of growing global population, and diminishing resources.

Maybe it is woefully hopeful to expect these choice examples to be the beginning of a change, but there is one thing about good behaviour that cannot be denied – it is contagious.



Tom Bird

The drugs do work

Banning Modafinil is denying technology's progress

From about 1811 to 1817, a group of skilled English labourers, mostly textile workers, formed secret bands under the leadership of 'General Ludd', or 'King Ludd' as he was sometimes known. The Luddites were neither quixotic dissidents nor champions of the simple life opposed to technology for the love of nature. Instead, members would systematically smash the kinds of machinery they saw as a threat to their craft and trade. Their struggle had nothing to do with Romantic ideals and everything to do with self-interest. The Luddites opposed progress because it threatened their way of life. A skill that was once the preserve of the guild was now available to the masses. Mind-enhancing drugs are the mechanised looms of today.

What drugs like Modafinil deliver is a level of concentration that is usually conferred exclusively and capriciously on that person who is in the library all day, every day, and gets a first at the end of the year. Alertness is a gift. And Cephalon, the pharmaceutical company behind the pills, wants to share that gift with the world.

It might be that it is a gift that you don't want to accept. Or perhaps you've found something that already does the trick: "Sorry Cephalon, I'm with Costa." Or maybe you're that person who is in the library all day, every day, and who actually, come to think of it (and thinking comes easily to fortunate you), quite likes the advantage that exclusivity entails. We're mostly conservative at Cambridge, and we're most conservative at the top.

While the case against Modafinil is often expressed in medical language – "there must be long-term side effects; we just can't take the risk" – it disguises a prejudice against progress that is really at work. At the

heart of the debate is a fierce class(room) war. Those who profess to stress nurture over nature – who celebrate an educational system that underpins a meritocracy – are unwilling, on the whole, to bless a drug that might yet level the playing field further. But liberals should not be Luddites.

Many of the legitimate concerns about these drugs are all in the head.

In November 2002, the University was proud to announce its part in the breakthrough: "Cambridge researchers have identified a stimulant, Modafinil, that improves mental ability without tiredness side effects."

Since then, clinical trials have established the safety of the drug.

It is now prescribed for a wide range of conditions

such as narcolepsy and shift work sleep disorder. Negative side effects are rare. And while Modafinil is currently available only on prescription in the UK, it is legal to purchase from foreign companies and is not listed in the Misuse of Drugs Act. As Barbara Sahakian, Professor of Clinical

Neuropsychology, states, "This is one of the first drugs where it doesn't seem to have abuse potential. It seems to be a good enhancing agent with minimal side-effects." I'm only trying to sweeten the pill.

Given that Modafinil is a safe drug – and no more dangerous, at any rate, than the addictive, psychoactive stimulant caffeine – it seems only fair that people should be able to use it.

A ban might be justified if the drug had detrimental effects, but the real gripe opponents have with the drug is precisely that it works. There is some sort of misanthropic desire for karma: it might raise your alertness, but by God they hope it stifles your creativity; it might keep you working right up till midnight, but they're praying you'll pay for it the next day.

Modafinil will not make Einsteins of us all. But it might allow some to fulfil a potential frustrated by short attention spans or poor short term memory. Whether to deprive students of the ability to take the drug is a decision that will ultimately be taken by people who did not need Modafinil to get to the top.

Yet when the question is raised, as it inevitably will, as to whether society should sanction the use of 'smart drugs', it is important that the neo-Luddites are shown up for what they are. If society is to progress – and if equality of opportunity is not reduced to a political slogan – then a judgment must be made based on the evidence alone. Otherwise the blind will be leading the dumb, even if the latter aren't really paying attention.



Spk yr brains

The Wit and Wisdom of the World Wide Web



Week 8: Uni Challenge

No surprise. Our whole education system is lost in technicalities and misses the point. From our politically dominated, target, exam obsessed schools, now to University Challenge. Sam Kay was a student and had expected to remain so, but things changed. So what? Bankers who deliberately cheat the public of billions get huge bonuses.

CL, Glasgow

I blame Gordon Brown and Tracey Playle for this mess.

GriffEric, Cam

"ignorantia juris non excusat"

latin_luvva

So it seems that cheating has made its way unto the upper echelons of society. a sad day for a country that once owned an empire. I see Oxbridge is alive and well, though, denying basic freedoms (enshrined in magna carta) to the hard woking mum or dad on a council estate whos struggling to make ends meet as they sweep up the mess from gordon "one eye" bnrowns' recession. JEREMY CLARKSON a true british patriot and 4x4 driver (nto like these homosexual sissies who will wimp out of an opportunity to drive a car that pollutes given half a cjhance...!) was spot on when he said that the recession wud vreep into all areas of british life. The number of speed cameras has DOUBLED as a result. it's political correctness gone mad, and where has british decency gone? Down the toilet, of course. I hang my head in shame as I feel sick to m y stomach.

honesttaxpayer, bedford

Rules are rules. they will now go to the EU court of human rights to protest, of course!

EnglishnotBritish (or european)

BRAVE JADE has spent her life in the spotlight, working hard to support her family in these difficult times. So why - WHY, i ask u - are we focusing on these nobodies who've taken part in a quiz?? Where's the talent in appearing on teevee and answering questions about science? it hasn't helped jade live, has it?, and now her kids r going to be without a mutha. Jack Tweed is proper sexi though, so i'm not 100% upset. but u got him first jade LOL

cervicallover, London



Julien Domercq

president

With WILL and DETERMINATION it is possible to achieve great things at the Union. I spent the last four terms helping to run many events, like the visit of Boris Berezovsky, and successfully inviting Stephen Frears and Trevor Nunn. We need a MORE INFORMAL AND ACCESSIBLE UNION. I want to insure that every member of the University can take part in Union events, regardless of their political ideals or means. If elected, I will put all my energy in ensuring that the Union provides relevant, up-to-date and meaningful political debates, is accessible, and also a constant supply of fun!

re-open nominations

president

Caroline Cummins

treasurer

I will be devoted to bringing real results for members as Treasurer. As Director of Publicity and a Steward of the President's Committee, I have experienced what's great about the Union and what needs to change. I will be committed to creating a long-term approach to sponsorship to ensure we make the most of all opportunities. Treasurer's Treats will be expanded and promoted widely so everyone benefits from the perks of their membership. As a member of Standing Committee, I will strive to ensure we provide prestigious political debates that fulfil the Union's potential as a centre for significant debate.

re-open nominations

treasurer

External Committee Candidates

(6 positions to be elected, chosen by Single Transferrable Vote)

Louise Anthony

Anna Harper

Phillip Heller

Nick King

Maeve O'Sullivan

David Staines

Caroline Stamp-Dod

Christopher Stanton

James Wakely

re-open nominations

Andrew Chapman

senior officer

IDEAS...The promise of free-speech means the Union must be somewhere every student can find a voice. As Senior Officer I'd work to make this happen by arranging speakers that reflect Cambridge's diversity, attracting new members and re-engaging existing ones. My links with Oscar-nominated actress Imelda Staunton, Sky-Sports Directors, and politicians will bring in big names too.

EXPERIENCE...I ran the Union's Schools Debating-Competition this year. Our access programme to get more state-schools debating saw the competition's size increase from 320 to 750 teams. Worked with large-organisations, coordinating a team of 160+ volunteers, engaged under-represented groups and chased people up for nine-months.

re-open nominations

senior officer

Jan-Jonathan Bock

standing committee

As Officer on Standing Committee, I am going to link various fields to design a new and creative approach. One of my aims: to run THEMED WEEKS, such as AFRICA, bringing together politicians, artists, and intellectuals in debates and talks, supported by music, art exhibitions and cuisine. I am going to develop an extended OUTREACH SCHEME for Freshers' Week, to guarantee the future of the Union - something both old and new members will benefit from. My experience as President of a major CU Society, as well as being a May Ball Employment Officer will help me implementing these plans.

re-open nominations

standing committee

Teddy Sun

entertainment officer

As Ents Officer, I wish to improve the QUALITY and VARIETY of Ents on offer and use this opportunity to give back to the society. My experience as DIRECTOR OF EVENT MANAGEMENT for Lent 2009 has demonstrated my competency managing events at the Union. I shall take this role forward by building on the quality of past successes such as Cocktail and Jazz nights and the Christmas Party as well as improving the range of Ents on offer with CLASSICAL MUSIC RECITALS, ART EXHIBITIONS and a HALLOWEEN MURDER MYSTERY PARTY, aiming to appeal to a variety of members.

re-open nominations

entertainment officer

Voting will take place online and will include all Union members who receive email notifications. Expect to receive an electronic ballot in your primary Union contact email some time before the election.

Enquiries about the election, including questions about electronic voting and election practice should be directed to ro@cus.org

Online Election Date & Times:

Mon 9 March

10am - 9pm

MAGAZINE

THIS WEEK IN THE MAGAZINE: SOCIALIST NICK COHEN CRITICISES THE LEFT / OLIVER LETWIN ON TORY SOCIAL POLICY / CHEEK BY JOWL / FASHIONABLE HATS / SPURIOUS MAGICIANS / ART / SEX



Photograph of the week by *Tim Johns*



“Catriona Cahill rehearses in the ADC Theatre for Dave Brown’s production of *Hamlet*, the white of her costume shining out from the deep black of the stage, giving this image a somewhat ghostly feel. The slow shutter abstracts and disguises who it actually is and what is going on, leaving it to the viewer’s imagination to create their own story behind it. In many ways, both photography and the theatre are art forms concerned with representation and perception, in which the eye of the beholder is all-important.”

If you have a potential Photograph of the week, send it to features@varsity.co.uk



My week by Vanessa Urquhart, student politician*

Wednesday

I skim my favourite passage from Volume Two of Margaret’s biography and pencil an admiring note in the margin. Then, after polishing the buttons on my reddest suit, I dash to a power breakfast with the team. My campaign manager is Ronald, a Yank from John’s whose father got Clinton re-elected. Then there’s Connie, a Newnham political ‘enthusiast’ who has been linked to the resignation of three JCR Presidents and is intimately acquainted with at least half of CUSU Council. Christopher, my other half and supposed publicity chief, drops his tea when I come in

and bumbles nervously. We make real progress with my re-vamped hustings speech (Ronald dubs it “Churchillian”) and Connie has found that another Presidential candidate has a rather unexpected fetish, which could be very damaging if it got out to the voting public. I never even knew you could do that with Lego. Ronald also tells me I have to stop wearing clothes the colour of blood. Will make a note.

Saturday

‘Lego-Gate’, as it has been dubbed, has made the front page of both newspapers, and so one of my opponents made a hasty exit from the election scramble. Nasty business, but had to be done. In other news, Ronald has

made a scale map of all the Colleges, and sticks a little Union Jack beside successful hustings locations. There was a slight problem at King’s when I voiced distaste at the occupation of the Law Faculty and a dreadlocked ruffian screamed “Fascist”, but luckily Ronald had the foresight to hire crowd control from the Blues wrestling squad, so he was dealt with. We have a night off from speech-making so I spend the evening with Christopher. He is stencilling posters that paint me in the style of Lord Kitchener, and I catch up on my Machiavelli. I shall miss moments like this when I am in office.

Tuesday

Public relations disaster. An insig-

nificant event from my school days at Cheltenham has been horribly exaggerated and posted on the election blogs. I have protested that I was as surprised as anyone at the discovery of anthrax in that tapioca pudding, but regardless Felicity Davis never had the foreign policy knowledge to be Head Girl. Luckily Ronald says the damage should be limited, as “Evil is my selling point,” and I’ve started wearing bottle-green suits. I calm myself by writing a vicious editorial in my defence and vowing to keep the adolescent volumes of my political diaries better hidden. In the evening I am encouraged by the team to visit a local ‘night club’. I sip water and watch the seething mass of student humanity – sometimes I am utterly

baffled by my contemporaries.

Thursday

Victory! Barring any upsets in the vote recount, I am President of the Cambridge University Student’s Union. I pose for photographs with Christopher, and answer questions from some vile hack, although the *Telegraph* has expressed interest in my writing them a weekly column. Walk through Clare with Ronald as the sun is setting, and he tells me this is only the beginning. I go home and listen to the 1812 Overture on the gramophone while reading *The Art of War*. Long live democracy.

* As told to Victoria Beale

LION KING ADVENTURE (STARTS HERE): Your name is Simba, you’re a lion, and you’re running for CUSU President. Crazy shit. Speaking of which, the Presidential Hustings in imminent and you’re shitting bricks - crazy bricks. You need to up your concentration. »p14 Take some Modafinil. You hear it works wonders on the concentration. »p15 Sing ‘Hakuna Matata’.

Ed at large

EDITOR-AT-LARGE ED CUMMING TASTES THE PORKY DELIGHTS OF GRANMENTIRA, HONESTLY THE BEST RESTAURANT IN CAMBRIDGE

There's a moment in *The Thick Of It* where the put-upon Conservative shadow minister expresses his disgust of the internet to a junior aide: "Have you ever Googled yourself?" he asks; "It's like opening the door to a room filled with people who hate you."

As I have discovered this week, he couldn't have been more right. In addition to my other duties, you see, I have been keeping a blog about Arsenal called UpForGrabsNow, and have come to two (2.0?) conclusions about the internet.

Firstly, the odds of someone making rhetorical recourse to Nazism increase by a factor of three for every person who posts a 'comment'. I say 'comment' rather than comment because I don't think "Fuck off" is, particularly, a commentary on anything much.

Secondly, the internet proves that there are too many stupid people in the world. Previously, if you were a stupid person and published something stupid, you could be fairly sure that someone clever would come along eventually and correct you, and the world would even out again. This is no longer so. You can now make up any old twaddle, no matter how dangerously moronic, and when you go online to check on yourself you'll find an army of byte-sized acolytes, ready to go and tell people they got pwned and that they're anti-Israeli for you.

I suppose the point is thank goodness for newspapers like this one with

their high standards of quality and accuracy, not to mention their refreshingly generous stance on toilet humour (see last week).

Anyway, I had a rogueish scheme this week, which I'm only telling you about because I haven't actually done it, so you've gotten off lightly. This



scheme, derived from a combination of my own poverty and a cartoonish sense of whimsy, involved inventing a restaurant and reviewing it. This restaurant would sell all sorts of weird foods and be staffed by very strange people, and all in all would make for a most diverting read. There was a productive editorial meeting all about it:

"I think I should make up a restaurant this week."

"Why would you do that?"

"Might be funny."

"Not so much."

"But you make up all the news."

"Goodbye."

In the end, of course, I digressed and went out with a friend who had been greatly moved by the University

is quite an innocent time for humans to go to the cinema, only to find that when they get out the mall has closed and there is no way to escape except down an escalator and then down an alleyway where you might, if you were so inclined, lean against a grimy wall taking heroin for a fortnight before you were found.

If you carry on down this alleyway, turn left at a shoeshop and carry on for a bit, you reach an innocuous-looking (aren't they all?) white building. This is not innocuous at all. For this is Granmentira, and it's the best place I've eaten this term. I ate a pork chop which was, well, porky, and the chum ate a burger, which he said was "nice", and much better than the burger he'd had at Gourmet Burger Kitchen, which is the only restaurant outside of Gattwick Garfunkel's where you can pay £10 for a main course and have to go up to order it.

The mood was only slightly let down by the service, who became agitated when they realised we were reviewers:

"We don't want any trouble."

"Er, neither do we?"

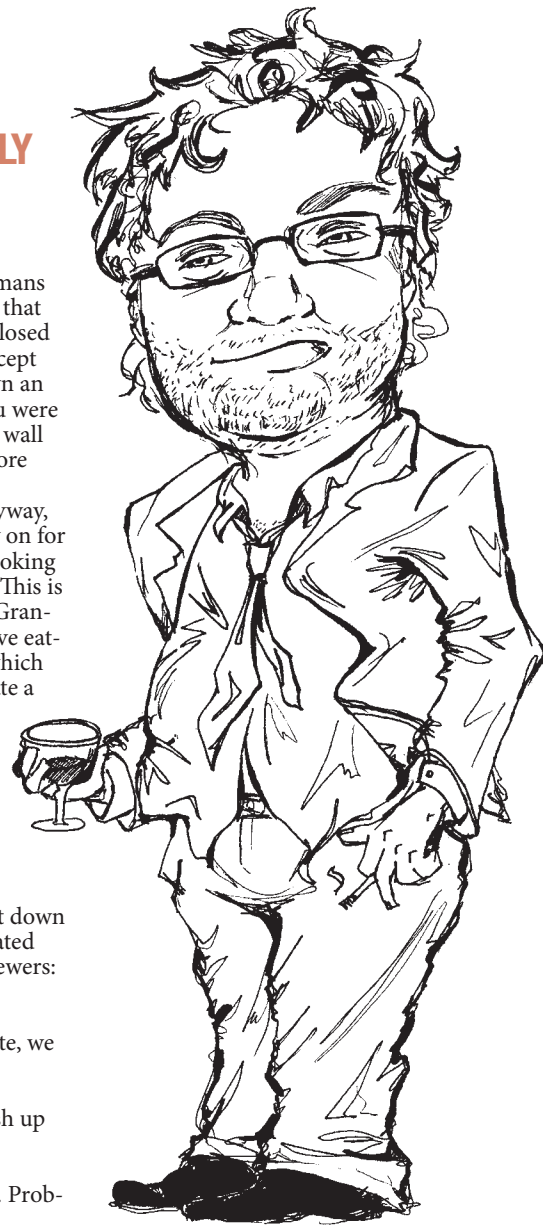
"No but we don't have a website, we keep a low profile."

"Don't you want business?"

"Look I think you should finish up and leave instantly."

"Sure, but..."

"But no." Then he scurried off. Probably to rearm himself, the Nazi.



La Grande Bouffe



Eight weeks have stomped past; you've written the essays, gone on the swaps, seen the bad plays, danced to cheese and are just about ready to return to Surbiton or Eaglescliffe with a host of anecdotes and fond memories. But before you put your bikini in your bag, you might like to think about celebrating your Lent term achievements, and what better way than with a valedictory meal? We've steamed and roasted at Varsity Towers to find some of the tastiest farewell dishes that you and your friends can cook up before you neglect each other over the ensuing holiday.

To paraphrase *Pink Flamingoes* (and why not?), not only are we the filthiest people in the world, but we are also the filthiest chefs in the world. That's why we've brought you such incongruous delights as trifle, tagine and tapioca pudding. Not strictly Lenten, being neither seasonal nor sacrificial, but you may notice that all our offerings are vegetarian. Don't panic though; this Ethical Affair doesn't include 'Tofurkey' (a pretend turkey product, for those of you unfamiliar with meat-free feasting). Dietary taboos have to start somewhere...

The recipes can be made easily in the most basic of 'gyp' rooms. By the

way, this is probably the most offensive piece of Cambridge slang. The only word it could be lengthened to is gypsy, and judging by the state of my kitchen, the implication is that all travellers are encrusted with rice-milk infused oats, and the odd salmon chunk. An unfair stereotype, I'm sure you'll agree. Then again, the only thing 'swap' can be lengthened to is: "Date-rape is sociably acceptable. We are all a bunch of dicks. Lets go and swap our bodily fluids." And that's not great either.



But I digress. Get a few localised friends, pressgang them into bringing a course and start a grassroots dinner party. Or breakfast party. There's nothing like being woken up to trifle and light conversation in bed.

BECAUSE GLUTTONY SOUNDS SO MUCH BETTER IN FRENCH...

Trifle

Sponge cake
Sherry or white wine
Tinned fruit – chopped and drained
Custard (ready-made)
Double cream
Flaked almonds/chocolate/angelica

1. Break the cake up (a swiss roll will do) in the bottom of a glass bowl.
2. Pour enough booze over it to soak.
3. Layer the tinned fruit of your choice atop the cake.
4. Spoon the custard over it.
5. Whip up the cream until it stands in soft peaks, and spoon over the custard.
6. Finish with toasted almonds, grated chocolate, or the angelica for that 70s housewife feel.

Tapioca Pudding

3 cups of milk
1/3 cup of tapioca (rice-like stuff)
2 egg yolks
1/4 teaspoon of salt
1/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon of vanilla

1. Soak tapioca in milk for an hour.
2. Put everything in a bowl.
3. Bring mixture to boil for fifteen minutes and then simmer for another twenty. You know it's ready when the tapioca has become translucent.
4. Serve when warm and then be happy because it tastes nice.



Vegetable Tagine

2 tbsp light olive oil, or sunflower oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 tsp ground cinnamon
2 sweet potatoes, cut into 2-inch chunks
1 large aubergine, similarly chunked
1 tin chopped tomatoes
1 tsp harissa paste (or more, depending on your capacity for chilli)
A handful of dried apricots, chopped
Parsley to serve, roughly chopped

Fry onion in a heavy saucepan, and when it begins to soften add the cinnamon. Stir until coated and aromatic, then add the sweet potato, aubergine, and tinned tomatoes. Follow this with the harissa paste and dried apricots, and mix gently. Reduce the heat and simmer until the vegetables are tender, about 40 minutes.

Serve with a cous cous cooked in vegetable stock, and festooned with raisins and toasted almonds. Eat with friends (serves four) and booze, and hopefully have sex afterwards.

And for those of you who are following a gospel that precludes butter, sugar and eggs, here's a more wholesome, slightly loaf-y, sort of gastronomy:

Vegan Carrot Cake

2 cups whole wheat flour (or spelt flour, if you're so bold)
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
¼ tsp salt
1 ¼ cups water
1 cup dates
1 ½ cups raisins
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp ground ginger
½ tsp ground cloves
½ tsp ground nutmeg
1 cup carrot, grated
¾ cup walnuts, chopped
½ cup orange juice

1. In a small bowl mix flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, and salt and set aside
2. Combine water, dried fruit and spices in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and gently simmer for 5 minutes
3. Place grated carrots in a bowl and pour hot fruit mixture over them. Allow to cool completely
4. Add the walnuts and orange juice to carrot bowl and mix well
5. Add the dry to the wet ingredients and stir well to combine. Pour the batter into a lightly greased cake tin.
6. Bake at gas mark 6 for 45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the centre comes out clean.

Disclaimer: this one probably won't lead to sex.

LION KING ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): Big blunder. The pill makes you concentrate, for sure, but on completely the wrong stuff: you spend the next three hours sharpening pencils. The upshot is that though you've got a whole load of HBs ready to rumble, you're nevertheless massively late for the hustings. Rescue the situation. »p16 Read from the Bible. »p17 Hand out free pencils.

Bruce Almighty

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN WILL FINALLY BE HEADLINING GLASTONBURY THIS SUMMER; SUPERFAN MICKY ALEXANDER EXPLAINS WHY THE BOSS IS GOD

Bruce Springsteen is not the most fashionable guy to like. Unfortunately most music fans seem to be stuck with the image of 80s Bruce, circa *Born In The USA*, as a stadium rocker who writes identikit songs about girls, cars, cars, girls and the occasional motorbike. How wrong they are.

I should state at this point that my appreciation for Bruce Springsteen is not bounded by logic or proportion. I once had an argument with a friend over whether Bruce Springsteen was as important to me as Jesus was to him. I definitely won.

That friend was a Roman Catholic. Springsteen himself is a lapsed Catholic, as much of the imagery in his songs attests – listen to ‘Lost in the Flood’, or one of the innumerable songs featuring a girl named Mary. I think I can best explain the impact of Springsteen upon me with recourse to Catholic theology. Orthodox Catholicism states that those who embrace the teachings of the Church go to Heaven, those who

reject it go to Hell, and those who are never exposed to them – unbaptised babies and the like – go to Limbo.

Well, many face the same sort of test on meeting me. If you love Springsteen, then welcome aboard. If you hate him, then I’m sorry, but you’re own words have condemned you. If you’ve never really heard his music, outside of perhaps ‘Born In The USA’, I’m afraid you are in Limbo, relationship-wise.

That’s not even to mention the various heresies, of which the most widespread must be the Dylanite heresy; he is a prophet, not the messiah.

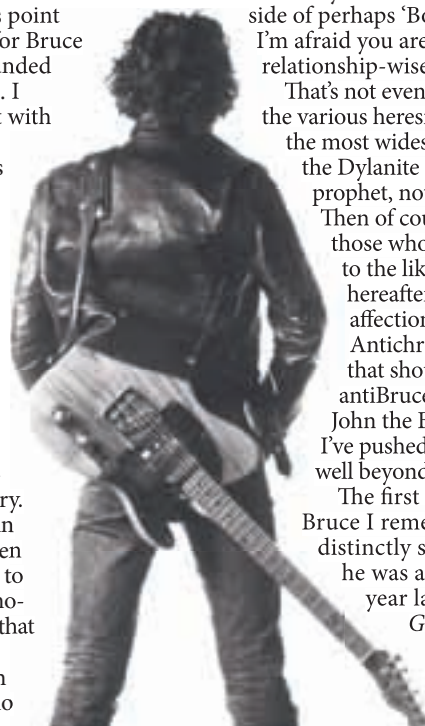
Then of course there are those who compare Bruce to the likes of Billy Joel, hereafter referred to affectionately as the Antichrist. Or maybe that should be the antiBruce...is Tom Waits John the Baptist? I think I’ve pushed this metaphor well beyond breaking point.

The first time I heard Bruce I remember being distinctly surprised that he was a white guy. A year later I saw the *Greatest Hits* on sale and recognising the name I

thought it was worth a punt. I listened to that CD over and over again, and a couple of days later I went out and bought *Live In New York*. Then, over the next few weeks, I bought up every Springsteen CD I could find – all different, each brilliant. The overly-verbose lyrics of *Greetings From Asbury Park*; the starkness of *Nebraska* or *Darkness on the Edge of Town*; the pure rock ‘n’ roll of *Born To Run*; the stadium pomp of *Born In The USA*; the jazzy epics of *The Wild, The Innocent & The E Street Shuffle*; and the bittersweet *Tunnel of Love*. They were like new worlds, each one.

The six best gigs I have attended in my life have been the six times I have seen Springsteen. As good as he is on the record, Springsteen live is something else. And now, he’s playing Glastonbury. I don’t know how he’ll work at a festival, considering the shortest set I’ve seen him do was two and three-quarter hours, and the longest was well over four, but let’s set aside such petty quibbles. If you get anywhere near a ticket, then all I can say is, sell any organ you can feasibly live without to get it. You won’t regret it.

Oh, and I suppose I should recommend a track for those of you who want to get to know Bruce better. There’s far too many to choose from, but how about ‘Racing In The Streets’? It’s a haunting and bleak ballad about loss, life, and, er...girls and cars.



THE CAMBRIDGE INVADER

**MISSION: TO DELVE INTO CAMBRIDGE’S SECRET ORIFICES
WEEK 8: GIRTON COLLEGE BAR**

My College bar closed on Tuesday. The new one is opening today, and it’s bigger and shinier and better, but nonetheless Tuesday night was very much seen as The End, as swathes of students old and new poured into the very limited space for a final nostalgic (and doomed) attempt to secure a lock-in, and drunkenly to sing College songs with misty-eyed enthusiasm and little in the way of coherent melody. Think the Pogues if half of them were actually English public school veterans. Oh, wait, yeah: think the Pogues.

As the final closure approached, panic set in. What would we do for two whole days without a cheap bar at stumbling distance? We were fairly sure this constituted a civil rights infringement. Fortunately I had a suggestion. “I know of a place,” I said. “A bar far, far away where few students have ever ventured before.” The others raised a sceptical eyebrow. “‘Tis called Girton,” I said. There was a hushed silence. A few of the elders shook their wizened heads. One leaned in conspiratorially, whispering over his ale like an ancient sailor. “Have ye heard the tale,” he hissed, “of the Girton Threesome?” No. I hadn’t. And I didn’t believe it. But

now I was more determined than ever to pursue the seldom trodden path to this remote Mecca of debauchery.

The taxi pulled up outside what appeared to be a stately home. J and I hovered, suddenly feeling very isolated and vulnerable. I was reminded of the orgy scene in *Eyes Wide Shut* and wondered if I should have brought a mask.

We made our way through labyrinthine hallways and down a staircase into an underground bar which faintly resembled an S & M dungeon, all red uplighters, tucked away booths and exposed brick archways. We were the only people there. The bar lady surveyed us silently with a look that said, “You’re not from these parts...” and, fearing that our hacked up bodies might one day be discovered under the charmingly unlevelled flooring, we secured a bottle of wine and retreated to a corner.

An hour passed. I began to hallucinate tumbleweed. A few people turned up, but all seemed rather docile. Tentative enquiries revealed that the Master’s efforts to prevent any ents being organised has led to a general disillusionment with College socialising, and many Girtonians eschew the bar for local pubs. I later

discovered from an ex-member of my College that he’d been banned from the premises after announcing that the Mistress was a “fit little tart” during a formal dinner, which may or may not have had something to do with it. Regardless, I felt let down.

We finished our wine and called a taxi to take us to Cindies. As we made to leave, however, there was a sudden influx of people, establishing a highly satisfactory male-female ratio. Perhaps we were making a mistake? Just then, two strapping gents (previously un-clocked) blocked our path. “You can’t leave now!” they cried, “THE SHOW’S JUST BEGINNING!” ... and proceeded to strip, rapidly, to their boxer shorts. This was more like it. The bar lady nodded at the trousers around their ankles and snapped, “pull them up or take them out” with an unsurprised irritation which suggested the scene was commonplace. J and I began to reconsider our decision. Cindies, however, beckoned, and unable to persuade the men in question to accompany us, and unwilling to pass up our taxi to pay homage to the site of the – apparently real – threesome, we reluctantly departed. But we will be back.



Competition ~~adc theatre~~

Each week we set a different creative writing exercise. The person who submits the winning entrance has their story printed in the next week’s Varsity, and is rewarded with two free tickets to an ADC Theatre show.

Week 8: Triolets. A triolet should rhyme abaaabab. It also uses repeated lines – line 1 becomes lines 4 and 7, and line 2 is repeated as line 8. In a good triolet, the meaning of the lines should be subtly different when repeated: don’t be afraid to change punctuation, etc.

Winner:
A Trio of Triolets

Morning Triolet - Country

Daffodils grow by a ruined arch,
That casts a dull colour over them
As it halts the sunrise. It is March;
Daffodils grow. By a ruined arch
A backpacker collapses, throat parched,
Drains his bottle and chews a grass stem.
Daffodils grow by a ruined arch,
That casts a dull colour over them.

Morning Triolet – Town

Dishwater douses the cobbles, poured from
A second-floor window, as someone shouts.
A pair of tracksuit trousers bounce, legs strong.
Dishwater douses the cobbles; poured from
A bucket held in cold thick hands, soap-worn.
The sun has hours yet to burn through those clouds.
Dishwater douses the cobbles, poured from
A second story window as someone shouts.

Penitent’s Triolet

Somewhere under my weakness are my real wants:
A prism-soul that reads its acts and comes to know
Their secret qualities. Pray: that a clean spring runs
Somewhere. Under my weakness? Are my real wants
Where that clarity is found? Take me to the font.
Let drops beat even rhythm with my yes and no.
Somewhere, under my weakness, are my real wants.
A prism-soul: that reads, that acts, that comes to know.

Hugh Burling

Runner-up:

In the Villain’s Lair

Mr Bond, I presume?
Being shot is too good for you.
And no grand tomb,
Mr Bond.

I presume
you will not escape your doom?

Danger is a thrill for you,
Mr Bond. I presume
being shot is too.

Good for you

Philippa Steele

Final competition: An exercise by John Gardner: A man is waiting at a bus stop. He has just learned that his son has died violently. Describe the setting from the man’s point of view without telling your reader what has happened. How will the street look? What are the sounds? Odours? Colours? What will his clothes feel like? Send submissions to Colette Sensier at literary@varsity.co.uk by April 18th for the chance to win two tickets to the first ADC show of next term, and to see your work printed in the last regular issue of the year!

LION KING ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): “Hakuna Matata,” you incant. “What a wonderful phrase. Hakuna matata! Ain’t no passing craze. Hakuna matata! It means no worries, for the rest of your days.” But this does go down when with your opponent. “That’s not a policy,” he argues. “That’s just a line from *The Lion King*. »p20 Point out that this is ok because you are in fact the Lion King. »p21 Change tack and talk about the Beijing Olympics.

THE VARSITY WEEK

THE COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS

Theatre

Ongoing:
Romeo and Juliet
Derek: The Footlights Spring Revue
The Chairs
Seven Jewish Children
Father/Son
The Vampire
Cardenio
Sodom
Historical Fiction
The Water Bears
The Boyfriend
Read the reviews on p26-7 and at
varsity.co.uk/reviews.

Sunday 8th
The Sunday Night Sketch Show
Keynes Hall, Kings' College: 9.30pm (£2)
Sundays used to be famous for churchgoing, roast dinners and not much else, but ask anyone today and they'll tell you that Sunday = sketch comedy.

Tuesday 10th
Guys and Dolls
ADC: 7.45pm, Saturday matinee 2.30pm (£7-£10)
The big Broadway musical that's put a smile on the face of millions of theatregoers worldwide. Runs until Sat 21st.

The Real Thing
Corpus Playroom: 7pm (£5-£6)
See Pick of the Week. Runs until Sat 14th.

Wednesday 11th
Barry, Pull Your Finger Out!
ADC: 11pm (£4-£6)
This brand spanking new comic play by Daran Johnson is the 2009 Harry Porter Winner and is not to be missed. Runs until Sat 14th.

Miscellaneous Theatre Festival
Judith E. Wilson Drama Studio: 7pm (free)
This ridiculously exciting event features loads of new work from some of Cambridge's finest student writers. Runs until Fri 13th.

Music & Nightlife

Friday 6th
Jazz@Johns Party Event
Fisher Building, St John's: 9pm (£5)
This term's Party Event features three great bands with CU Jazz Orchestra headlining. Promises to be a great place to chill out and relax with some jazz and a couple of drinks, but there's also plenty of space for a bit of dancing!

Saturday 7th
Churchill Jazz Band
Churchill College, Wolfson Hall: 8pm (£2-£4)
Quality big band entertainment including swing, funk and Latin.

Sunday 8th
Live Modern Jazz with the Andy Bowie Quartet
Cricketers, 18 Melbourne Place: 8.30pm (free)
The gig lives on!



Tuesday 10th
Patrick Wolf
The Junction 1: 8pm (£11.50 adv.)
See last week's Varsity for our interview with the enigmatic Mr Wolf (above), who brings his amazing multi-instrumentalism to Cambridge for one night and one night only.

Thursday 12th
Soundcheck
Fitzwilliam College: 9pm (£6)
MJ Cole and DJ Frankly Sick head the bill at Fitz's always-great Soundcheck.

Art & Classical

Ongoing Exhibitions
Fitzwilliam Museum (free):
• 'I turned it into a palace': Sir Sydney Cockerell and the Fitz (until Tues 17th)
• The Immortal Stone – Chinese jades (until May 31st)
• Changing faces: Anthony Van Dyck as an etcher (until May 31st)
• Kachōfūgetsu – the natural world in Japanese prints (until May 17th, see p29)
Kettle's Yard (free):
• The Roundhouse Of International Spirits (until Sun 15th)

Friday 6th
The Queen Mary Consort
St John's College Chapel: 8pm (£3-£5, free for TCMS members)
Specialising in contemporary works neglected by most chapel choirs, this collection of Cambridge choral scholars will be performing MacMillan, Saxton, and Lukaszewski.

Saturday 7th
CUMS Chorus with PRIME BRASS
Trinity College Chapel: 8pm (£5-£15)
Cambridge based professionals, Prime Brass, will perform a range of 20th- and 21st-century works with CUMS Chorus.

Sunday 8th
CU Chinese Orchestra Society (CU-COS) Lent Term concert
Queens Building Auditorium, Emmanuel College: 4pm or 8pm, (£3-£6)
Award-winning harmonica virtuoso Jia-Ye He performs Chinese and Taiwanese folk songs and his own compositions.

Tuesday 10th
Simon Trpceski
The Theatre, Peterhouse: 8.30pm (£15)
This could be your last chance to see an incredible young talent in such an intimate setting. Royal Philharmonic Young Artist Award-winner Trpceski will be playing pianistic favourites by Debussy, Chopin and Prokofiev.



Talks & Events

Friday 6th
Why has the Indian State locked up the good doctor?
Keynes Hall, King's: 6pm (free)
See Pick of the Week.

Saturday 7th
Mastana
Corn Exchange: 7pm (£10-£14)
Head to Cambridge's 'greatest Asian Cultural Arts Show' (below), the 12th annual event hosted by the CU Hindu Cultural Society.



Monday 9th
'You can change the world – through prayer'
Darwin Room, Pitt Building, Trumpington Street: 7.30pm (free)
A free lecture by Lyle Young, CSB.

Wolfson Howler
Wolfson College Bar: 8pm (£6, £2 for Wolfson students)
More laughs a minute than you can throw a pun at, with Steve Hall headlining and Ed Gamble MCing.

Tuesday 10th
Sprung! '09
Fitzpatrick Hall Queens' College: 8pm (£4-£5)
A showcase of new works in dance and film.

'Creativity: Beyond the Self'
MCR Room, Newnham College: 7.30pm (free)
Presented by the Arts Society, Newnham College. The internationally-acclaimed sculptor Helaine Blumenfeld will be talking about 'madness' and about finding and escaping the self in relation to creative processes.

Film

The Class
Arts Picturehouse: (daily) 1pm (not Tues), 3.45pm (not Sat/Sun), 6pm (Sun only), 6.30pm (not Sat/Sun)
Palme d'Or-winning flick about the pressures faced by teachers and pupils in the school of a tough Parisian neighbourhood.

Gran Torino
Vue: (daily) 1pm, 3.40pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm
The man with the most intimidating voice in cinema returns to clean up the filthy streets of suburban America. It's Dirty Harry with lawnmowers, and Clint is out for blood. See review p29.

The International
Vue: 12.20pm (Sat/Sun only), 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.30pm, 11.20pm (Fri/Sat only)
Clive Owen and Naomi Watts negotiate lots of jump-cuts while trying to expose an evil financial organisation (boo hiss!) who secretly deal in weapons and secrets.

Watchmen
Arts Picturehouse: Fri/Sat, 11pm, 2.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.45pm; Sun-Thurs: 1.45pm, 5pm, 8.15pm
Highly anticipated adaptation of the acclaimed graphic novel. Superheroes with no superpowers, a villain who wants world peace and a blue demigod who prefers Mars to Earth.

The Young Victoria
Arts Picturehouse: (daily) 12.00 (except Weds), 2.40, 6.50, 9.10
Emily Blunt, Paul Bettany and, strangely, Princess Beatrice all make an appearance in the new film about rich dead British people and the power of love/corsets. Do say: "Oh my, I was quite carried away by the romance of it all." Don't say: "Isn't this just Elizabeth with rosier cheeks?"

St. John's Film
Sunday 8th: 7pm and 10pm
Frost/Nixon



The Real Thing
Tues 10th - Sat 14th
Corpus Playroom: 7pm (£5-£6)
Henry is a successful playwright trying to write a play about the true nature of love. Does he even know what that is? Henry and his wife Charlotte, their friends Max and Annie, and a jailed political activist named Brodie collide and their lives will never be the same. Tom Stoppard's crackling and hilarious dialogue frames this deep exploration of love, art and joy.

Why has the Indian State locked up the good doctor?
Friday 6th
Keynes Hall, King's: 6pm (free)
Since May 2007, award-winning paediatrician and human rights activist Binayak Sen has been held in Indian jail on false charges for attempting to expose governmental corruption. This is a special film screening on Dr Sen, followed by a talk with his wife Ilima Sen. Come and be part of a movement to demand his release.



Conservatism with a human face

IS OLIVER LETWIN THE MAN TO CURE BRITAIN OF ITS SOCIAL ILLS? AFTER SPEAKING AT THE EMMANUEL COLLEGE POLITICS SOCIETY, HE EXPLAINED TO MOYA TILLY SARNER HOW THE CONSERVATIVES CAN FULFIL LABOUR'S AIMS THROUGH DIFFERENT MEANS

Former Shadow Home Secretary, former Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, present Chairman of the Conservative Research Department and Policy Review, and future Secretary of State? If the polls and Labour's self-immolation are anything to go by, Oliver Letwin will wield considerable power in the next government of the United Kingdom.

Letwin is widely regarded as one of the country's most intellectual politicians – “a very damaging accusation”, he smilingly deflects; and his top-class education at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, has lent his thought a tenor that verges dangerously on the academic. How does he bridge that gap, I ask, from the ivory towers, the theoretical, and the books, to the practice of politics, people, and their very real problems? “I don't see academia and politics as two worlds. Of course practising scholarship is different from practising politics. But serious, grown-up exploration of ethical, philosophical, historical, and anthropological ideas, which is the kind of academic work I was involved in, means thinking in ways which have an effect on how we see and do things. And similarly, serious, grown-up politics means thinking about how we ought to see and do things, and not just doing them. There is a vital need for people who will conduct the discussion that lies between scholarship and administration, in order to connect the two, because otherwise we lose all the benefits of thought when we come to do the most important thing we ever do, which is to organise our own society.”

This blend of academic rigour and practical politics found form during Letwin's talk in his critique of New Labour's social policy. It is this discussion, amongst others, that he is direct-

ing as Chairman of the Conservative Policy Review, and which he hopes will pave his party's way from leading the debate to leading the country, transforming that “intellectual ascendancy” into electoral victory.

His analysis is certainly compelling; the government's bureaucracy locks people into dependency by treating them as a composite of disparate problems rather than as individuals in themselves. Those on benefits are constantly shunted from department to department, given conflicting advice by assorted bodies, with no regard for the whole picture. What is needed, he argues, is a consistent, cohesive, comprehensive approach, which treats the person as just that, so as to build a humanised, personalised, procedure which brings stability and progress to those whom it serves. Hard to argue with that; as someone who likes to consider herself left-wing, I found myself uncomfortably warming to what Letwin had to say. A Tory? Moi? Better knock back my last glass of champagne socialism while my internal inconsistency will still swallow it.

But Letwin soon soothes that fear of all things Conservative. Deliberately constructing a bipartisan backdrop to his policy analysis, he informs his audience that there is now no contrast between the aims of Cameron and those of New Labour; both seek to reduce poverty, increase social mobility, and improve public services. Both parties share the same progressive objectives; the difference lies in the means by which they intend to reach them.

Letwin (whilst at University a member of the Liberal Club) has climbed into bed with the liberal ethic, whilst maintaining that Brown's route will lead to spluttering, bu-

reaucratic impotency, as opposed to Cameron's socially mobilising climax. Does this mark the start of a new apolitical era? Or does Letwin just know his customers? In a College where a May Ball entitled ‘Empire’ provoked outrage reported in the national press, any astute political chameleon would show off the redder items from his wardrobe of values. Hence, no doubt, Letwin's crimson-coloured tie.

So perhaps this is nothing but a rose-tinted front, I wonder, as Letwin's compassionate conservatism shows occasional cracks of blue, and hints of old Tory attitudes seem to seep through. Criminals are referred to as “damaged goods”; the government must break the “cycle of deprivation”. But these terms, on Letwin's lips, are imbued with empathy as opposed to condemnation, and expose a proactive political architecture that aims to help by providing constructive support. So far, so lefty.

But Letwin claims his Policy Review has found the answer: decentralisation. What a scoop, I hear you cry; a Tory who believes in less interference from central government! But this is fairly radical welfare reform. By mobilising the voluntary sector, giving charitable organisations the money saved in benefits for every unemployed person they get back into work, Letwin hopes to realise “two goals simultaneously”, allowing Britain to climb out of the recession, and into a “better society rather than a worse one at the end”. The only way “to achieve more without vast additional spending is to change the way we do business, and to enable people by dealing with them at a much more local level, on a human basis”.

But there is one fundamental breach between the goals of New Labour and of Letwin, widened by his policies

coming out of this review, with which he did not look at all at ease. Asked if it was not the responsibility of the government, rather than that of the voluntary sector, to help the underprivileged, Letwin seemed to lose his cool. His hostile rebuke that who achieves the results is not important, the old ‘what matters is what works’ argument, was unconvincing, and that chink in his armour of compassion momentarily revealed the entrenched division of partisan politics that is still far from being bridged.

All that said, his aspirations to achieve those enlightened ends and his conviction in those means seem genuine; and anyone with a social conscience will hope he is right, should he come to power. But what of Trevor Phillips' assertion that his task as head of the Equality and Human Rights Commission is “to break the grip of white men who went to public school?” How can Letwin fix that problem when he embodies it? “I agree with Trevor in that we have to make sure that people achieve what their talents and efforts will permit, and not have a society where people are locked into positions. This means that those who are talented and hard-working coming from less privileged backgrounds should be

able to make headway, as should those from privileged backgrounds.” A typically diplomatic response, but one that is given some substance by the fact that both he and Phillips are trustees of the Social Mobility Foundation, which gives bright students from poorer households a leg-up into their chosen career. When speaking of this organisation's achievements, Letwin's whole demeanour lights up. His exclamation that there are “little miracles” going on all over the place, all the time, may have been a little vomitous, but the implication that real progress could be made if such projects were given a more major role was a heartening one. If I didn't leave shouting “Yes we can!”, I was certainly thinking “Perhaps we could...”

But what about that favourite biscuit? “Large, home-made, rather crumbly biscuits that my family bakes.” Ahah! Sounds like family values to me! I bet he prefers cupcakes with blue icing too. Whatever political colours Letwin chooses to don or consume, whatever school uniform he used to wear, and whatever his favourite sweet snack, his arguments were on the way to convincing me that his policies would leave us with “a better society rather than a worse one at the end”. If only for his taste in biscuits.

Live and Letwin

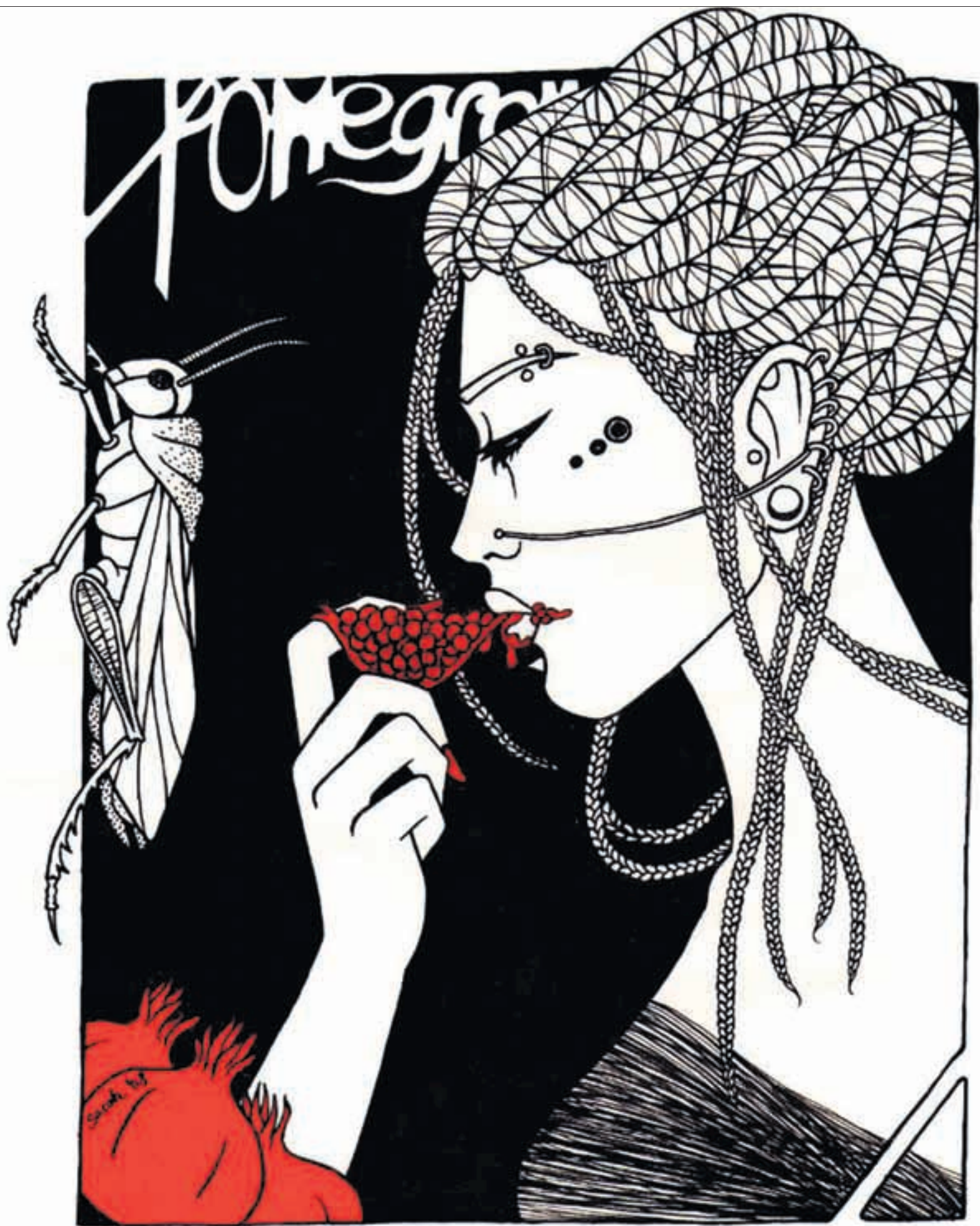
1956	Born to two academics in Hampstead
1981	Returns to Cambridge as a Research Fellow at Darwin
1983	Becomes a member of Thatcher's Policy Unit
1997	Becomes MP for West Dorset
2001	Appointed Shadow Home Secretary by Iain Duncan Smith



From left to right: Jack wears panama hat by Anthony, £47.95; Jessica wears beret by Arthur Shepherd, £7.95; Camilla wears felt hat by Topshop, £25; Kwamira wears Kosak hat by Army & Navy Stores, £35; Sarah wears straw hat by Jigsaw, £37; James wears knitted hat, Oxfam, £1
Styling by Alice Newell-Hanson & Kate Womersley
Make-up by Bobbi Brown at John Lewis
Photography by Katy King



HEADCAST



www.pomegranate.me.uk
AN INTRODUCTION

The ezine *Pomegranate* was formed in the summer of 2007, when two future Cambridge students, Charlotte Runcie and Emily Tesh, decided to fill a gap in UK poetry: a quarterly magazine publishing poems and criticism only by the under-30s. Six editions on, *Pomegranate* receives hundreds of submissions per issue, of which twenty or so are published on the site, www.pomegranate.me.uk. The magazine has given a platform to Londoners, Glaswegians and Texans; to students, schoolchildren and wage-earners; to young writers who have never been published before and to established names – including the two most acclaimed under-30s poets in the country, Luke Kennard and Frances Leviston.

This introduction collects ten of the best poems featured in *Pomegranate*'s first six editions. The magazine welcomes submissions (see the back page for details), especially those which, like the poems printed here, show artistry, intelligence, and imagination. In the meantime, here are some of the most interesting young voices in poetry.

LAURA MARSH

Apollo's Hyacinths

Not much of a courtship, this afterwards love.
I come by Tuesdays to the allotments' gate
in my best coat and scarf, and watch you shove
bulbs into the incipient soil, and wait.

We barely speak – gardening gloves, cuttings, shears -
but what you give me, I can make do with –
those days when the low sun warms my ears,
and you bend across with your spartan kiss.

Come April, your cheeks are touched with triumph.
Festoons lie about you, bringing the glory days
back from the underworld, and mine the 'hmp!'
of being planted in the wrong place,

whilst you cherish your unrepeatable trick,
the bloom in your heart that no one can pick.



JAMES MIDGLEY

Seducing the Leopard Gecko

You wrap yourself in cowslip and walk
to the disused allotment down the road.

The sun pours honey through the leaves:
even this is essential, as is the strip

of bark in your pocket, rubbing brittle
on a needle-fitted badge. There,

between the weeds and strewn tin cans:
a lance of gold lazels on a rock, lasers

beneath a drift of woodchips. You kneel
and hold out the bark from your pocket

like a ringbox, pin the badge, its face
reflective, above your breast pocket.

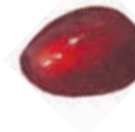
You have already reclaimed from the charity
shop the terrarium in which you both will live.

The gecko hears your flattery (one must
use flattery) and slips out her brass bullet

of a head, tests the air with a flick,
finding the musk of decayed trees, scent

of the improbable, that mix of the erotic
and the innocent. But you have her now,

palm-locked, squeezing too tightly
this creature you dress in familiar names.



BEN DAVISON

Discovery

While you've called me up, I suppose
you'll be just desperate to know
how I feel the subjects we dreamed up
turned out. Well, to start with,
what's with all the mindless praise
for Copernicus? His system (with
its Greek name enduring),
so much the big achievement
of modern European science,
had a precedent, I hope
you realise – a precedent
in my beloved Samos, which many thought
the centre of the universe, except
the one-and-only Aristarchus,
although I loved the place.
I know you scoff at us: how easy
it must have been, how pathetic
to claim credit for the basics
your ten-year-olds can understand, how
we had our pick of subjects to advance
while your every innovation
was known a thousand years before,
but we had to discover subjects, before 'discovery'
could even begin to be a word.

SHARON WANG

These are the days

These are the days collapsing like shelves of coral,
pinching to a wound, a star, a whittled tip
of light. We make our homes out of pitch
and mortar, shavings from our mothers' best soap,
songs someone hummed in the dark, rocking
and rocking. We are a million flung dewdrops
burning brighter than pinpricks, the cosmic handful
of dust that clamps the earth and will not
let go. Salt pebbles the underside of our tongues,
and all around landmarks are scattered
like broken moons. Our hands are for fashioning
stories, our mouths for unhooking desires.
Bridled in snow, we bear the lurch of seasons, return
to damp earth stricken with small fistled flowers.
And here after three days of rain
the day unclenches with such a tumble of light.

GEORGE TTOOULI

Riding Northwards on the GNER to Edinburgh

*"Yet dare I almost be glad, I do not see
That spectacle of too much weight for me."*
—'Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward', John Donne

That time when we turned our backs on sorrow
and watched time reverse with our northern passage
through speckled meadowland and harvest crows
rucking into the hayrolls, past old kirks and burges,
the walls and spans of greystone and yorkstone
and under the cathedral arches of Newcastle station,
Berwick's steads and scarps threshed to the skin-ridged seas,
herds cliff-perched and hovels plotted between course
and rocks, the lead and slate roofs flung
from centuries ago into the vales before us,
each spire a reformation, every hedge a land act,
every colour so strong it left us like batik.
The nets we spread need flocks of gulls
to hoist them up to beauty.
Every loss cuffs us to misery –
the ancient hedges, the ties to the centuries old,
when gone, leave us reduced and unrestored,
but, through time, consoled.

AMY BLAKEMORE

The Clinic

The clinic brooded silently
behind its automatic doors – trying so hard not to be white.
A frozen necropolis for old issues of Cosmo,

leafed through by girls
who loudly advertise that they're bitches –
spray on tan, metallic heels, venereal diseases.

I sat in the kids' corner,
too demure for the waiting area,
piecing together eight-spoked plastic flowers
undying.
Children's toys.

I remembered the satisfying stiff click holes

from nursery school.

I waited for you
but didn't have the guts to go in myself –
do a swab-test – let the rubber blue-finger butterflies in between my legs.

You asked me if I didn't trust doctors.

I would find out two weeks later the baby –
the dream I'd warmed somewhere below sickness,

was dead. I bled it out.

You got free condoms.

I ran for the bus.

BECKY VARLEY-WINTER

Advice to Little Red Riding Hood

Count slowly to ten.
Know that the trees,
though they interlace their fingers
suspensefully, ask for nothing.
Always remember to breathe.
Let the shadows of the forest
make patterns upon you;
hold the tender column of your spine
as if you would grow green with leaves.
Before the belly of the wolf,
admire the size of his teeth,
the intensity of his hunger,
your own perfect redness
for battle,
holding in your hands
the fervid brightness of flowers,
all the things your grandmother
forgot to tell you about wolves.

SOPHIE MACKINTOSH

Small Things

There's emptiness here that rings in your bones
like a tuning fork, so you need really

to concentrate on small things; blades of grass
edging through the concrete.
The wind picking out
the shivers along your skin.

You should walk. Let your footsteps charm up
an echo, the company
of ghost feet

and keep thinking of small things. Like the way
you ring doorbells and then run your lungs raw, the way

you write messages in the dust
filming the windows

though there's nobody to read them.

The Six Times My Heart Broke

The first time my heart broke was in an elephant graveyard. The elephant skulls looked like urinals with tusks. 'Why have you brought me to this elephant graveyard?' I asked. 'It's not working out,' she said. 'You love me more than I love you. I thought the elephant carcasses made a nice backdrop.'

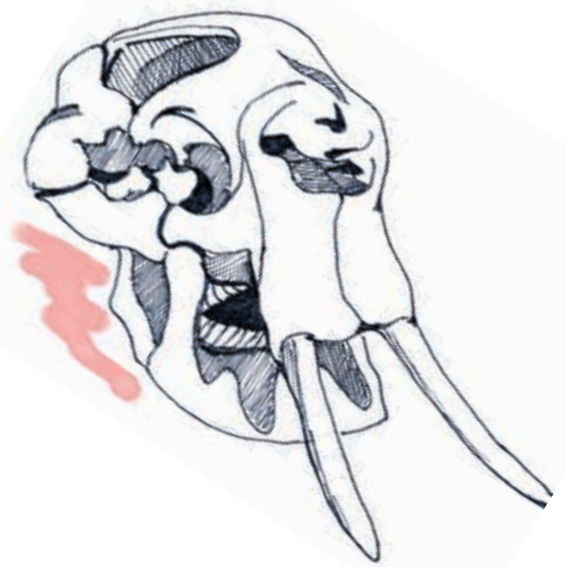
The second time my heart broke was in the middle of the second take of an action sequence in a heist movie. 'That wasn't in the script,' I said to my co-star. 'I know,' she replied, and we cowered behind the car door for a series of controlled explosions.

The third time my heart broke I had my heart removed and replaced by a donor heart. I dipped my former heart into a container of liquid nitrogen and dropped it onto a paving slab where it smashed. 'Art project,' I explained to a pedestrian.

The fourth time my heart broke was when I swept up the shards of my frozen heart and carried them in a coolbox to a nearby gallery, but while I was chatting with the gallery owner, a dog used his nose to dislodge the coolbox lid and ate the heart. 'Maybe we could exhibit the turd,' suggested the gallery owner.

The fifth time my heart broke was when the dog turd that was once my heart was sealed in a glass container and purchased by an elite terrorist group, exhibited as an example of Western decadence – being an especially odious example of our cultural life – and used to recruit car bombers, one of whom obliterated my penpal while he was drafting a response to my overly-critical review of his first novel.

The sixth time my heart broke I was working out my donor heart by swimming laps in a crater full of rainwater. 'I have nothing to say,' said a boy standing at the edge of the crater. 'Or nobody wants to hear it, anyway.' I wanted to yell and tell him not to get discouraged, but I had swallowed a duck call and so could only quack. He left and never painted the triptych he was supposed to.



LUKE KENNARD

SUBMISSIONS

If you're a writer under the age of thirty, we'd love you to submit your work.

See <http://www.pomegranate.me.uk/submissions.html> for how to send us your wordsmithery. We also welcome submissions of artwork and poetry-related articles.

How the World

Creation, after a time slumming with progress, reapplied itself on a hillside where my feet were lizards flirting with the patio heat.

The second day brought a valley of sundried cloth, towels fluttering a scent of shrubs and myrtle and afternoon laid out like a bronze turtle.

Rain ran its fingertips round the basin's rim, ushering scowling clouds from the mountain ridge and a smell of cheese cured three days in a ditch.

Flying ants didn't make it through the night and lay crusting on a half-diamond marble tile; all the while life waiting for them to spoil.

The thought of this valley glowing under winter, with a drift of snow slumbering across the hill, is how the world became reordered in a lull.

A scorpion came on the final evening in the muggy funk of a summer downpour, a jet shard twisting on the glazed tor.

At twenty-five to six, light pushed out the old sky and coaxed apart the house's stubborn, resting doors to the basking birds and cicadas' applause.

DAI GEORGE

Laura Marsh is President of the Oxford University Poetry Society. **James Midgley**, a winner of an Eric Gregory award, is currently studying for his Master's degree in poetry at the UEA. He edits the poetry journal *Mimesis*. **Ben Davison** lives in Glasgow, where he works in a cash and carry. **Sophie Mackintosh** is from Pembrokeshire in Wales. She is currently studying English & Creative Writing at the University of Warwick. **Becky Varley-Winter** graduated from Cambridge in 2008, and currently lives in London, where she studies for an MA in English and sometimes writes non-academic things, too. **Amy Blakemore** is 17 years old and is doing her A-Levels. She will be featured in a forthcoming anthology from Bloodaxe, *Voice Recognition: 21 Poets for the 21st Century*. **George Ttoouli** is an Honorary Teaching Fellow for the Warwick Writing Programme and a freelance editor and writer. With Simon Turner he co-edits *Gists and Piths*, a blogzine dedicated to the discussion and publication of contemporary poetry. **Sharon Wang** studies at the other Cambridge (Massachusetts), and would like to live inside a whale. **Luke Kennard** is the youngest poet ever to be shortlisted for the Forward Prize for Best Collection, for his second collection *The Harbour Beyond the Movie*. His third collection *The Migraine Hotel* is out from Salt in April. He lectures in creative writing at the University of Birmingham. **Dai George** splits his time between Cardiff and New York. He is studying for an MFA at Columbia University.

Sarah Larsen, cover artist, is a 22-year old Dane with a lot of tattoos.

This preview was put together by **Dan Hitchens**, **Emily Tesh**, **Charlotte Runcie**, and **Sean Jones**.

Left Behind

'NASTY NICK COHEN,' RAGED THE SOCIALIST WORKER, AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF WHAT'S LEFT?. NICK COHEN, A JOURNALIST WHO HAD ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF THEIR OWN, HAD BROKEN AWAY. ANDY RYAN LISTENS TO THE AUTHOR'S SIDE OF THINGS



"There are plenty of good reasons for opposing the Iraq War and I've never said people should have been for it," Nick Cohen begins. "But why is there no support anywhere in the rich world for Iraqi democrats, feminists and socialists who want something better after 35 years of the most terrible tyranny? Solidarity used to be the best principle of the Left. It's not as simple as asking why wasn't there more support for the war, it's asking what happened to the best of the left-wing tradition."

"It's far wider than Iraq. Imagine I was to show you an article defending a movement, probably a radical Islamist movement, that is misogynist, sexist, anti-gay, that wants to abolish democracy and impose some kind of authoritarianism. If I then ask you to guess which kind of newspaper that's from, you'll say straight away that it's a left-wing paper."

"You've got to have some idea of the history of the left to see how malign that is. In the 30s that would have been the other way around. It was conservative newspapers, and especially the *Times*, that defended Hitler. Now it's people who think of themselves as left-wing who do it."

Cohen started his career as a left-wing firebrand, writing for the *New Statesman* for many years. Over the last decade, however, his political outlook shifted, and he became almost a neo-conservative. Following the publication of *What's Left?*, his book attacking the modern left-wing movement, he has become a pariah in the circles he once frequented.

He, however, does not see himself as having moved away from the Left, but rather towards it.

"The Protestant view of the world sees the individual consciousness as supreme, a minority of one can be right. That's why Protestant churches split the whole time. In that sense I am left-wing and I haven't changed."

"There is an equally plausible Catholic way of looking at intellectual life. If the Pope and all his cardinals say that 'this is Catholic doctrine', it bloody well is Catholic doctrine. If you disagree with it, you're not a Catholic. In this sense, if vast numbers of people who call themselves left-wing disagree with me, then I'm probably not left-wing. I think some of the stuff I've written in *What's Left?* is the most left-wing stuff of my career. However, it's not what most people think of as left-wing so from their perspective I'm not."

Anti-Americanism is one of Cohen's prime charges against the Left. He believes Obama's rise will change this and shift foreign policy attitudes in the process. "I think George Bush going and Barack Obama coming in is hugely important. George Bush provided an international cartoon hate figure that united people in opposition. It almost got to the stage when people thought 'if he goes everything will be fine' and it's not going to be fine. Obama, as he

made clear in his rather good inauguration speech, knows very well that he's going to face an Iran that wants the bomb, he's going to face a psychopathic radical Islamist movement, and he's going to face Russia and China flexing their muscles."

"Not everything in the world is the fault of the West. It's almost a colonial point of view, that the root cause of everything is the West. There are totalitarian movements which are just going to be there. George Bush goes and they are still there."

Cohen is concerned that anti-Americanism has also driven the civil liberties agenda. "I'm not against people defending civil liberties. I'm very weary though when the only things highlighted are crimes from the West. If the only abuse of civil liberties that you're going to condemn is Guantanamo Bay and you say nothing about what's going on in China and Iran then you don't really believe in civil liberties."

"You've got to believe in universal human rights. If not, you develop into

lot of suppressed class hatred in middle-class liberal thinking."

"There's a lot of dislike which I think is quite dangerous as we go into a recession. There's going to be the most terrible increase in poverty. I suspect people are going to say 'well look, we've had twelve years of a Labour government, they're meant to have done something about all this. If people are poor now it's their own fault.' That is something which needs to be argued against very hard."

Regarding the economic crisis, it is Labour's contribution that really fascinates Cohen. "The great crashes of capitalism have never happened under a left-of-centre government before this. The great booms and busts have always happened under governments that were *laissez-faire*, like Bush in America or Hoover in 1929. Governments who essentially believed the market can regulate itself or governments that were frankly corrupt. That's what happened in Britain with the South Sea Bubble in 1720 and what happened in Japan when

"YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE IN UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS [OR] YOU DEVELOP INTO A KIND OF LIBERAL RACIST WHO SAYS RIGHTS FOR WOMEN ARE ALL VERY WELL IF THEY'RE WHITE-SKINNED WOMEN IN CAMBRIDGE, NOT IF THEY'RE BROWN-SKINNED WOMEN IN TEHRAN"

a kind of liberal racist who says rights for women are all very well if they're white-skinned women in Cambridge, not if they're brown-skinned women in Tehran, because it's their culture to oppress women."

He believes the Left's next move should be a push to bring inequality back to the centre of political discourse. "For good reasons in the sixties, people stopped talking about class and started looking at the position of women, gays and ethnic minorities. And that's all fine. But it has become very odd that the biggest cause of disadvantage in Britain, that is the absence of money, is no longer talked about or thought about seriously."

"It's got to the stage now that the British working class and the working class everywhere have become universal hate figures. They are potential fascists, they are all racists, they are all homophobes, and it isn't true. All of this talk is a compensation for middle-class radicals for the failure of the working class to do what they were expected to do. If you go back fifty years the working class were supposed to be the vanguard of history, they were supposed to rise up and create a new society and they didn't. They are rather despised for that and feared. People now think if you let them have their say they'll bring back the death penalty and all that. There's a

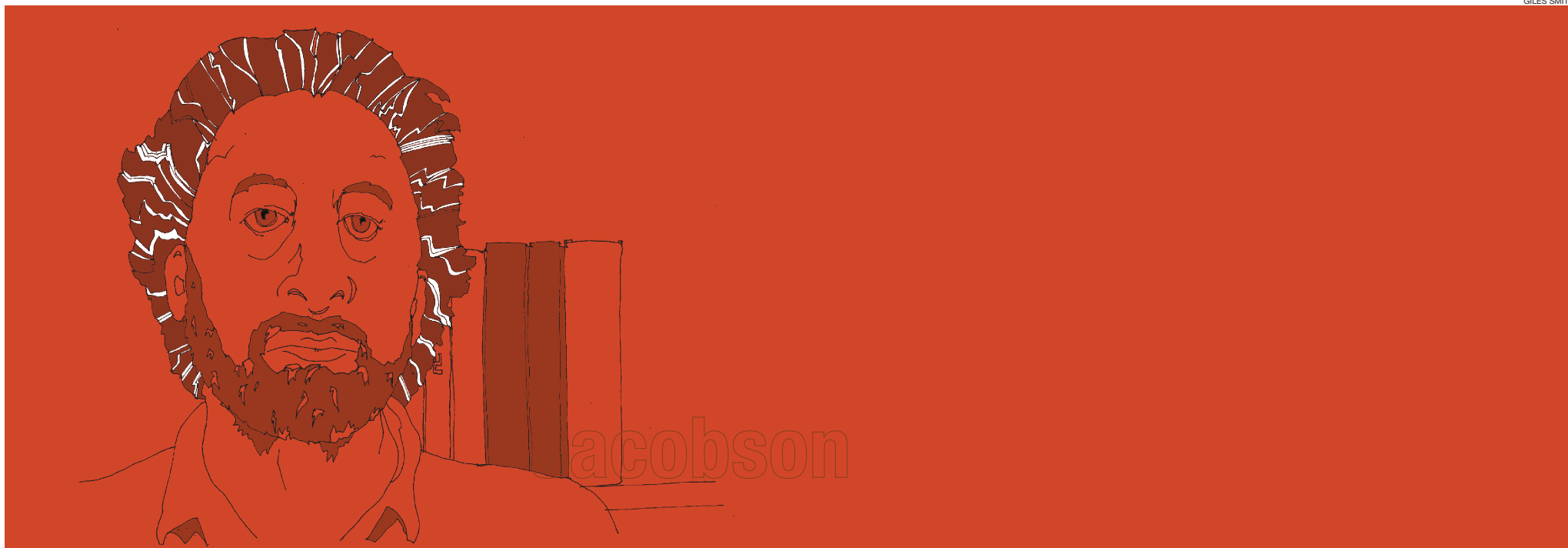
its market crashed in 1990, where there were huge scandals afterwards about political corruption."

"Labour in Britain isn't particularly corrupt, it hasn't been bought. Nor does it believe in deregulation. If you try and set up a small business, they will regulate the living daylight out of you. But they don't do the one thing you would expect a left-of-centre government to do and regulate finance capital. This is partly because they are in awe of it and partly because all the social programmes they are doing, all the massive increases in public spending, are funded by taxes on the city and housing. They've prostituted themselves."

Cohen believes the crisis will force Britain to rethink its place in the global economy. "What are we going to do in the world? If you had asked someone last year 'what is it that Britain does that no other country does?' the answer would have been that the City is the financial centre of globalisation. Now it's not and that's all fallen apart."

"The message from the government was 'this was a crisis but we can get over it and get back to normal.' Now they are beginning to realise normal is gone. This is like the fall of the Berlin Wall or 9/11. It has changed the landscape and we need to head off in a new direction." One suspects that Cohen will be there the whole time, sniping from all sides.

LION KING ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): "I am in fact the Lion King anyway," say you, "so it's OK for me to use 'Hakuna Matata' as basis for presidential policy." But, yet again, the oppo has some choice words: "What an absurd suggestion. You're not the Lion King. I'm the Lion King. You don't have regal status. You're just a generically maned creature." Who the bejesus does this chap think he is? »p22 He's your uncle Scar. »p23 He's lost his marbles.



Grouchy Club

RAGING AGAINST DUMBING DOWN, HARRY POTTER AND ANTI-SEMITISM, LAUREN DAVIDSON DISCOVERS THAT SELF-CONFESSED LITERARY ELITIST HOWARD JACOBSON IS NOT A MAN AFRAID TO SPEAK HIS MIND.

“Hi, welcome to The Groucho Club, can I help?” smiled the bespectacled woman behind the desk.

“Yeah, I’m meeting Howard Jacobson for an interview,” I replied.

That is a true story, although mostly irrelevant to the rest of this article. I’m not even sure if the lady wore spectacles, or, indeed, if she was a lady. I just wanted to mention that I was in the Groucho Club, a members-only club for personalities in media and the arts, inspired by Groucho Marx’s quip “I don’t want to join a club that would accept me as a member.”

A couple of minutes later and in walked Jacobson: novelist and columnist by profession, “a Jewish Jane Austen” by self-description and a master of polemic debate. I was a little nervous at first, and rightly so, as he immediately launched into an attack on today’s society.

“We live in a dumbed-down age,” he fumed. In his view, schools nowadays place too much importance on fame and money, and seeing as you can achieve these things by acting dumb, that’s not good for the future of being smart. Think of Gail Trimble, a smart young woman, who seems to have received more negativity than commendation from the public.

Jacobson puts this lack of intellectualisation in our society down to *Big Brother* and *Harry Potter*. Reality TV contestants can’t talk to each other; they can’t express themselves in words nor show any possession of a rich or ethical vocabulary. He notes that the majority of top bestsellers of last year were biographies and memoirs, and he “loathes *Harry Potter* and everything about it”. But this hatred is not held only for our favourite scarred wizard, but for all children’s books. “I never read kids’ books!” he assures me. A few seconds pass us by. Then, “OK, I must have read kids’ books, but I have this fantasy that I was reading Henry James from a very early age.”

Jacobson firmly believes that children are capable of more than society thinks, and suggests a good dose of George Eliot. “Whoever has read *Middlemarch* would never commit a criminal act, would never commit an unethical act and would never be a fool,” Jacobson says. “Have you ever read a report in the newspaper that a person was mugged, beaten up or attacked by someone carrying a copy of *Middlemarch*? Never!”

He seemed very resolute on this issue, so I moved the conversation along to the topic of Cambridge. Jacobson, 66, studied English Literature under F.R. Leavis at Downing

and got a half-blue blazer, but this just irked him more. A full-blue blazer was awarded to those who rowed or played rugby for the University, but for table tennis? Merely a half blue. And so, the one activity in which Jacobson did participate did nothing for his inferiority complex but strengthen it. This didn’t change when he returned as an employee of the University. Like most teachers, he taught and supervised, but unlike most, he also had a leather goods stall in the market to increase his income. And so, again, he muses that on neither of his Cambridge sojourns did he manage to rid himself of his complex.

“HAVE YOU EVER READ A REPORT IN THE NEWSPAPER THAT A PERSON WAS MUGGED, BEATEN UP OR ATTACKED BY SOMEONE CARRYING A COPY OF MIDDLEMARCH? NEVER!”

College in the Sixties, and returned as a teacher to Selwyn College some years later. What may seem surprising is that he hated his time here, and while he blames no one but himself, he puts this down to his schooling. Educated at a grammar school in Manchester, Jacobson claims that he was never told, unlike the Etonians and Harrovians, that the world was his for the taking and that he could have everything. As a result, he lacked confidence and went up to Cambridge laden with inferiorities. He reminisces to me of the private school boys, who walked around with the air of ownership and seemed to all know one another. When I asked if he was a library swot, party animal or extracurricular do-it-all, he replied “I was no kind of student, I didn’t even behave badly.”

The one university activity in which Jacobson did involve himself was table tennis. He played for the University

I think we can only be thankful for that. Due to his self-proclaimed nature, Jacobson has created some literary masterpieces centred on characters that are irreversibly affected by events in their childhood and familial history which lead to self-fulfilling trends. Jacobson has also become a voice of intellectual and polemical discussion for British Jewry and Middle-Eastern politics.

Recently, Jacobson hosted the opening episode of channel four documentary ‘Christianity: A History’ talking about Jesus as a Jew. In this he raises the interesting question of the origin of Christianity, discussing how and why it moved away from Judaism, looking at the relationship between the two religions today and delving into the mystery of Jesus.

Jacobson admits to me the importance of religion to him, in the historical and cultural sense as opposed to the devout and practising

sense. “I don’t do supernatural,” he explains, “and I don’t pray. God is a good idea; there probably isn’t one but I couldn’t cope without the idea of one.” Religions, while they may have a god in common, define themselves against each other; “we are who we are because we are not you.” Right now, we both agree, this is particularly evident.

“Drivel. Disingenuous. Fatuous.” No, not God; we’ve now moved on to a topic which has been much in the limelight lately, both in and outside of the Cambridge bubble. *Seven Jewish Children*, which played at London’s Royal Court Theatre in February and is currently running at the ADC Larkum Studio, pitches itself as a ten minute history of Israel. It calls itself a play for Gaza, and although the title refers to Jews and not Israelis, it does not see itself as anti-Semitic, misguided or one-sided.

Jacobson makes it very clear that he is quite against censorship, and would not lobby at all for the play to be removed from the stage; in fact, he feels the play should continue. His main concern is that *Seven Jewish Children* is not art, but propaganda. He paraphrases D.H. Lawrence, explaining that we value art, because in art, that which you think you want to say becomes subsumed into something else. Art raises its own argument and through it we get taken where we don’t normally get to go.

Jacobson brings an example here, saying that for the duration of

Macbeth we get to live in the mind of a murderer and entertain and understand his mindset, but in *Seven Jewish Children* there is no attempt to do that, there are no surprises, no attempts to challenge. He also says, with a twinkle in his eye, regarding the collection of money for Gaza at the end of the play, that you don’t go out after seeing *Macbeth* and give money to families of people killed by Scottish dictators. The play, according to Jacobson, is propaganda – but this is not to say it should not be performed; art has no obligation to be fair and neither does this. Rather, it is important that the audience are aware of the nature of what they are watching; that a dramatic sense of conflict is not being raised. “It’s not my Judaism that is offended, not at all, it’s my intellect.”

Jacobson asks me about political affairs of this nature on campus, and then speaks in the wise tones of someone who read Henry James as an infant. “We should not spare Israel our criticism, but should not wag our finger at them or take a higher moral tone – we must be responsible citizens of a community and be properly critical.” This is hardly surprising, as Jacobson is a self-confessed “Leavis elitist”. Criticism, literary or other, is at the heart of civilisation, believes Jacobson: “if we can’t make a judgment, we can’t say anything at all.”

Well, the solution is clear. Start handing out copies of *Middlemarch*.

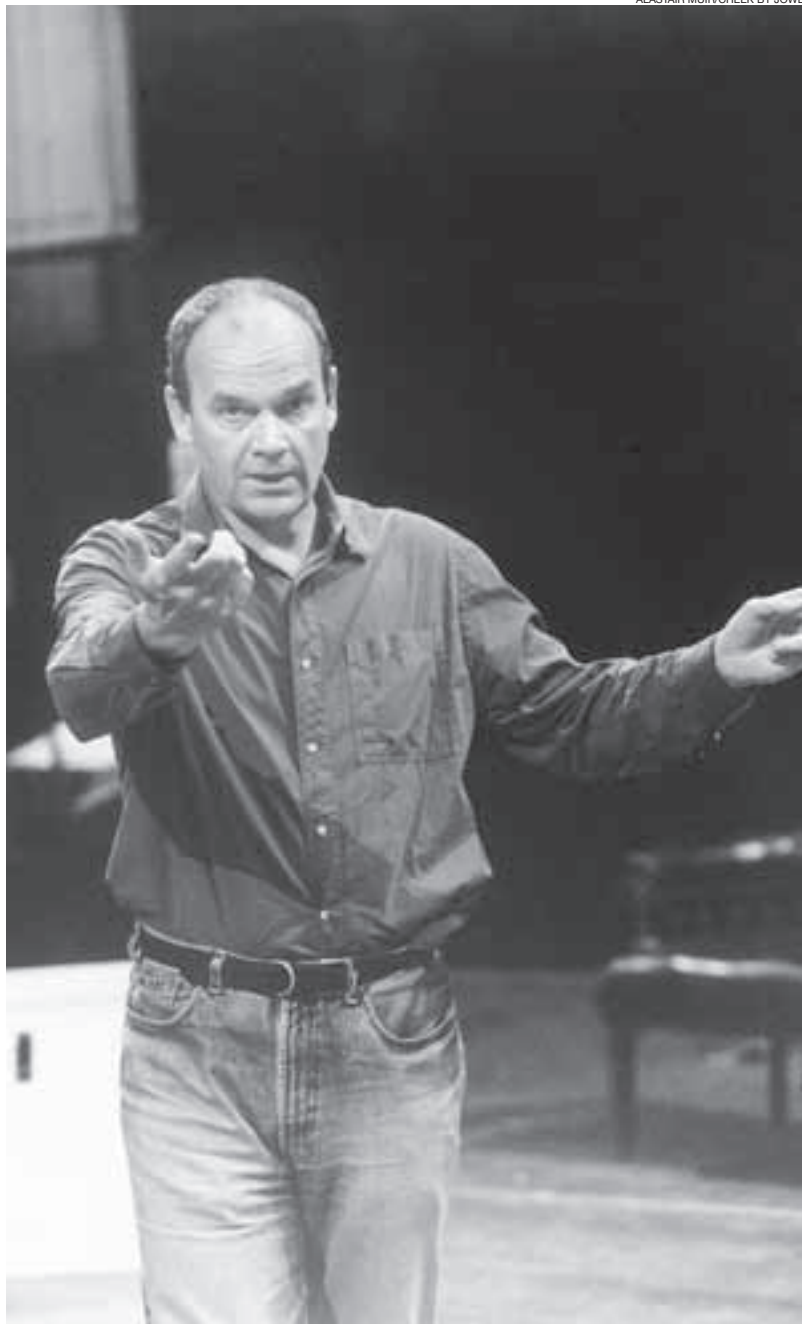
Howard’s End

1962	Studies English at Downing
1985	Writes his first novel, <i>Coming from Behind</i>
1999	Novel <i>The Mighty Walzer</i> wins both the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize and the Jewish Quarterly Literary Prize
2009	Presents an episode of <i>Christianity: A History</i> for Channel Four

This Mortal Coil

CAMBRIDGE ALUMNI DECLAN DONNELLAN AND NICK ORMEROD, FOUNDERS OF THEATRE COMPANY CHEEK BY JOWL, HAVE IMPRESSED CRITICS THE WORLD OVER WITH THEIR DISTINCTIVE DRAMATIC STYLE. EMMA HOGAN FINDS OUT WHAT MAKES DONNELLAN TICK

ALASTAIR MUIR/CHEEK BY JOWL



“Nowhere in my life has a place been so obsessed with success as Cambridge. Even LA.” Declan Donnellan, co-founder with Nick Ormerod of Cheek by Jowl, is coming back once more to Cambridge, where in the mid-1970s he read English and then Law at Queens’.

Donnellan and Ormerod met when they were both nineteen, playing Lennox and the Third Murderer in *Macbeth*. Since founding Cheek by Jowl in 1981, they have produced consistently striking, exciting theatre; it is hard not to talk about contemporary European drama without mentioning Cheek by Jowl. Their productions concentrate on the more classical, canonical texts, but breathe new life into them through a mixture of deceptively simple design by Ormerod, and Donnellan’s refreshing belief that “theatre is about the actors first and last”. Now, from the 25th to 28th March, they are bringing their production of Racine’s *Andromaque* (which the *Guardian* recently

described as “the most anticipated theatrical event of the year”) to the Cambridge Arts Theatre.

Donnellan and Ormerod show that there is no one route to that elusive object, ‘success’, in drama after Cambridge. Though they were both involved in the acting scene as students, Donnellan admits that he “was not a

star of Cambridge theatre”. However, the day Donnellan qualified as a barrister, he gave up his work with Law, and has not looked back. Donnellan and Ormerod demonstrate, then, that “the runes are not cast”.

Speaking about Cambridge, Donnellan describes how he felt “a certain sort of Calvinism in the air. A certain sort of predestination – that if you do not make it big in Cambridge you won’t out there. There is a feeling that life is

passing you by, that you are getting on. It’s a faulty time clock, and a good way to fail”. Instead, we should remember how young we are, how much time we have ahead of us. Yet, although it is comforting to hear Donnellan, who reassures me with his claim, “I never planned a career – it’s only looking back I found I had one,” it is hard not to feel that the combination of Donnellan and Ormerod in theatre was bound, in some ways, to be groundbreaking. It all started when Donnellan was sixteen, and went to see Peter Brook’s production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*: “It sort of changed my life. It was fantastic. I wanted to be a part of that.”

Theatre is, for Donnellan, “where you celebrate humanity”. This spirit of celebration runs through all of Cheek by Jowl’s work. However, when I ask what links, in his mind at least, the five current Cheek by Jowl productions of *Andromaque*, *Twelfth Night* (in Russian, recently celebrating its 200th performance in Moscow), *Boris Godunov*, *Three Sisters* and *Macbeth*, Donnellan insists it is merely his own personal taste: “I do the plays that I like. Ones about love, sex, allusion, politics, power, poetry.” And yet, these are all plays that place an important emphasis on the actor, the performer, rather than a gimmicky use of set or video installation. They demonstrate that “theatre is built of incremental humanity”.

This emphasis on the human actor is central to Donnellan’s work. His book, *The Actor and the Target*, translated from Russian into English, brilliantly captures the importance of the performer. Donnellan demonstrates how we all perform, in different ways, in our daily lives. “We get this really prissy sense that we have an ‘inner truth.’ And we use language from the theatre, unfortunately, to describe lying. We do just act. It doesn’t mean we are lying. It is very dangerous that we think acting and lying are synonymous. You’re playing at being a journalist; I go in and act my role as a theatre director. I act being a theatre director, but I am not lying. Lying is nothing to do with acting... We don’t like the fact that we perform all the time, that there is an element of theatre in everything. It doesn’t mean that it is untrue. It’s very dangerous when people forget the importance of theatre.”

“THERE IS NO THREAT TO THEATRE. IT IS THE GREAT ARCHETYPE.”

The touring Cheek by Jowl productions ensure that this “importance of theatre” is never lost. Donnellan describes the process of touring as “being where you are enjoyed, being where you are welcome”. Although it is in many respects a European group, Cheek by Jowl bases itself in the Barbican, and when asked, Donnellan describes British theatre with affection, saying that it is “much better than it was”.

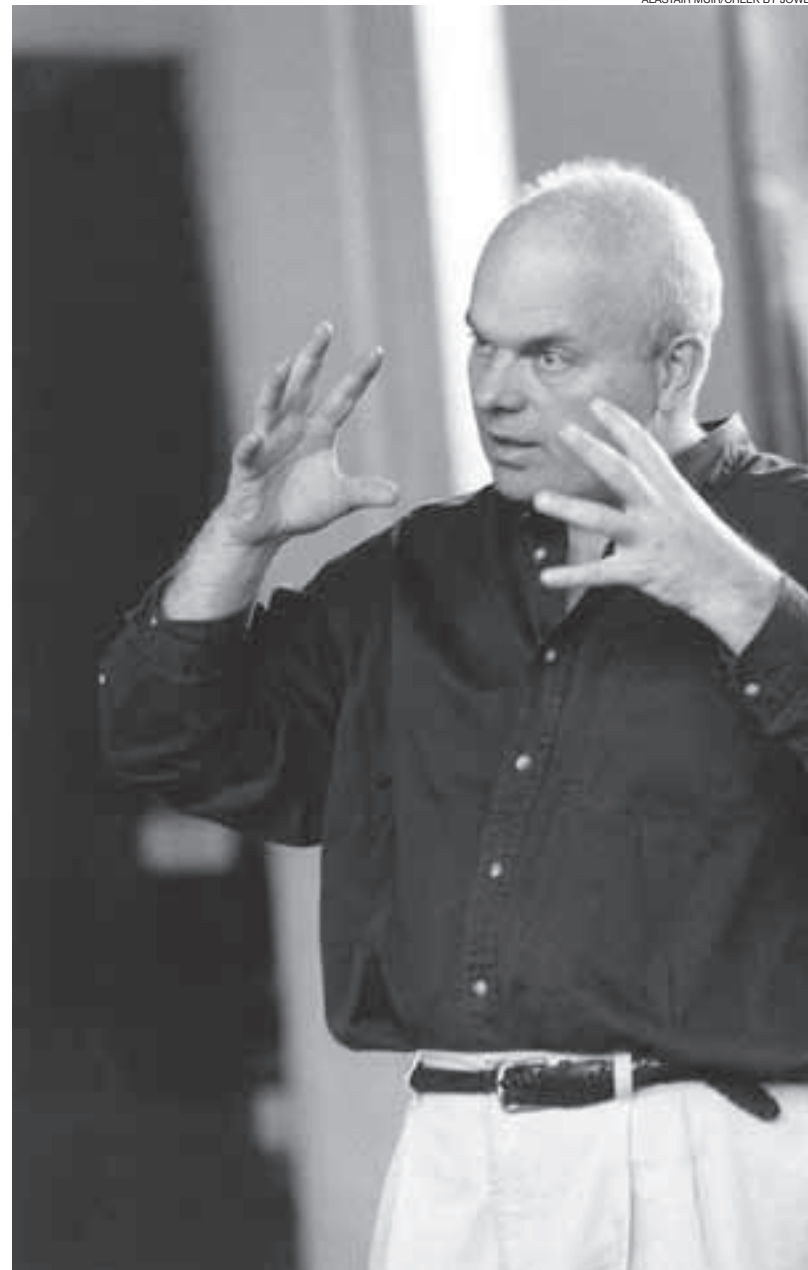
However, he believes it still has a way to go. Schemes such as the National Theatre Travelex Season are, in Donnellan’s opinion, brilliant, but only the beginning. “It was something Nick and I had been asking for, for a long, long time. Ticket prices are, however, still far too high, and are probably the greatest threat to theatre today. We do not like performing in places where they charge too much for our work. It becomes a treat, going to the theatre. Ordinary people should be able to go once a week.” Cheek by Jowl’s recent production of *Troilus and Cressida* in the Barbican was done in traverse, a form Donnellan loves but which, in this credit crunch era, is probably too expensive at the moment to tour with.

The production of Shakespeare’s notoriously difficult play was a resounding success. Donnellan, however, describes himself as having only “an instinctive basis on Shakespeare”. In his opinion, the theatre is far removed from the musty study of

Renaissance scholarship; he therefore grounds his actors in two principles: “learning the text and learning the verse structure. The jazz musician has to learn the four beat square before he can syncopate on it. It’s not just anything.” Directing is “about making good connections between people, contacts on stage,” rather than a discussion of the technicalities of the Shakespearean stage, the generalities of criticism rather than the specifics of existence. For Donnellan, “great acting is always specific”.

It is the specific which drives us, which is the basis our daily lives. And it is the mixture of the specific and the overwhelming in drama which ensures it will, ultimately, survive: “There is no threat to theatre. It is the great archetype.” Though there is no one archetypal Cheek by Jowl production, there is this constant drive behind them, this utter integrity and belief, which ensures they shall always startle, and always remind audiences of the importance of theatre.

ALASTAIR MUIR/CHEEK BY JOWL



LION KING ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): Oui, c’est l’oncle Scar, le frere de Mufasa. “Scar, what are you doing here?” you ask, understandably. “I thought hyenas bumped you off at the end of the first film. You don’t even feature in *The Lion King 2: Simba’s Pride*.” “How would you know?” Scar responds bitterly. “You didn’t even watch it because of your snobbish aversion to films which go straight-to-DVD.” »p29 Tactfully remind him that back in those days it was called “straight-to-video”. »p30 Bypass pedantry and ground your criticisms of *The Lion King 2: Simba’s Pride* in more precise detail.

It's a Kinda Magic

EVER SINCE THE GREAT SHOWMEN OF THE VICTORIAN ERA, THE BRITISH PUBLIC HAVE BEEN ENRAPPED BY MEDIUMS AND MAGICIANS. JOE HUNTER EXPLORES THE TECHNIQUES USED BY THESE 'PSYCHICS', AND WHAT OUR WILLINGNESS TO INDULGE THEM SAYS ABOUT US

Not long ago, I correctly guessed the first name of a girl I'd never met before. She was talking to a friend of mine at a party and I just turned to her and said, "Excuse me, is your name Emily?" It was, and Emily was very perturbed. I think she suspected it was an inventive but slightly sinister chat-up line. It was nothing of the sort. I was merely a bit drunk, and suddenly felt a strong inclination that the girl standing next to me was called Emily – so I said so. It was 'cold reading', and I didn't even know it.

Derren Brown recently made a recording for Channel 4 of one of his live shows. As per usual, his stunts were incredible, including a number of simultaneous 'readings' conducted on members of his audience while blindfolded. The information he was able to reveal about the participants was astounding in its apparent obscurity and unerring accuracy, including a much more impressive name-guessing stunt than mine performed on a guy who had an extremely rare name that stemmed from having mixed (non-English) parentage. The thing about Derren Brown, though, is that he continually reinforces the message that he has no psychic abilities whatsoever. So what's his secret? You can be damn sure it's not coincidence: just go onto 4oD and watch the show for yourself. Derren sets out his stall at the beginning of every program he makes, stating that he uses a variety of techniques, all of which have a strong grounding in psychology. The technique I found myself unwittingly using on our friend Emily, and which Brown demonstrated such a mastery of in his show, is one of the oldest in the book. And there ARE books, let me assure you.

'Cold reading' is an umbrella term for processes by which 'psychics' can conduct readings of strangers and give the impression that they are able to 'see' and reveal personal information about them. The procedure is that the reader makes a series of high-probability guesses based on a huge range of visual and auditory signals given by the subject. Much more information about oneself is projected by mere appearance, body language, and voice than most of us are prepared to accept. To a skilled reader like Brown, a huge range of information can reveal itself as a reading progresses, as each 'hit' provokes a response from the subject, causing them to reveal more about themselves. The point I'm trying to make is

that the operation of cold reading rests upon the sorts of judgements we make about people we don't know every day; many of which are correct. My being able to guess Emily's name is an example of my performing this kind of cold reading without being properly aware of what I was doing. I mean, do you realise how many Emilys there are at Cambridge? And how many of them give off signals about their background, school, and so on, without even knowing it? It was still a bloody lucky guess, no doubt about that – but complete coincidence, it was not.

Time for a confession. This article was originally meant to be an interview with Sally Morgan, an

English celebrity psychic, who appeared at the Corn Exchange earlier this term. I was contacted by her PR agent who offered *Varsity* an interview before her show, along with complimentary tickets to see the performance. As I have already hinted, I have a pet hate for people like Sally, who claim to be speaking to the dead, or to have actual psychic abilities; consequently, I relished the prospect of grilling such a person and writing up a suitably scathing account of the interview. However, for reasons unknown, the interview didn't happen. Her agent stopped returning my calls and emails. Still holding on to hopes

of a phone interview, I went along to her show.

Now, I don't want to put too fine a point on this but Sally Morgan turned out to not only be a total fraud with regards to having psychic abilities (which I expected), but also turned out to be an absolutely terrible FAKE psychic. She began each reading with a process known as 'shotgunning', where she would throw out a name to the entire audience (roughly 800 people), and wait for hands to go up from those who could make a connection with that name. If, astoundingly, no one jumped at the first name she said, she would modify it slightly: e.g. 'Bob' would become 'Barb', and then 'Barbara'. When someone made a connection for her, a minion would run over with a microphone, and agonisingly vague cold reading would follow. One note I made in my pad during the course of the first half of the show (I left at the interval) simply reads, in block capitals, "HOW MUCH MONEY DID PAYING CUSTOMERS SHELL OUT FOR THIS GAR-BAGE!?" Fifteen pounds a head, as it turned out. Times that by the number I mentioned before and, to paraphrase Jay-Z, you are looking at one rich celebrity psychic.

My suitable and self-righteous reaction to this spectacle was something along the lines of, "My God, these people (i.e. her audience) are credulous," coupled with "Oh dear, she's exploiting their credulity in a really awful manner." Then, the tears started to flow from those she was giving readings to, and I was filled with confusion. You see, Sally Morgan's audience was composed largely of the recently bereaved. Unsurprisingly, really, when you think about it: she claims to speak to the dead, and they have a particular reason to want her to be able to do so. The reason I became very confused about my feelings towards what Sally does, is because I started to notice the emotional turmoil etched across the faces of her participants.

These were vulnerable people. They had lost parents to cancer, children to rare diseases, and friends in fatal accidents. Sally cooed over them like a surrogate mother, shining her Star Psychic spotlight on them. And gradually, against my better judgement, I began to root for her. Please, Sally, tell this sunken-eyed and agonised woman her husband wasn't in pain when he died. Please, Mrs Star Psychic lady, reassure that teenage girl that her father forgave

her on his deathbed, and that he did love her after all. As the first half of her show progressed, I stopped sneering at her shabby cold reading skills, and started watching the people around me instead. When Sally let rip with her shotgunned names, heads bowed together in furious consultation, desperate for a connection. Sally Morgan gives them what they want, I thought. Perhaps it's even what they need.

Then an atom bomb exploded in the auditorium. It took the form of a clip from Sally's TV show, which was shown to the audience as a means of bringing the first half of the show to a close. I can't tell you how odious and despicable this woman is for using this clip to promote herself as a 'real' psychic. It was an extract from a blindfolded cold reading in which a middle aged woman in full belly-dancing garb approached, and (as the voiceover dramatically intoned) "Sally was consumed by darkness." After correctly identifying the woman as an 'exotic dancer', Sally paused uncertainly. Then, "Oh... I don't want to say it... oh my darling... you were raped, weren't you? A long time ago?"

"Yes," replied the woman.

"By more than one man, wasn't it? Oh dear..."

After a bit more of this, the clip ended, the lights came up, and Sally informed us that this reading changed her life. Apparently it was an incredible experience, a vivid reading she'll never forget. Then, we were ushered out for the interval. I can't say how she did it – how she guessed that this woman had been raped – but that's what it was: a guess. The little bells and jangling bracelets gave the woman away as a belly dancer, and the feel of her skin when Sally grasped her arm must have betrayed her age; just as the accent in which she replied to the question about her occupation must have identified her as middle-eastern. The rape guess, though, was the kind of successful 'hit' rare for a cold reader as unskilled as Sally. But, regardless of accuracy of reading, to visit an area of a person's past as dark as that for the purposes of a TV show like 'Sally Morgan, Star Psychic', is unforgivable.

I found the manipulation of such a powerful revelation (in order that some of its impact might rub off onto our perception of Sally's supposed 'powers') so distasteful that I could barely contain my disgust as I walked past her slimy agent standing by the bookstall in the foyer. An escape from reality may be what we all need from time to time in order to deal with the darkness life throws at us. However, when a person exploits an episode in somebody's life so dark that most of us can scarcely imagine the damage it must have done to her, and does so in order that they might better sell their own personal brand of escapism, that person is exploiting human vulnerability in as base a way as any I can think of.



Caught Up in the Web

NYU PROFESSOR CLAY SHIRKY, AUTHOR OF A NEW BOOK ABOUT ONLINE ORGANISATION IN THE SPACE AGE, DISCUSSES THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF OUR INCREASING INTERNET SAVVY WITH COLETTE SENSIER

Several weeks ago, about a hundred students occupied the Law Faculty to protest Israel's actions in Gaza. This protest was largely organised in the few days before it began, using Facebook groups and e-mail to mobilise potential protestors. Only a few hours after the protestors entered the Law Faculty building, a press release was circulated, via e-mail, to local and national news channels; a Facebook group was set up to invite new protestors; and e-mail invites went out to the various speakers who would visit the occupation over the next week. Almost as quickly, independent Facebook groups were established, both against the occupation and for the purpose of further discussion.

The remarkable thing about this story isn't, Clay Shirky would argue, that students could co-ordinate the protest, including notifying media and inviting speakers, from a laptop in a lecture theatre. What's remarkable is that we all took it for granted. Shirky has been "looking at" the internet for fifteen years, but mostly "teaching and working for an audience of techies".

He decided to write a book (*Here Comes Everybody: The*

Power of Organizing Without Organizations, out last month) when he saw "social networking spilling into the general public". "A book," he says, "is a medium that reaches people who don't care about techie stuff but do care about the social and political implications." As he repeatedly states in his

new work, "revolution doesn't happen when society adopts new technologies – it happens when society adopts new behaviours."

In other words, the story of the internet revolution has only now become truly significant, when these modern tools have simply become an integral part of life. Who doesn't e-mail their friends and supervisors, buy books on Amazon, or stalk a new significant other on Facebook? Shirky chortles when I mention the effect of the internet on one's social life, and tells me that it "increases the net disappointment in the world [because] if men are allowed to fantasise, they go far off the rails, and the real world becomes a disappointment". He compares the evolution of the internet with the introduction of the telephone, which allowed "people to talk directly without being chaperoned," and so scandalised Victorian society, who, he laughs, would "consider today a nightmare. But society evolves".

Shirky goes on to illustrate this key difference between tools' existence and their widespread, integrated use, when comparing the campaign strategies of Howard Dean and Barack Obama. "The difference between

Dean and Obama," he explains, "is the difference between tactics and strategy." Howard Dean is commonly known as the first politician to harness the internet, but he adopted it "as a tool, not a management structure". By contrast, in Obama's campaign, "use of the internet was baked into their assumptions from the beginning. People at the top of the organisation were comfortable with the internet". (Perhaps too comfortable – as many of us will remember, Jon Favreau, a senior speechwriter on Obama's team, unthinkingly posted pictures of himself fondling the breast of a cardboard Hillary Clinton on Facebook.) Dean used the net to attract fundraisers; Obama used it to organise a volunteer network.

Joe Trippi, a long-time campaign worker, has said that "just like Kennedy brought in the television presidency, I think we're about to see the first wired, connected, networked presidency". Arianna Huffington, editor-in-chief of *The Huffington Post*, has gone further to claim, "Were it not for the internet, Barack Obama would not be president. Were it not for the in-

for instance, Ross Mayfield, creator of Socialtext, has said that anybody from a company which has laid off 5% of its workforce can have a free wiki for jobhunting.

In the end, Shirky's message on any question of mass participation's impact on society is the same: there's no point in debating rights and wrongs. These tools are in place. All we can do is decide how to use them. He's slighting of the academic disdain for Wikipedia. As a professor at New York University (NYU), Shirky tells me his professional philosophy is; "If I forbid you that means you'll use it but not tell me, so I'm operating in the dark, which is antithetical to the principles of education." He calls it "adopting tactics which disrupt strategy – the strategy of how young people learn". He commends the "profound" co-ordinated group learning ability of students.

"Universities existed before the printing press," he says, and have a track record of integrating new technologies. In general, "the ability of authorities to encourage things is

"REVOLUTION DOESN'T HAPPEN WHEN SOCIETY ADOPTS NEW TECHNOLOGIES – IT HAPPENS WHEN SOCIETY ADOPTS NEW BEHAVIOURS"

ternet, Barack Obama would not have been the nominee". One of Shirky's predictions for the future is the creation of a political party entirely on the internet. Indeed, pressure groups and even businesses have already started up like this.

This kind of shift in power – where groups or people gain authority through superior use of social tools – is discussed in Shirky's book. As Shirky says, there's a vast disparity between the most active users on any site – he cites Wikipedia as an example – and the greater mass of less active users. Although *Here Comes Everybody* often seems to portray disorganised, organic groups as producing excellence through unity and goodwill, I saw serious implications for traditional power structures. Shirky hastily agreed; he's just lectured at LSE on this subject. He points out the example of the recent Sellafield strike, in which web co-ordination, he says, "has taken over the previous union prerogative".

As he explains, "the history of democracy is a history of checks and balances – which groups get deferred to in which circumstances". There is still an important element of goodwill in the internet community. Shirky dismisses the idea of a negative effect of recession on volunteer efforts such as Wikipedia, saying that "tools which function as interesting toys in prosperous times, in a crisis are pressed in serious service," and that "recession is a moment in which people recognise a capability they didn't know they had". He expects the charitable aspect of the online community to continue:

relatively high but to forbid things is low". As an educator, he says, banning online tools is "saying lie, or don't lie. If I'm educating I'd rather say don't lie. Otherwise I'm asking to preserve my fantasy world over reality, and will become increasingly divorced from the world and from students".

Shirky thanks his students in the book's acknowledgements, and clearly prizes his link to today's youth. At forty-five, he's hardly the oldest academic around, but he criticises his contemporaries' attitude to young people and new technologies. "We have no way of saying what we would have chosen," he says, "I'm betting we would have behaved the same. Part of the criticism of modern social tools is embedded envy that we didn't grow up when this was available."

Shirky is an exciting academic mind, writing with an easy style to illuminate internet technology's sociological and political consequences in a way designed to appeal to all. Some of his analysis might seem shocking to a sector of society where these tools are less integrated – as I've said, having grown with them, we often don't really notice these technologies any more. However, this integration is central to Shirky's argument; as he says, "the fusion of the internet with general life is the big story".

"When we were first playing around in the early Nineties," he reminisced, "everyone assumed there would be a separate virtual world. Now we're at the end of cyberspace as a notion, and the internet is increasingly about co-ordinating layers of society."

LION KING ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): You quote: "For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs." Reception is mixed: the steak-lovers at the hustings heartily applaud this veggie-bashing, but the vegetarians themselves don't feel herb-eating is weak, per se. You're forced to defend vegetables in order to keep this important band of swing voters onside. But how? »p26 Your grandfather is a vegetable. »p27 You love tomatoes.

Music Collage

LATE OF THE PIER'S ROSS DAWSON AND SAM POTTER TAKE TIME OUT TO SPEAK WITH LUCY BRYANT ABOUT TEENAGE BOREDOM, INDIVIDUALITY, AND LYRICAL GIBBERISH

“The songs, they’re not traditional songs are they? They’re like collages I guess.”

Not everyone can make a statement like that about their debut record, but Ross Dawson and Sam Potter are some of the few that can. Late of the Pier have had a brilliant year. Gaining a wealth of fans with extensive tours as well as a record, *Fantasy Black Channel*, which graced many ‘Albums of the Year’ lists, Late of the Pier finished 2008 on a high. Now they are back on the road, and I spoke to them before their sold-out show at the Junction.

Sitting across from a band whose sound is so unusual, the first thing I wanted to establish was who their influences were. “Noah’s ark. Noah and his ark.” After a few confused blinks from me, Dawson and Potter explain. “It’s more that we can’t answer it. I think it’s the case that our influences are so broad, they really are. I’d say there are probably ten in any one song. I guess that’s why our music is so hard to pin down. People are always trying to label it, and I don’t think you can.”

Late of the Pier, like so many great bands before them, is primarily a product of teenage boredom.

“We had fuck all to do,” explains Ross. “We had all these instruments around us thanks to Sam’s dad, so we kind of did it. It was a really shit school as well with a lot of uncultured ruffians and that. I don’t know. We just didn’t really fit in.” Over the years they’ve tried to keep their shows as ‘all-age’ as possible. “When we started out it was mostly in indie clubs where there was a lot of bravado, folded arms and blasé-ness, but kids never have that. The fact that we’d do shows and [kids would] be so excitable, we kind of bounced off it.”

The band members each approach a live show in their own way. “Basically we’d practise lots; we’d try and play perfectly, and make it sound as good as we can as humans,” says Sam; “Me, myself, I just try to switch off in a strange way and give myself up to the crowd.”

As a band, Late of the Pier’s individuality is precious to them. “We do enjoy being different, we do try to do things differently,” explains Ross, and Sam agrees: “At the minute people are just fighting against being part of a body of people. This decade is about poking your head out and being yourself.” They find themselves frustrated by the endless band com-

parisons made by the press. “It’s just so annoying, because it’s just not true and it’s quite obvious it’s not true [that we’re like certain other bands]. It’s just lazy journalism and people not knowing what they’re talking about really.”

Late of the Pier’s lyrics are a very unique facet of the band’s music. “We get misquoted all the time.” Ross tells me; “In one of our songs, ‘Heartbeat’, there’s a line in the chorus, ‘a heartbeat, a flicker, a line’ – it got misquoted as ‘a happy African lion’. So people think we’re singing about lions in Africa being all happy. That’s quite funny.” Unlike those of many other bands, Late of the Pier’s lyrics don’t always have a typical structure or content, and, in fact, they aren’t even always real words. They serve a different purpose, besides story-telling. “It’s supposed to make you feel something, not necessarily something in particular. We’re not trying to say anything; it’s just supposed to provoke a reaction. Often it makes the songs quite personal because the lyrics don’t really mean anything – each person interprets them in their own way.”

Late of the Pier are excited about the current musical climate. “I think



PAUL SMITH

there is something happening, you get bands like Micachu, Metronomy, even bands like Mystery Jets; they’ve all got the same kind of intention before they make music. But it’s not a sound thing,” they explain, it’s an overarching

idea. “That’s what will bring people together and there’ll be a community again.” Late of the Pier seem happy to include themselves in this quasi-movement, almost excited. Just don’t say they sound like it.

Darwinian Reverie

LAURA FREEMAN RE-ASSESSES DARWIN DESCENDANT GWEN RAVERAT’S REMARKABLE ACCOUNT OF HER CHILDHOOD IN VICTORIAN CAMBRIDGE

This year marks the bicentennial of the birth of Charles Darwin, and the 150th anniversary of the publication of *The Origin of Species*. Darwin’s mark is still keenly felt at Cambridge, stamped on his rooms at Christ’s College, in the University Library (which

houses his papers and letters), and of course, in the name of Darwin College.

The last is a bit of a misnomer. Darwin senior lived in Kent. The Darwins of Darwin College were Charles’s son George, his American wife Maude de Puys, and their four children. Their

eldest daughter, Gwen Raverat, grew up in The Granary, now Darwin College, and went on to immortalise her Victorian childhood in her Cambridge memoir, *Period Piece*, published in 1952 and never since out of print.

Raverat studied fine art at the Slade and later worked prolifically as a wood-cut artist. *Period Piece* is peppered with her neat wood-cut vignettes offering snapshots of Cambridge life at the turn of the century.

Charles Darwin wrote, “the only evil at Cambridge was its being too pleasant,” but Cambridge as it appears under Raverat’s microscopic is an absurd, comical beast. She skewers the strange mores and fussy decorum of the late Victorians: the contortions involved in vaulting a stile *en route* to Granchester without revealing a scandalous glimpse of ankle, the horror of discovering face powder on the dressing table of an otherwise respectable grande dame. In one memorable passage, Raverat describes a punting trip through a mass of naked undergraduates bathing in the Cam and recalls that while the ladies of the party shielded their eyes with parasols, she peeked through the

spokes. The accompanying wood-cut, of ladies, parasols, and men in striped blazers being besieged by nude, whooping youths, is a masterstroke of delight and mirth.

Raverat cites Rembrandt and Thomas Bewick, the great early-nineteenth-century wood engraver, as her heroes, and she wonders what it would have been like to be Mrs Bewick – whether her husband might have let her engrave a page or two. Raverat is impassioned when she talks about her artistic yearnings and the difficulties of being a career-minded upper-class girl in the late 1800s. Stay-at-home propriety rears its ugly head at every turn. Raverat describes her family as “benevolently philistine”, mathematicians and scientists all, bemused and mistrustful of artists and creative types. Despite her ambitions, Raverat is condescending towards the Newnham girls who are always “dowdy” and without a partner at dances.

The Cambridge she describes is at once alien and recognisable. She recalls the perils of walking on the grass of Trinity Great Court, the tedium of services in College chapels (“the lowest layer

of the dust-and-ashes of boredom and misery”), and the arrival in Cambridge for the first time of that most modern of contraptions: the bicycle. (Ladies rode tricycles, three wheels being considered in some way less indecorous than two.) In one passage, Raverat describes cycling along the Backs by night in the days before gas lamps. It is a journey fraught with the horrors of a child’s imagination: tigers and bandits lurk behind every tree, and each new breeze threatens to extinguish the hurricane lamp strung between her handlebars.

Raverat venerates her scientist grandfather, putting him in the “same category as God and Father Christmas,” but is troubled by the curious legacy he left. At school she is indignant when the other girls ask if she is descended from monkeys, and she is vexed by her own irreligious thoughts. She recounts that her idea of prayer was “Please God, if you will let there be chocolate pudding for lunch, I will be very good to-day.” Hers is a wholly convincing portrait of the contradictions and absurdities of childhood. *The Gwen Raverat archive is housed at Broughton House on King Street.*



View from the Groundlings



Joel Massey tells us what's what in theatrical week 7

Cambridge drama is reaching jejaculatory heights this week with a whopping 11 student plays. But it won't be long now before we can all breathe a sigh of collective relief. And what a term we've had. There's been Shakespeare, Miller, more Shakespeare, new translations of Chekhov... and yet more Shakespeare.

Speaking of the great man, his *Romeo and Juliet*, on now at the Arts Theatre, promises to be an absolute stonker. They presumably took copious amounts of LSD and then decided that this play just isn't put on in Cambridge enough.

If you're looking for something more off-the-beaten-track, Ionesco's *The Chairs* at the ADC may be the answer. All I know about Ionesco is that his *Rhinoceros* is full of people turning in to rhinoceroses. The imagination runs wild: maybe he always titles his plays with a noun and then has the plot be people turning in to the aforementioned object. But how much dramatic juice can you squeeze out of turning protagonists into chairs? Maybe these speculations are off the mark; you'll have to watch it to find out.

Shows are often notable for unexpected reasons, and this week is no exception. One underestimated theatrical art I'd like to champion is blurb-writing. There are a few shows this week actually at risk of being overshadowed by their remarkably ludicrous blurbs. A fine example is *Sodom* at Queens, which claims to deal with "the base instincts which govern our governors" as seen through "the nihilism of a poet who finds his only reality in sexuality". Whereas *Sisters, Such Devoted Sisters*, on next week at the Corpus Playroom, purports to explore "the Glasgow drag scene" alongside "exploding pigeons, cars through walls, ecstasy and karaoke". Oh, and watch out for when "stilettos become murder weapons and grannies set themselves on fire". Is it just me, or are Neil Kinnock and Lord Haw-Haw holed up in a crack den in Trinity secretly writing all the blurbs for Cambridge's plays?

Well, almost time to say goodbye. Before I do though, I'd better get something off my chest. I've spent a lot of time watching a lot of plays this term, and feel it's only fair that I waste some of your time in the following way. So here goes. "Ahem" (pretentious throat clearing)... "To be or not to be a horse, my kingdom for a dagger, is this a dagger I see before the northern star, of whose true fixed and resting quality there is perchance to dream that all the world's a stage, alas, poor Yorick, if music be the food of love, play on." Adieu.

THEATRE

***Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare**

Arts Theatre, March 3rd-7th

Dir. Charlotte Westenra; The Marlowe Society

★★★★★

Occasionally, updated productions of Shakespeare can make you reactionary in your theatrical taste. This beautiful and richly detailed production of *Romeo and Juliet* is performed in elaborate period costume and works wonderfully.

This is a tremendously professional production delivered by a hard-working cast totally immersed in the play, no matter how small their character. A few technical quibbles: there are some really quite pathetic pillars that wobbled anytime somebody went near and chunks of completely inaudible dialogue overwhelmed by sword-fighting.

Apart from that, the quality of this production was such that absolute professionalism and competency can be taken for granted. I am, then, forced to think of other things to review. There

was an intricate sound design from Soosan Lolavar; unnerving and often beautiful original music from Jude Carlton; as well as a gorgeous and complex lighting design from Robert Mills. Consequently the heat and intrigue of Verona beat down upon the cast and audience.

One would expect the production to rest on the shoulders of its eponymous lovers. Yet I came out extolling the virtues of the chorus. This was when the production became something special. It was a fabulous depiction of an on-stage world. Each member of the chorus became a character with a story in their own right, flitting in and out of the action, often present without speaking.

But is it right to come out of a Shakespearean tragedy praising the chorus and the production design the most?

Well, the acting was certainly impres-

sive. Lucy Evans was a captivating Juliet, drawing laughs with an unusually headstrong determination but proving herself a magnetic tragic actress. Jack Monaghan has proved that he can do troubled adolescents and it works better with Romeo than with Hamlet.

Otherwise, James Walker made a brilliant other-wordly Mercutio, with an electrifying delivery of his Queen Mab speech; Catriona Cahill was the best nurse I have ever seen, very funny and desperately sad. The entire cast performed with understanding and aplomb. It was just that the chorus of grieving on-lookers were so ingeniously directed and well acted, that they conversely sidelined rather than highlighted the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet themselves. Cambridge productions are rarely as good as this. Don't miss it. **Oliver Soden**



KATY KING

***Derek – The Footlights Spring Revue* by James Moran, Keith Akushie & Lucien Young**
ADC Theatre, March 3rd-7th

Dir. James Moran & Lucien Young; Footlights

★★★★★

Watching *Derek* was a bit like watching *Groundhog Day*. Everything should be different because it's a different day, a different sketch. But it's the same. It's the same reliance on swear words to carry the joke through, the same punchlines trailing off, the same self-satisfaction. There was a laziness in the performances – the hope that you can just say anything and, followed with a smug little look to the audience, everything will be alright. *Derek* is never embarrassingly bad, but it is, like the title character, completely mediocre.

Little room was allowed for characterisation; this meant that the jokes came under increasing pressure to be funny, and in *Derek* they just

weren't witty enough. A man having sex with a book is not clever comedy, neither is it risqué enough to shock the audience into laughing. *Derek* was a pick-and-mix selection of different ways to make people laugh, but it failed at all of them, simply because it wasn't quite brave enough to stick it's neck out and take a risk.

This is not to condemn it completely. There are a few nice scenes, it's slick enough, and the acting is generally adequate – although the performances of the two blond males were so similar that they became interchangeable with each other. While it was nice to see the gender balance readdressed, the female performers were either playing men or, worse, were playing women solely in rela-

tion to the male characters.

And it all just seemed like a wasted opportunity. The writers are talented guys and the Spring Revue is the perfect forum for them to experiment. But they didn't. This kind of thing has all been done before, and better. And I, for one, blame Ricky Gervais. *The Office* spawned a number of David Brent impersonators (Ricky Gervais included) who have been riding off the success of it ever since. But this post-David Brent party is fast developing a hangover. The lights have come on and you realise that you've got vomit on your clothes and have been sleeping with the wrong person. *Derek* showed that this type of comedy is fast in need of an aspirin. **Nick Beck**

***The Chairs* by Eugene Ionesco**

ADC Theatre, March 3rd-7th

Dir. Sam Pallis; CUADC

★★★★★

According to Sparknotes (did I really just admit that?), *The Chairs*, which premiered in 1952, was overshadowed that year by Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, which played last month at the Corpus Playroom. I will not let this happen again! *The Chairs* was undoubtedly the best piece of theatre I have seen this term at Cambridge, and the only lateshow where I didn't look at my watch once.

Ionesco's play portrays an elderly couple who have lived alone on an island for seventy-five repetitive years, and they have difficulty remembering their past. Most of the play sees them setting up chairs and greeting invisible guests who have come to hear the old man's message

to the world, and we see their stories and personalities emerging through their interaction with these invisible guests. In the end, an orator appears to reveal the old man's message, but he turns out to be deaf and dumb. This, my friends, is one powerful play.

The Chairs is a seminal example of the genre known as theatre of the absurd, with a characteristic morbid wit and self-conscious comic sensibility that makes us laugh at the most horrific ideas.

And laugh I did. For the majority of the play there is a cast of just two actors, and yet there was a vast amount of energy on stage. Ellie Massie and Oliver Soden portray their characters excellently, and manage to move with apparent

ease between tragic moments of revealed inner strife and hilarious moments of pure comedy. The pair have a great on-stage chemistry and impeccable comic timing. For a decent chunk of the play I was in an unstoppable fit of giggles, as Soden in particular was indescribably funny in his movement around the stage and tone of voice.

The Chairs is a play inundated with meaning and infused with humour, excellently performed by some of Cambridge's finest actors. It just seemed a shame that there were even more empty seats in the audience than on the stage. Become a part of the absurdity and pull up a chair at this week's ADC lateshow. **Lauren Davidson**



ZING TSJENG

Seven Jewish Children ★★★★★ The Importance of Being Earnest ★★★★★ The Vampire ★★★★★ Sodom ★★★★★

The Water Bears ★★★★★ **READ ALL THE REVIEWS AT VARSITY.CO.UK/REVIEWS**

Father/Son by Freddy Syborn

Corpus Playroom, March 3rd-7th

Dir. Freddy Syborn

★★★★★

Father/Son is by Freddy Syborn. I like him immensely. However, when I saw the script last term – friends in high places, darling – I remember thinking that it had the potential to suck. It all hinged on whether the play's central (rather novel) technical device – through which Father and Son talk SIMULTANEOUSLY to their respective loved ones – worked.

And it does work, mostly. The play starts with father and son looking at each other separated by an imaginary line and an equally imaginary mirror. It soon becomes clear that on one side of the divide, father has just died, whilst on the other, son is yet to be born. Such mirroring emphasises the parallels between the two halves of the stage: in one scene, father and son hold identical conversations about Bob Dylan going on

tour; in another, father comes prematurely whilst son whispers, "It's all over now." Call me an English student, but I like that sort of thing (sex and death and mirroring, not premature ejaculation).

I'm not saying it works flawlessly. Son's political earfucking got a bit tiresome, for one thing. And, yes, certainly, one problem with disrupting a temporal medium is that it know **all** which **gets** way **a** you're **bit** supposed **confusing** to **and** be **you don't** looking. But in a way, that works too: hearing two conversations at once means you cannot help but listen only to fragments – it says something powerful, probably, about the lack of communication between father and son. Or something.

Look at me – reviewing the play, not the production. Bugger. Quickly, then: Adam Lawrence is convincingly

angry as your worst nightmare of a King's student, at one point memorably claiming that Milton Friedman was worse than Hitler. Jessie Wyld is engagingly commonsense (yet interesting) as Charlotte, whilst Susie Chrystal is charmingly sweet and bovine as son's sounding-board. Perhaps fittingly, the pick of the bunch is probably Peter Coldam – the chilling tape-recorder voice-over towards the end of the play combines perfectly with his stilted, browbeaten persona onstage to make him at once sympathetic and distant (like everyone's father, really).

Ultimately, this is bold, exciting, innovative and very, very good new writing, it's well acted, it's only 40 minutes long, and even if I thought Freddy Syborn was the biggest shit alive I'd be telling you to go. So do. *George Reynolds*



FREDDY SYBORN

Context



Week 8: Tom Stoppard and The Real Thing

To write one brilliant and very funny play is an accomplishment. To write two or three, as Oscar Wilde did, is extraordinary. To write five or six, as George Bernard Shaw did, is prodigious.

So think what that says about Tom Stoppard, who has written eight: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, *The Real Inspector Hound*, *Jumpers*, *Night and Day*, *The Real Thing*, *On the Razzle*, *Arcadia* and *The Invention of Love*.

He has certainly not lacked recognition along the way. In the forty-three years since *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* first appeared, he has remained a star. In recent years he has won an Academy Award, been the only living playwright not writing in French to have his work performed at the Comédie-Française, received a knighthood, and has been the subject of innumerable studies and biographies.

One of his most famous plays, *The Real Thing* (on next week at the Corpus Playroom) was first produced in 1982 in the West End, and the cast included Roger Rees and Felicity Kendal (who subsequently became Stoppard's second wife). Its commercial and critical success was followed two years later by a sell-out production on Broadway in New York, with Glenn Close and Jeremy Irons in the main roles. This production was very well received and won several Antoinette "Tony" Perry Awards.

Audiences criticised Stoppard's early work, recognising its wit and cleverness, but asking whether the playwright was really able to apply his genius to real life problems, of love and passion for instance. *The Real Thing* can be seen as the play that ended such speculation while also confirming Stoppard's reputation for stylistic experimentalism and innovation.

Nancy Chernin from the *Los Angeles Times* sums this sentiment up well: "Passion is not usually what one looks for amid the intellectual and verbal gymnastics that make Tom Stoppard's writing so stimulating. But that's what drives *The Real Thing*: passion between a man and a woman and passion of that man for language, for finding just the right word to express a meaning."

It is perhaps for this reason it stands out among Stoppard's seven other seminal works. For this was the first time Stoppard showed audiences he had "a heart as well as a head", as Sheridan Morely, of the *Spectator*, put it. *The Real Thing* is both a beautifully witty and clever play, and also the first Stoppard to make you stop, think, *and* feel. It is well worth a look. *Tim Checkley*



TOM MORIARTY

Cardenio

Fitzpatrick Hall, Queens' College, March 3rd-7th

Dir. Laura Hounsom; BATS

★★★★★

Cardenio is Shakespeare's 'lost play,' here re-imagined by Bernard Richards. In spite of its disputed authorship, it fits snugly into the schema of a Shakespearean problem play: neither wholly tragedy nor comedy, it dabbles in a little of both before its resolution, and this production generally strikes that balance well. Thanks for this must go largely to Ben Blyth, who brings a dark charisma to his role which achieves the necessary oscillation between sleazy mischief and shocking violence.

Elsewhere, this balance is achieved less subtly. In an only partially successful search for laughs we are subjected to a profusion of West Country accents (somewhat inexplicable in rural Spain) and a scene of attempted rape, played

here as a sort of sinister slapstick, which unfortunately is never quite funny enough to overcome its inappropriateness.

The standard Jacobean approach to scenery, or the lack thereof, places a huge pressure on the cast to hold the attention. It's a pressure that most buckle under; apart from the aforementioned excellence of Blyth's rendition. Tom Barbour's confident turn as his friend-turned-rival is impressively affecting, but the rest are largely unremarkable. It's amusing, but also distracting, that, as a consequence of this imbalance in the performances, the two male leads have more of a dramatic rapport with one another than they do with their lovers. Alashiya Gordes seemed a little too keen to em-

phasise her maiden honour – apparently addressing all her lines to a spot on the floor in front of her – making her fraught love scenes fall rather flat.

Happily though, the play largely transcends these limitations. The story trips along nicely, and there seems to be enough enjoyment drawn from the poetry of the text, especially in the rhythms of the quick exchanges, to excuse a slight lack of energy. The staging, which attempts to be nothing more than utilitarian, helps by making scene changes short and keeping the whole show moving with enough momentum that by the final bows you'll feel it's been satisfying, if not cathartic or hilarious. This isn't theatre as a feast for the senses, but it's at least a good square meal. *James Marshall*

HARRY BULLIVANT



Historical Fiction by Jenny Boon

Pembroke New Cellars, March 3rd-7th

Dir. Jenny Boon; Pembroke Players

★★★★★

Bizarre. I'm not quite sure I ever really understood what *Historical Fiction* was aiming to be. Was it a comedy? Was it a social commentary? Was it a straight play? I'm not sure the playwright herself knew either. I understand that it is very difficult to write a full-length play, especially alongside doing a degree, but the whole concept of the play seemed utterly silly and pointless.

For the most part, *Historical Fiction* seemed like a competent junior school play: its staging was basic and the vast number of set changes and props being hauled onto stage became vaguely farcical. I felt I was stuffed into a school hall waiting for my little brother

to come on stage. Squeezing 17 actors into the tiny Pembroke New Cellars took me back to those days where everyone got a part in case their parents wrote in and complained.

The production never attempted anything technically or dramatically impressive; the acting was naturalistic which jarred somewhat with the stereotypical characters. The storyline is very strange; it felt like the play had been written as a set text to explore the key themes of an AS General Studies paper. Themes such as the ethics of time travel and defining history were central to the plot. The characters discussed scientific revolutions, happiness and personal fulfilment.

There was nothing excessively bad about the play; it was just rather peculiar. The technique used for time travel was simply the characters ducking behind the desk on the stage, which had about the same dramatic impact as someone dropping a stapler. The staging was rather dodgy too; all of the scenes with characters sitting, either on chairs or on the floor, were completely missed by anyone in the audience further back than the front row.

It is wonderful that there are so many opportunities within Cambridge for new playwrights and all budding actors, and if the cast and crew enjoyed themselves, then I suppose that is something. *Victoria Ball*

iWatch

Week 8: Monty Hall's Great Escape, Sunday 9pm on BBC2, available on BBC iPlayer



Travel, ethical living, grand life changes and property renovation are four ubiquitous staples of modern television, and this new series manages to combine them all. Monty Hall is a marine biologist and professional diver who last year decided to escape the urban stress of life in Bristol, drive fifteen hours north to Scotland's rugged west coast, and start a new life in an isolated crofter's cottage: just him and his dog Reuben.

The point at which, in this grand life-changing scheme, the television crew became involved is uncertain. Was Monty on his way to Scotland when at a service station on the M1 he crossed paths with a marauding camera crew who heard his story and started filming? Or did Monty decide he wanted a life change, wander over to BBC Bristol, knock on the door and immediately be met with a positive response due to the poverty of original commissioning at the BBC? In keeping with the bleary-eyed romanticism of the series, it's probably best not to ask.

Cynicism aside, the first episode certainly has its merits. The aerial shots of Scotland's west coast are entrancing, and as Monty rightly says, "It's a view you don't really expect to see in the British Isles, it looks more like New Zealand and Scandinavia." He spends the whole of the spring renovating a dilapidated old cottage which sits ten feet away from a golden beach overlooking the Isle of Skye. With boyish enthusiasm Monty builds sheep pens, roofs his house, plants vegetables and digs a well, all to the pumping backing track of Arcade Fire – just in case you were tempted to think that sustainable living is not cool.

A cast of local extras provide additional entertainment, as the grizzled highlanders look askew at the nutty eccentric's townie ways. He buys chickens from Donald 'the hen' MacDonald, becomes friends with Keith the pig farmer, and goes out fishing with a rugged old sea-dog named Snoddey. Maybe it is just my pathetically nostalgic temperament, but it is reassuring to see these people still eking out a living in such desolation.

Reducing three months of work into an hour of TV obviously needs some careful editing, and this show was wise enough to make sure every single scene was filled with glorious sunshine. But who would want to even consider that it may have occasionally rained? TV is in the trade of selling blissful dreams, with a bit of sneaky editing.

Rob Peal

MUSIC

Invaders Must Die

The Prodigy

Cooking Vinyl, out now

★★★★★

The Prodigy's new record, *Invaders Must Die*, is an album with big shoes to fill. A favourite of students and ravers alike, the Prodigy spent the nineties enjoying commercial success, critical acclaim and probably quite a lot of drugs. They managed to court controversy whilst still crossing over into the mainstream so successfully that this reviewer remembers getting a sticker of Keith Flint's face free with a copy of *Top of the Pops* magazine. But are the great, genre-crossing tracks that brought them fame and fortune present on this album?

With a subtle, slow-building intro, the title track is a decent album opener. As good as it is however, it did lead to slight concerns that this would be an album of poppy, packaged drum

and bass. The Prodigy's influence spawned a whole generation of new acts; had they resorted to copying their protégées in an attempt to keep up?

My fears were unfounded. This is unmistakably a Prodigy record, though while most, if not all, of these tracks would nestle nicely on a previous release, unfortunately they wouldn't stand out.

Highlights of the album are the collaborations with Foo Fighter (and former Nirvana sticksman) Dave Grohl on the tracks 'Run with the Wolves' and 'Stand Up'. Although an unexpected combination, it's not surprising that it works as well as it does: Grohl's drumming has added power to any track it's graced in the past, and what are the Prodigy known

for if not their intensity? This pairing is both formidable and inspired: it gives these songs an edge over the rest of the album. Grohl should be proud; the drums command these tracks.

Invaders Must Die is the musical embodiment of the phrase 'if it's not broke then don't fix it.' The album has kept the elements of the Prodigy's sound from previous releases (albeit slightly re-freshed and updated to avoid the whole thing sounding like it was snatched straight from the sweaty mitts of a 1994 bedroom DJ). Unfortunately this does make the album a little disposable. This record doesn't move the band forward at all and there is little they've done on this album that they haven't before. The record is definitely enjoyable, and a must for Prodigy fans. But I'm sorry



to say if you were looking for the next 'Firestarter' or 'Smack My Bitch Up', prepare for disappointment.
Lucy Bryant

Enemy Mine

Swan Lake

Jagjaguwar, out March 23rd

★★★★★

One of the most expensive films ever to come out of Germany was *Das Boot*, the story of the German U-Boat U-96 and some of the perilous missions carried out by its crew. Most of the film is set inside the submarine, and one feels a realistically claustrophobic sense of paranoia watching it, since much of it was filmed using a specially-designed hand-held Steadicam which was hauled down steel-lined hallways and had sirens dubbed in co-ordination with the red bulb flashes. After it grossed huge amounts at cinemas worldwide, Wolfgang Peterson, the film's director, decided to take a couple of years out, probably chilling up in Neuschwanstein, and then returned with a complex science-fiction epic with a similar plot line. *Enemy Mine* charts a reptilian humanoid's emotional



quest to get his son Zammis inducted into the Drac Holy Council.

Fortunately for everyone, Canadian supergroup Swan Lake didn't go and pull a Wolfgang on us in making

their own *Enemy Mine*. While the album is certainly complex and most definitely epic, it features significantly fewer skirmishes on planet Fyrine IV. However, with song titles like 'Settle on your Skin' calling to mind Triffid-like exogens, and opener 'Spanish Gold, 2044' suggesting a futuristic setting in former Hispanic colonies, perhaps we shouldn't be so sure.

But our clarification of the album's excellence comes through the faultless music. Clocking in at about 10 minutes shorter than the band's impeccable debut *Beast Moans*, this, the group's second album, is perhaps slightly less broad-ranging in terms of musical themes and styles, but is definitely more cohesive. While consistency in style is not what we have come to expect from

the trio who between them have made a few dozen albums under a myriad of different names, we have come to expect consistency in quality, and *Enemy Mine* certainly doesn't buck this trend. As a trio, Dan Bejar, Carey Mercer and Spencer Krug are perfectly matched, with each artist bringing a unique geological formation to the magma chamber below the caldera of Swan Lake, enough to erupt into a globe-encircling plume of lava bomb-studded rock dust, and to suffocate the ground with a triple-layered pyroclastic sealing.

This band is terrific, as are all their songs. I'm not sure contemporary rock can do much better than this, but then again Wolfgang Peterson did go and make *Air Force One*.

Andrew Spyrou

Mozart, Beethoven and Mendelssohn

The Beethoven Ensemble; conductor: Dan Hill; soloists: Max Baillie, Matthijs Broersma, Ceri Owen

Trinity College Chapel, Saturday February 28th

★★★★★

Intuitive programming once again from the Beethoven Ensemble, as Mendelssohn's Third Symphony echoed the overture to Mozart's Don Giovanni. The latter was given a weighty performance, with an almost deathly slow introduction that imparted a surprising amount of grandeur for such a small orchestra. This gave way to what became an exciting quick section, though string intonation could have been slightly clearer (although this may simply have been the fault of the acoustics).

Mendelssohn's Third, played nearly three weeks after what would have been the composer's two-hundredth birthday, opened with a first chord that wasn't entirely together. Yet this was an enjoyable rendition, if not as viscerally exciting as Mendelssohn-playing can be. The violins worked well, particularly in their exposed

sections in the first movement's introduction, and the move to the exposition was vigorous. The turn to the minor close to the conclusion was magical, and the return to the introduction's themes brought out a sense of architecture rare in student conducting.

The second movement opened with brisk jollity from the first clarinet, and though the chattering winds were well phrased, some of the detail was lost in the tutti passages (though this is not Mendelssohn's clearest orchestration). The slow Adagio opened with another mistimed chord, but the strings displayed a wide variety of tone, from a mournful huskiness to a rhapsodic purity. The finale, however, dragged: a quicker tempo would have given a much greater sense of drama. The over-prominent brass often meant that the primary melody was

obscured by counterpoint. Nevertheless, there was a suitably craggy air to some of the playing, and the flickering woodwinds near the end were highly effective.

Beethoven's Triple Concerto for violin, cello and piano, opened with something of a festive feel. The difficulty with this concerto, is getting the cello to project over both the orchestra and the other soloists: Broersma managed to do this well, especially in the elegiac lament with which the central Largo begins. There was a precision to orchestral parts, and the interplay between violin (Baillie) and cello was often electric, especially in their more virtuosic sections in the finale. Yet the first two movements never really came alive, just lacking that indefinable something that makes a decent performance great.

David Allen



ART, FILM & LITERATURE

Kachōfūgetsu: The Natural World in Japanese Prints

The Fitzwilliam Museum

Until May 17th

★★★★★

The Cambridge History of Art Department has a fanatically microscopic focus. With three millennia of art at its disposal across six continents the department trains its lens almost exclusively on the four big hitters: Italy, France, Germany and Royal Britannia.

The Euro-supremacy of the Emmanuel May Ball Committee has got nothing on the art history syllabus. A series of cartographic divisions mark the boundary lines: no further north than Edinburgh, no further south than Naples, nothing west of Cardiff and nothing east of Berlin. Oh, the freshers are palmed off with the odd token lecture on Islamic Pottery or Pacific Art, but come Part II, it's a steady diet of bella Italia, la belle France, schönes Deutschland and England's Gin Lane.

Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese art exist only as supporting acts to Dürer and Leonardo. Andy Warhol and Jackson Pollock might as well not have bothered. China and India are invoked only when some enterprising merchant from the East India Company imports a tea-set or a sketch of an onion dome back to the salons and drawing rooms of Western Europe. Japan gets its big break in discussions of Manet and his penchant for Japanese prints before slinking back into obscurity. Russia made its debut on the syllabus two years ago and as of next year will be replaced with Byzantium (two fringe courses would be excessive), so small victories are being struck in this territorial war. Nevertheless, the Art Historian might very well graduate from Cambridge

labouring under the misapprehension that no one east of the Berlin Wall had ever had the temerity to pick up a paintbrush and that Western Art History peaked with Raphael and has been on a downhill course ever since.

Hurrah then, for the Fitzwilliam, which fills in the cultural gaps. 'Kachofugetsu: the Natural World in Japanese Prints' is an exquisitely beautiful exhibition of prints by Hokusai (he of Wave fame) and Kitagawa Utamaro. The prints are a master class in bringing the natural world to life. Grasses sway in a breeze made tangible, turtles sink into the shallows with a contented stream of bubbles, and herons watch from river banks with steely eyes.



And if all that foreign food leaves a strange taste in your mouth, there's an adjoining collection of painted and printed studies of shells and insects by those stalwarts of the Western canon, Rembrandt, Hollar and van Kessel.

Laura Freeman

Gran Torino

Dir. Clint Eastwood

Starring: Clint Eastwood, Christopher Carley and Bee Hill

★★★★★

Gran Torino is Clint Eastwood's story of a Korean War veteran living in the midwest of America. The plot centres on Walt Kowalski and his vintage 1972 sports car, which becomes a symbol of reconciliation and ageless heroism. He lives alone, maintains tenuous relationships with his children and struggles through a life of hostile regret for the crimes against humanity he committed as a soldier. Through various steps of interactive fate, Walt becomes integrated into the area's Hmong community, till he realises that he has more in common with them "than my own spoilt, rotten kids".

What doesn't really convey is what this film is actually about. I'm not sure whether it's about racism, or old age against youth, or gang warfare, or class

distinctions, or, in the oh-so-Western sense, 'doing the right thing'. You could say it does all these things, but the thread of connection is half-worked through, so that all the issues it attempts to address are not left wide open; they are closed down and packaged in a neat Hollywood ending.

While it does contain a heart-warming story of a friendship between a man and a boy, both of whom were looking for their half of the father/son combo, the complex issue of race is used more as a heavy weight for a serious film. Two thirds of the film is made up of almost slapstick casual racism, though it redeems itself swiftly in an impeccably constructed instance of reality that does resonate to some extent. However, Eastwood's automatic shift back into the

Western hero, in both his direction and his acting, is a disappointing surprise and a far stretch from the poignancy which *Million Dollar Baby* gave us.

At first, it seemed impressive that the racist insults seemed to become less and less important, and that the intention behind them was well investigated and portrayed. As this racial hate is shed off, Eastwood once again becomes a man simply fighting an evil; though unconventionally, you see, because he hates the Church. In the end, this is a film which has let the others such as *Do the Right Thing* and *American History X* do the work for it. The story of the film presents a triumph, but it doesn't triumph the issues it presents, which remain strictly situational. Heather Iqbal



The Socialite Manifesto

Christiana Spens

Burning House, out now

★★★★★

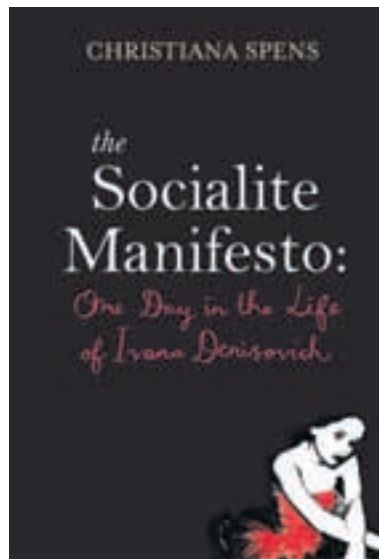
Though the new book by Christiana Spens (a current Homerton student) alternates between her own input and space left for the reader's, it would be generous to think that such artistic sparseness invites genuine collaboration. Rather, in leaving half her pages unmarked, the author forces us to generate the narrative interest and character development her own work neglects. Of the protagonist we are told teasingly to "make her [Ivana] You" since she is in fact "...whoever you want her to be", and yet the caveats present themselves almost instantly: Ivana Denisovich can be whoever you want her to be, providing she's a distant, 18 year old, drug-abusing, sexually-charged Camdenite with a troubled past. Solzhenitsyn's everyman war prisoner she most certainly is not.

Once this pretence of open-mind-

edness gives way it's hard to take the heroine seriously; in advertising Ivana's odyssey as 'the socialite manifesto', the tone is slangy, teenage and somewhat trying. But of course the stereotyped protagonist and asinine title have nothing on the book's actual content. Coming on like an A-level Art course-work folder, *The Socialite Manifesto* takes us on a tour of angsty drawings, frustrating the reader with caricatures so melodramatic and quips so undemanding on anything but our patience. Thus, a compromised model bears the pun "Let them Eat Coke"; trampling red stilettos are glossed as "killer heels", while a clique of girls around a mirror are explained away as "Boring, Boring Boring..." Such blasé engagement with her subject matter allows for an irony which is at best limp-wristed.

Spens does, however, treat us to the occasional flicker of insight. 'Nose-bleed in New York' proves particularly fertile: a fragile sketch flecked with some at least well-meant poetry, the piece showcases another tawny starlet, nosebleed spraying suggestively onto her mouth to become lipstick. The way Spens melds images of violence and glamour here is tender yet cutting, not to mention the closest she comes to making a thought-provoking point. Nevertheless, this highpoint is a rare one and its relevance to Ivana's journey is also somewhat uncertain.

In the conclusion of the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx urged the workers of the world that they had '...nothing to lose but your chains'; all Spens's readers have to lose, this manifesto suggests, is their £12.99. Eliot D'Silva



Take V

Lent Term 2009



EMILY MATTHEWS

Five of the Best

The snow

Hey, winter arrived at last! Cue a profusion of photographs of cheekily gurning snowmen in front of famous Cambridge landmarks.

800th Anniversary

Just as the finishing touches were being put to London Bridge and Genghis Khan was conquering Turkestan, 1209 saw the University found by a few migrant scholars. 800 years later, and we have 31 Colleges, 83 Nobel Laureates and Cindies. Brilliant.

Law Faculty occupation

Your views may be ambivalent, and '60s throwbackery may not be to everyone's taste, but these students were admirably proactive and got the University talking.

Breakfast at Night

People said: "Breakfast at Night? It'll never work, it sounds as silly as lunch at three in the morning." But the cynics were wrong. This Week 2 ADC Lateshow was a great example of new writing, definitely one of the funniest shows this term.

Comedy at the Junction

Mark Watson, Josie Long and David O'Doherty? Keep 'em coming!

Five of the Worst

The snow

Day 1: jubilation for the precipitation. Every other day: ice, not nice.

The norovirus

Sidney Sussex's two-day sick bug takes its place in the bottom five not only for the violent vomiting, but for spawning an army of mask-wearing disinfectant-sprayers as well.

First Class Teas closure

Your one-stop shop for parents' Christmas presents sadly shut for good this term.

Dodgy Alan's Alternative Dating Agency

Of course there hasn't been just one shoddy play this term, but this looked like a shocker as soon as we heard the name. Tell you what, next time there's a high quality piece of theatre called something along the lines of *Dodgy Alan's Alternative Dating Agency* we'll eat our hats.

Easter Term 2009

With Lent Term coming to a close, the inevitable exam term comes around. Be afraid, be very afraid. Actually don't, just get through the exams, and we'll be in May Week before you know it!

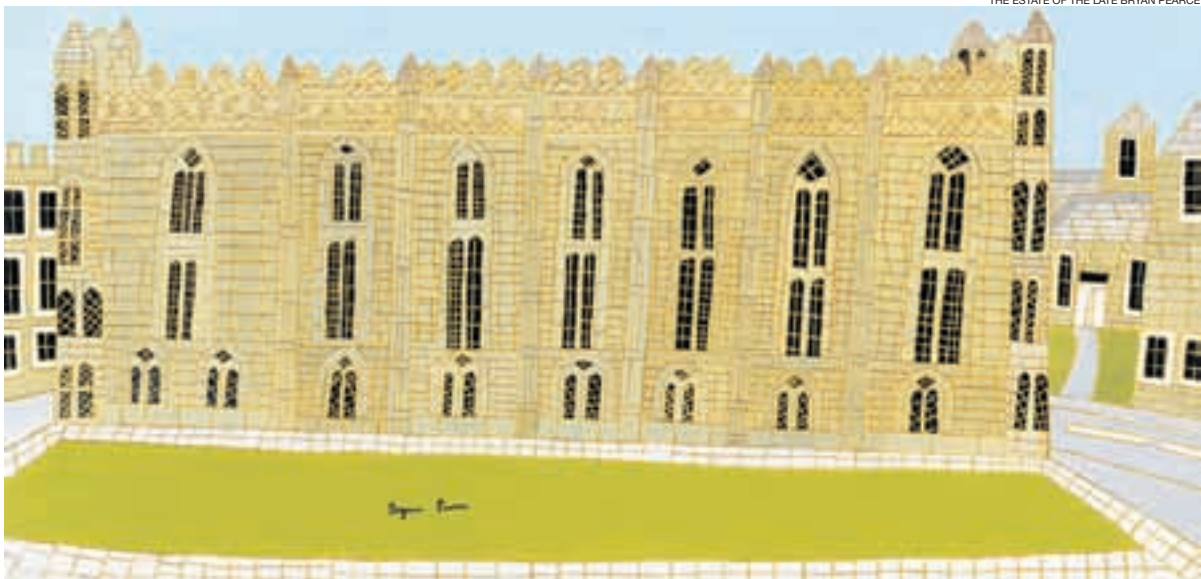
Great Works Of Art In Cambridge
#26: King's College Chapel, Cambridge by Bryan Pearce
Kettle's Yard

You're not alone if you think this is the wrong column for the work of Bryan Pearce. A few of his unstarry oil paintings grace the walls in the annexe of Kettle's Yard. His marine portraits are wholly eclipsed by the less vibrant, but better renowned works of Alfred Wallis. These sea shanties and sailors' ditties are well at home in the driftwood ambience of Jim Ede's home.

Open any art dictionary and you won't find "Pearce, Walter Bryan, painter, b St Ives, 21 July 1929; d St Ives, 11 Jan 2007" among its pages. He is a relative unknown. However, during his lifetime he was the subject of seven monographs (by six different authors), held over 38 one-man exhibitions, and was positively revered in the prodigious Art Colony of St Ives, Cornwall. Ede was a champion of the artist, claiming that the pure simplicity of Pearce's paintings rivalled that of works by quattrocento master Fra Angelico.

Pearce suffered from the rare genetic disease Phenylketonuria, which severely stunted his learning and communication skills. Nursed for most of his life by his mother Mary (d 1997), herself an amateur painter, he found relief and

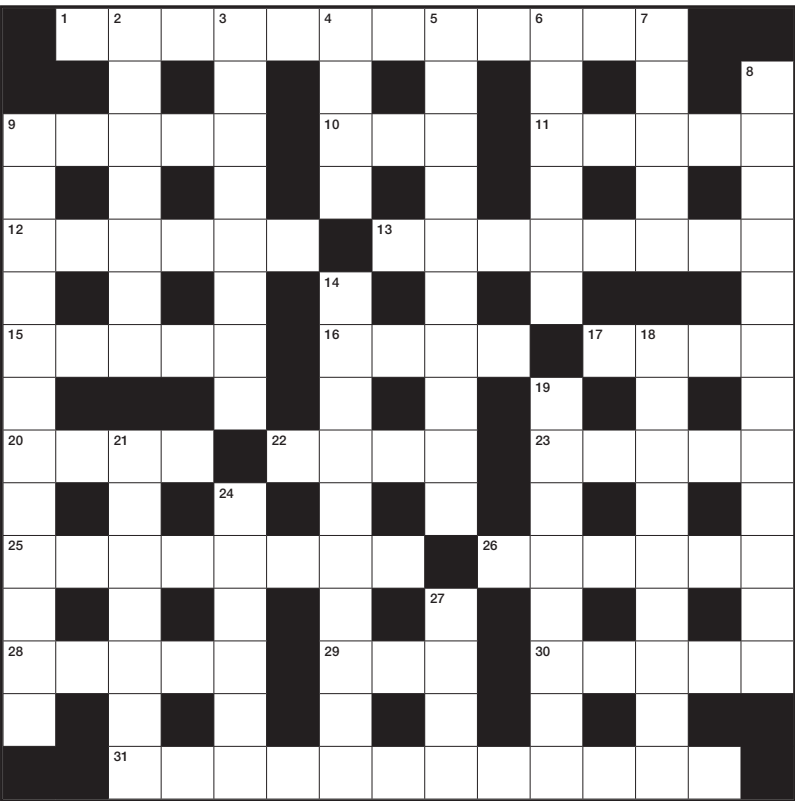
rehabilitation through painting. Proud of her son's individual style, Pearce's mother boasted, "Bryan isn't influenced by anyone... he's not interested in paintings by other artists and he doesn't look at art books".



Games & puzzles

Varsity Crossword

no. 502



- 23 Irritate speaker and he loses his head. (5)
25 Maid is covered in messy sperm and loses momentum. They're a bit wet. (8)
26 Golden gate cake. (6)
28 Scarf used as cottage cheese container. (5)
29 Resistance, initially - oh, holy Moses! (3)
30 Circle rating in death notice. (5)
31 Neighbourly character is trouble for one of London's natives. (6,6)

Down

- 2 Warm chicken? That's ungodly! (7)
3 Misfortunes of lake in the lady. (8)
4 Worker has no victory with this kind of service. (4)
5 Onion makes Santa break down in Alamo city. (3,7)
6 Petitions without even the beginning of interest in steps formed with nine-in-one. (6)
7 Caress gangsta chain. (5)
8 In a stir Henry bet Luke that this is one for unpleasant types. (8,4)
9 Shredded map of Seattle fills shoes in one way. (6,2,4)
14 Don in bondage - phone for one. (3,3,4)
18 Users of one might refer to this tea with no nouns and verbs - in fact, no words at all! (9)
19 One crypt about another - get air conditioning in. (8)
21 It's smoked crocodile penis, diced. (7)
24 He doesn't eat quicker. (6)
27 Frost is up to ruler. (4)

Set by Hythloday

Across

- 1 My glaring confusion with NHS is intended to perplex outsiders. (7,5)
9 It shortly appears that these can be climbed with six-in-one. (5)
10 Transportation up front. (3)
11 Poke (perhaps 17) and get honour for spin. (5)
12 Nature feels this way about my

- hoover - brush, but with love. (6)
13 Strike jackass in the crotch - it's instinctual. (4-4)
15 Wise man can make drug, I hear. (5)
16 Bull on the other place. (4)
17 Particular about sex. (4)
20 Goblin with a killer. (4)
22 This garment sounds like the hardest word. (4)

Answers to last week's crossword (no. 501)
Across: 1 One across, 6 Siege, 9 Boudoir, 10 Texting, 11 Dollars, 12 Slowest, 13 About-face, 15 Not so, 16 Tiara, 19 Taken down, 22 Lifts up, 23 Demotic, 25 Purcell, 26 Morceau, 27 Sites, 28 Two across. Down: 1 Orbed, 2 Equal to, 3 Coolant, 4 Ogres, 5 So to speak, 6 Six down, 7 Evident, 8 Eight down, 13 Antelopes, 14 Autopilot, 17 At first, 18 Answers, 20 Numeric, 21 On the go, 23 Dumbo, 24 Clues.

LION KING ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 13): "Look Scar," you elaborate, "it has nothing to do with my art-house predilections. It's just that the script was shit, the songs weren't catchy, and the voice talent was lacking." Unfortunately, several members of the hustings audience disagree vehemently: "Bollocks to that," one says. "The Lion King 2: Simba's Pride is actually the best Disney sequel ever. Every character has depth, and all in all, it's comparable in quality with a film like Aladdin, and that's saying something." Indeed, your lack of cinematic nous goes on to cost you the election.

Sex in the University City



Week 8: Zoophilia

Have you wondered why so many Cambridge tutors keep veritable 'petting pens' in their College rooms? Recent research may have the answer: after farm workers of course, academics are indeed the group most likely to be closet zoophiles - those who fall deeply and sexually in love with animals.

And why not? Socially retarded intellectuals often long for a lover who will let them drone on about their doctorate, not interrupt with intelligent questions, and even allow them a quick nuzzle afterwards. And who better than a captive pet who can only yowl faintly in boredom and distress?

And once you start to look for it, zoophilia really is everywhere. Ten minutes spent browsing on the freely available video website zootube.com should count towards some kind of advanced anatomy module: it's an eye-watering kaleidoscope of pornographic farmyard combinations. If you've got a serious concern about how 'girl-on-horse-on-dog-on-dwarf-on-chicken' works, this is your new Wikipedia.

Hoping to obliterate the fuzzy (and furry...) footage from zootube, I began to leaf through a volume of renaissance love poetry. Almost immediately I chanced upon a striking little vignette depicting a rather naughty monkey vigorously pleasuring a surprised (yet gratified) young lady beneath her apron. And it's not just an academic interest. A giant goat, muzzle smeared with red lipstick, flowers in its fur, heavy lashed come-to-bed eyes and an erotically pulsing head currently adorns the window of the Cambridge branch of White Stuff. It left me wondering, does sexed up livestock really sell smart casuals these days?

Media scandals involving abuse of trust and paedophilia have now become commonplace in universities. So how would a don found in a compromising clinch with the college cat fare before a university tribunal? Would the feline be classed as an equal or as a minor? Should the university be obliged to defend the honour of the creature as one of its own? Or would the incident be hushed up; too taboo (or not taboo enough) to warrant serious investigation?

A zoophile sex scandal seems unlikely. Yet judging by the well known limerick about Johnians, sodomy, dons and swans, even when it comes to bestiality, Cambridge will give as good as it gets.

Isabel Taylor

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.

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

Last week's solution

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

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If you have any questions, please e-mail the current editors, Hugo Gye & Michael Stothard, on editor@varsity.co.uk.

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Quick Catch-up

College Catch-up

Football Plate

On Saturday Pembroke faced Downing in the semi-final of the Football Plate competition. As leaders of Div. 1, Downing came into the match as favourites, but it was Pembroke who took the lead after a corner-kick was headed in by Frank Gorringe.

Downing reacted positively to the early goal and soon equalised with a well-worked corner to the back post. Minutes later Downing's centre mid found space outside the area, and struck the ball into the bottom corner to put them ahead.

But Pembroke refused to release their grip on the game and kept the deficit to just one at half time.

Injuries forced substitutions for Pembroke, including Omar Kadhim who went on to score in the 70th minute. 2-2 at full time and no change after a further 30 mins; the game went to penalties.

Pembroke calmly slotted their first three, then Robert France stepped up for Pembroke, beating the keeper with ease to send his team through the final after a memorable victory.

Varsity Catch-up

Mountain Biking

Cambridge rode to an impressive victory in the Mountain Bike Varsity Match on Sunday.

In the 1.5 hour cross country race held at Crowthorne Woods in Berkshire, both the Cambridge First and Second teams finished ahead of Oxford's first rider. More promising still, the entire first team consisted of freshers.

Former GB squad rider Shaun Hurrell (Catz) put in an impressive ride to take overall victory. Andrew Nichols (Sidney Sussex) recovered well from an early crash to finish in second place, with Philip Buckham-Bonnett (Selwyn) coming third.

The result bodes well for the forthcoming BUCS Champs.

Varsity Catch-up

Rugby Fives

Cambridge had a very young and inexperienced VIII with four freshmen and one other debutant; Oxford had far greater strength in all departments. It was no surprise, therefore, that Cambridge found themselves well behind after the singles and could make no inroads in the doubles.

The third and fourth pairs fought valiantly, and successfully, to amass sufficient points to avoid the embarrassment of the heaviest defeat for Cambridge in the history of the game. The final result was 298-109.

The Light Blues expect to be stronger next year but will find it difficult to match Oxford's talent, especially with no courts in Cambridge to practise on. A heavy burden will fall on the new captain to motivate and bring on his players.

Cambridge Craven a win

ROWING HYPE BUT FOOTBALL HOPE. VARSITY REVEALS THE CONFIDENCE OF THE CAMBRIDGE BLUES

The 125th football Varsity Match will be played at Craven Cottage on Sunday 29th March (the same day as the Boat Race), and the Blues are feeling hopeful.

After a stop-start season, somewhat disrupted by copious amounts of the dreaded white stuff, they are now looking to get back on track in time for the big match.

Captain and left winger Jamie Rutt is quietly confident, regardless of the setbacks: "After the disruption caused by the snow we've responded well and strung some strong performances together in recent weeks. Hopefully we can keep that going over the final few weeks. Competition for places is stronger than in any year whilst I have been here and I know we will be more than a match for Oxford come the 29th."

The Cambridge squad contains a couple of key players. Ali Hakimi has been a rock at the heart of the Blues

defence all season. Strong in the tackle and virtually unbeatable in the air, they are hoping he will be able to keep the Oxford attack quiet.

At the other end of the pitch, Matt Amos has been back in the squad since Christmas and has put in some top performances, scoring some crucial goals in the process. A scorer in last year's Varsity Match, he will be looking to add to his tally in a few weeks' time.

A worry is that Amos's usual partner up front, Jesus' Michael Johnson, is unlikely to play in the match. Having sprained his ankle quite badly against Northampton, he was forced to watch his College team overcome Girton from the sidelines in the Cuppers semi-final on Tuesday.

The team have five fixtures left to play and will be looking to build a little momentum and finalise their team choices whilst avoiding any more last-minute injuries.



Michael Johnson is a serious injury worry

SOPHIE PICKFORD

Light Blue boxers look to throw heavy punches

CAMBRIDGE TRY TO RECLAIM THEIR CROWN IN THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE AMATEUR CALENDAR



Boxing training has been intense in the Varsity build-up

VIN SHEN BAN

On Tuesday the Old Billingsgate, London, will host the most eagerly awaited night of boxing in the amateur calendar. The running total is as close as it could be; Cambridge winning by 49 to Oxford's 48. Oxford have won the last three Varsity Matches, using the same experienced squad throughout. This year, however, many of them have graduated, making room for a fresh group of faces for our boys to smash around.

The Cambridge team includes two returning Blues from a nine-man squad, and their experience will be needed. Form this season has been on and off. A good win over the Army in November gave reason for optimism, but some lower-than-average performances against a strong town side may have stripped one or

two boxers of their confidence.

For sheer punching power, look to Adrian Teare and Ed Chadwick (middleweight), who knocked out an officer of the Metropolitan Police force a couple of weeks ago. If it's tactic and technique you're after, you ought to enjoy Will Rees's bout. Ieuan Marsh has impressed in his first year in the squad with his aggressive hunter's mentality inside the ring, while Chris Webb, making the transition from kickboxing, was the star of the show against the Town team.

Although what they do inside the ring is up to themselves, it will be important that the boxers develop the same team mentality as any other Light Blue side, if they are to make the best of the evening.

Thumping win crowns rugby league season

Jenny Morgan

The Rugby League boys have been one of the most successful Cambridge outfits this season. After storming wins in their last seven matches, they rocked up at Twickenham Stoop last night full of confidence for the Varsity encounter, which was televised on Sky Sports 3. Led by Matt Bray in his third Varsity Match, they were out to avenge last year's defeat.

After an Oxford start, the Light Blues worked their way up the pitch, running into some crunching tackles then halted by an offside offence. Their next drive soon turned against them though as an intercepted pass handed Oxford the chance to charge down the pitch and take the first points with a try for James Batstone on ten minutes.

Cambridge were soon back on the attack, winning a scrum after Oxford knocked on just in front of their own try line. The opportunity was engineered into a try for captain Matt Bray, converted by James Hunt to take Cambridge ahead.

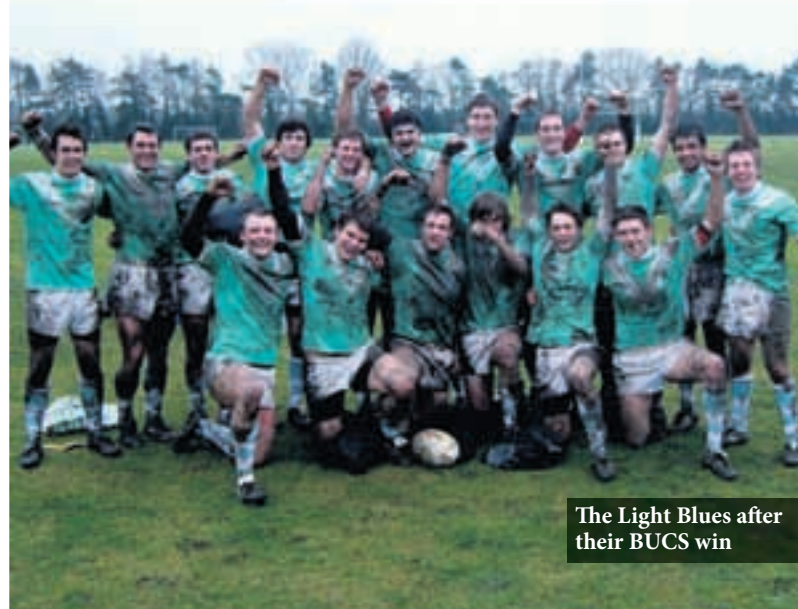
Cambridge	20
Oxford	4

Mistakes aplenty left the match in the balance in the run-up to half time. A foolish penalty for interference gifted Cambridge another two points, to go into the tunnel 8-4 up.

Cambridge hit the ground running at the restart, and Oxford indiscipline handed them another penalty to stretch the score further. Not yet beaten, there were several dangerous Dark Blue breaks through the middle, and the Cambridge tackling was hardly inspiring.

But the stream of handling errors from the Oxford players meant that nearly every attack was lost and the Light Blues kept their heads to keep their lead. A try set up by Aaron Sonnenfeld for Ignacio Quintana confirmed the win, with Joe Pitt-Rashid providing the icing on the cake with another.

20-4 at full time: a suitably strong end to an epic season.



The Light Blues after their BUCS win

REPORTS

Footballers fail to hold off Oxford

» Mistakes in defence see women fall foul of an Oxford onslaught

Jenny Morgan

Saturday brought another big Varsity occasion. And with the Cambridge crowd stood several deep at the Fenner's pitches, the Women's Blues prepared to perform in this the 49th Varsity confrontation.

Nervous from the start, Cambridge found themselves on the back foot immediately. Danielle Griffiths and Lizzie Richardson had their work cut out in defence, and Leesa Haydock was on hand to head away a corner within the first few minutes. There was nothing to fault in this early defensive performance, and the Blues sat back and let Oxford run at them, confident in their ability to neutralise the threat.

When the ball was cleared, however, Cambridge were lacking in front runners to get on the end of some hefty, looping passes up field. A couple of chances went wanting for the Light Blues, as the Oxford defence literally threw themselves in front and somehow scrambled the ball away. Indicative of the general messiness of the play, it was a full twenty minutes before the first saves of the match were made by the Oxford keeper.

Messy at this end of the field, it was however inescapable that Oxford were the more structured in their phase play in midfield. Cambridge were sparse in attack and getting to the ball second every time, and the defence were increasingly left with no option but to

Cambridge	0
Oxford	2

clear off the pitch and into the crowd. Hardly inspirational football from either team, the first half ended an unexciting 0-0.

Within two minutes of the restart, excitement of the wrong kind was injected as a marking error in defence left an Oxford striker free to hoof the ball over the head of the goalie to take the lead. Jolted awake, the Light Blues finally took the initiative and gave the crowd something to shout about.

Straight back on the attack, Cambridge won first a free kick and then a series of direct shots, though frustratingly these all went wide or into the waiting arms of the keeper. Maisie-Rose Byrne and Kate Robinson worked beautifully up the two wings, but the absence of options in the middle of the park meant that the team often failed to convert chances into any real advantage.

Then, almost in slow motion, Oxford received the ball in attack, dribbled round two defenders and snuck the shot into the left corner to edge even further ahead. Cambridge might have had the possession, but Oxford were having all the luck.

The final quarter of an hour was torture to watch. The Light Blues were giv-

ing their all, Leesa Haydock in particular battling her way physically through the midfield to deliver the ball to her forwards. But time after time the chances were missed, and disbelief turned to despair for the Cambridge contingent both on and off the field. In the dying seconds, even, the ball rebounded off the woodwork, agonisingly off target

once again.

Cambridge had paid the ultimate price for their first half lethargy, and Oxford had got lucky with their attacking chances. With the seconds having lost earlier in the day, this is a club that will have to pick itself up now at the end of the season in order to come back for revenge in 2010.



A Dark (Blue) day for Cambridge hockey

» Hockey girls show fighting spirit while men are humbled in shock defeat

Anna Stanley & Becca Langton

This Tuesday saw the 109th women's and men's hockey Varsity Matches. Last year the women only lost out narrowly and were eager to prove they were every bit as good as their Dark Blue opposition, having lost to them previously on two occasions in the BUSC South Premier League.

This motivation could be seen from the off as Cambridge impressed spectators with great passing and pressure, creating a clear chance with only 37 seconds played. Centre forward Jenny Stevens managed to exploit the sleepiness of the dark blue defence by skillfully slipping the ball past the Oxford keeper and the Cambridge Blues were set to dominate this game.

Fighting hard for fifty-fifties, Lisa Noble did a fabulous job as centre midfielder, keeping Oxford captain CJ under control, and helping the defence move the ball out of the tight press. Continuous movement by all three forwards and good passing up both sides of the pitch enabled Cambridge to keep the pressure up. A few short corners were won, but the Light Blues struggled with the logging Oxford keeper, who made some good saves and helped her team stay in the game.

After a period of intense pressure, the Cambridge women sat back and were soon punished when a ball up the left hand side was crossed into the D, where the Oxford forward was already waiting. Cambridge were then frustrated when the umpire took away an advan-

Cambridge Men	1
Oxford Men	4

tage which led to a goal. Going into half time, the score one apiece, Cambridge clearly looked the better side.

The second half saw the Dark Blues up the pressure but Cambridge was not going to give up just yet. Hannah Rickman's passing enabled Anna Stanley to make some quick runs with the ball, taking on the Oxford defenders and trying to find her fellow forwards in the D. Emma Goater and Mel Addy tried to press up the right but the short corners which they won went unconverted. A ball back to the injector was stopped by Oxford on the line and prevented the Light Blues from taking the lead, but that is how close they got.

It simply was not meant to be; luck definitely was not on their side. Slightly disheartened by the lack of returns for their constant pressure, Cambridge sat back and let Oxford take charge once more, paying the price when a short corner was converted. The Light Blues continued to push for the equaliser but in the end lost 2-1. Cambridge felt they were the better side in this game and proved they are a force to be reckoned with, but unfortunately for them this just was not enough.

Having dominated Oxford for two years, the Cambridge men's Blues team were confident. With a team

brimming with talented freshers, of whom three are internationals and one a national league player, along with a number of seasoned Varsity participants, Cambridge stepped onto the pitch anticipating the chance to even the day's score.

Starting positively with searing runs from the midfield, Scotland-capped Nick Parkes took the game into the opposition half, and with his customary flare Jack Yelland finished neatly to bring the light blues the advantage early in the first half. The midfield were positive on the attack; David Bell distributed well from the centre while vice-captain Stuart Jackson was only inches from stretching the lead on a number of occasions.

The game was inevitably a physical one and fast-paced. Nevertheless Cambridge seemed to find it difficult to establish a hold on the game. Play was end to end with both teams eager to press on the D. Keeper Chris Robinson was superb in goal, thwarting a number of Oxford attempts but the chance to capitalise on the lead when they were in possession passed Cambridge by.

With the midfield clearly struggling to find their feet it was once again the stalwart defence of captain David Saunders and record-breaking seven-time Blue Jez Hansell that meant Cam-

bridge were able to enter the half-time break with the one goal advantage.

Five minutes into the second half, Cambridge were punished as they looked the other way. John Fedderson opened Oxford's account and with the support suffering from the bleak rain and biting cold winds, it seemed as though the match might be played out to the draw.

Man of the Match Rupert Allison was keen to keep the pace of the game up, however, and while Oxford were quick to shut down the Light Blue attack, Allison picked out keyhole spaces to thread passes through to Jonny Knight, who was unlucky not to pull back the lead. It was only in the last quarter that the game finally found its stride and unfortunately it was in Oxford's favour.

David Madden was inspirational at the back, however his best efforts were not strong enough to keep out an aggressive Dark Blue attack. Thomas Lockton took the game to 2-1 with a masterful reverse stick strike into the back of the net. In the last ten minutes Alex Evans found the goal again and Cambridge, piling forward in a last ditch attempt at evening the scores, left themselves vulnerable at the back. John Fedderson rubbed salt in Cambridge's open wounds as he scored his second of the match to seal the deal and regain the trophy for Oxford.

The final score was 4-1 to the Dark Blues, a less than ideal result and not one that reflected the ability, tenacity and strength of the Cambridge side.

Cooney's Marathon



Lauren Cooney

Week 8

In which Lauren faces the physio and comes out laughing...

I always used to be incredibly impressed if people told me they were going for 'Physio'. Woah, they must be really bloody sporty, yeah. 'Physio' was a self-inflicted pain, it meant that you worked out, that you persevered, that you took one for the team.

More than that, it meant a regular massage, which seemed very luxurious in the face of my own experience of the Thai sort in the Thai sorta place in Thailand. This involved my mate Lucie and I on our backs on adjacent beach towels, whilst uncharacteristically humungous Thai women twisted our legs past each other's faces. Funny. Not so relaxing.

'Physio' was a new sort of massage, a classy sort of massage, the gentleman's massage. It was the sort of massage that took place on a leather clad chaise lounge once a week. I imagined a glossy, but gentle-fingered, hunk called 'Mert' rubbing lavender oil into my feet whilst jogging on the spot in his satin tracksuit.

Imagine the horror when I met Jim, who managed to lose his cup of tea twice in our 90-minute session, and explained in gruesome detail, the soft mound of skin he has "protruding between me left thigh and me perineum". Verbatim. Jim, for all his charm, succeeded in stripping me to my knickers after only five minutes pre-amble and then inflicted SUCH pain mixed with MUCH TICKLING. I was laughing because that it is how I deal with wanting to kick someone in the face, which differs from the squeal I emitted three years ago whilst having acupuncture. The lady apologised for hurting me and promised to avoid my lower back without realising she had actually found my g-spot.

Although I restrained from kicking Jim I couldn't hold my tongue, but Jim was unfazed having just returned from the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championships. He had decided that everything, including an Irish man yelling "You Cant", sounded sweet. At the end of the 90 minutes I asked if I would be fully recovered for the Marathon.

"By June?!"
"Erm, no, by April..."

For the time being I am required to make alphabet shapes with my feet for half an hour each day, and I've signed myself up for the Silverstone half next week. If the shin splintz (they get a z cos they are bad, man) prove themselves, I might have to resort to running the marathon in a tutu or next pseudo-comedic costume to warrant an 8hr plod. I'll cross my splintz that this is not my swan song, and divert your attention to that lovely website, hoping that you might ignore my stint in rehab and just throw your wallets at your computer screens: <http://www.cambridgerapecrisis.co.uk/>

Sport Feature: Boat Race Preview

Blades Out

VARSITY SPORT BRINGS YOU THE FACTS AND THE FORM GUIDE FOR THIS YEAR’S BOAT RACE

What goes on...

The Boat Race tradition was begun in 1829, when a student from St John's challenged his friend from Oxford to a race at Henley. After several years of disagreements the annual challenge finally got underway and has continued largely unchanged to the present day.

Several years have been particularly dramatic. The politics of selection led to Oxford mutinies in 1959 and 1987, and more recently the media latched onto the Livingston brothers rowing in opposite boats in 2003. And who could forget the 1978 race, when Cambridge sank on the final stretch, recently named the 79th Greatest Sporting Moment.

Cambridge currently lead the overall series 79-74, with one Race declared a dead-heat since 1829. This year they will be rowing in a boat recently named by His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, 'The 800th'. The Race will be screened live on ITV1, coverage beginning at 2.30pm.

Over the next week, Cambridge's race preparation is finalised by racing two top-flight rowing clubs, the Molesey and Leander Boat Clubs. Both clubs are expected to select first-choice crews in order to test their winter preparation in time for their forthcoming Head of the River Race. With World- and Olympic-level athletes in the lineups, this will be a stern test for Cambridge in the run up to their big day.



Colin Smith and Henry Pelly, opposing Presidents, at the crew announcement

The crews for the 155th Boat Race were announced on Wednesday morning, and Cambridge look to be in for a tough time.

Oxford are fielding five Olympic rowers this year including several internationals.

GB silver medallist and OUBC President Colin Smith and his Team GB team mate Tom Solesbury will join New Zealand's bronze medalist George Bridgewater, Croatian Olympian Ante Kusurin and Dutch star Sjoerd Hamburger in the starting line-up. Returning Blue Michal Plotkowiak (2007) from Poland takes up the crucial Bow position.

In fact, the line-up has been described as just short of Olympic standard. The Oxford coach Sean Bowden believes that it is one of the strongest crews in years, and is quietly confident of their chances at taking a fourth consecutive win.

However there is no escaping the variable nature of this particular race: "We have a technically strong and experienced crew but we still recognise the challenge that Cambridge represent this year and we are continuing to push ourselves to prepare for the Race."

Oxford Crew

Bow - Michal Plotkowiak
2 - Colin Smith
3 - Alex Hearne
4 - Ben Harrison
5 - Sjoerd Hamburger
6 - Tom Solesbury
7 - George Bridgewater
Stroke - Ante Kusurin
Cox - Colin Groshong

The Light Blues look certain to have their work cut out against this strong Oxford crew.

Cambridge Head Coach, Chris Nilsson, has five returning 2008 Blues including American Ryan Monaghan, who is joined by British crew members Henry Pelly, the CUBC President, plus Tom Ransley, Peter Marsland and cox Rebecca Dowbiggin (2007 and 2008).

Pelly has rowed for the GB Quad at U23 level whilst his team mates Ransley and Marsland will all be contending for GB international vests this summer. It is inescapable however that all are as yet somewhat behind their Oxford counterparts in experience.

Some have rowed for years. Ranley started eight years ago and Monaghan took to the water at sixteen. Others are a little bit newer to the sport: Marsland only took it up three years ago after a series of rugby injuries.

Coach Nilsson is up for the challenge: "I've pushed them harder on occasions than they have been pushed before. But we had to go there and they now know what they are capable of. We are up against a much stronger boat but I still believe we can win."

Cambridge Crew

Bow - Rob Weitemeyer
2 - Henry Pelly
3 - Deaglan McEachern
4 - Peter Marsland
5 - Ryan Monaghan
6 - Hardy Cubasch
7 - Tom Ransley
Stroke - Silas Stafford
Cox - Rebecca Dowbiggin

FORMER PRESIDENT OF CUBC TOM JAMES TALKS TEAM TACTICS WITH JENNY MORGAN

If anyone knows the Boat Race, it's Tom James, four time rowing Blue and Olympic gold medalist in Beijing. The rowing star took time out this week from a skiing holiday to run through his thoughts on this year's race.

After all, the Boat Race is unlike any other in the rowing calendar. With no heats, reps, and semis to 'warm up', no other crews, it's just you and them, no second chance.

The atmosphere is completely different, explains Tom. In an international race, "the start is very quiet, the crowds are usually just at the finish and really the viewing figures are not that large. The Boat Race, however, is viewed by 250,000 people on the bank, with about 70,000 people watching the start."

It can be incredibly difficult to block all of that out and manage to focus on the task in hand. Moreover the history and prestige of the occasion only add to the tension, with Old Blues taking an avid interest long after their time in the boat.

The pressure can make or break a crew. Individual rowers must deal with their nerves in order to ensure top performance. "Some like to get very wound up before the race and be very aggressive, while some like to stay calm and relaxed and let the

occasion get them into the right mind set. Basically you need to be confident, strategically prepared and determined that you are going to get everything you have put into training right on race day."

The programme of races in the run up to the big day is put in place to help the crew develop a race routine and learn how to deal with their own personal reaction to pressure.

The extensive media coverage of the event can exacerbate these issues. It doesn't necessarily help to come in with too much confidence. "Ideally, if you are professional enough you should be able to ignore the public perception, or betting odds put on you – but everyone is human and especially in the boat race where it is very much a two horse race you find the label of 'favourite' can be very

damaging."

The personal pressure is also immense. The crew have fought hard to win their place and for many the time constraints of a degree course mean that this could be their only or their last chance.

The Boat Race means everything to the people involved. Even for Tom, winning in his fourth and final attempt, when he was CUBC President, is right up there with Olympic gold. "They're both very special moments for me in my life; very different memories which I'm sure I'll remember equally in time to come."

With this in mind, his advice to this year's crew is to get out there and enjoy it. "It's very easy to get carried away with the hype, emotion and expectation on the day but the best outcome will come from sticking to what you know best and being ruthless in executing it." The guys have put in the hours of training and pursued rigorous nutritional and lifestyle regimes; the race itself is just the culmination of months of hard work.

"Keep your heads, you don't need to do anything heroic - just row your own race," says the man who has seen it all before. Advice that the Blues would do well to observe, even with such a great burden of expectation weighing on their broad shoulders.



Tom and his team mates in Beijing

What goes in...

- Ever wondered what it takes to be a boatie? Apparently an awful lot of pasta for one thing. Here's a look at one of the guys' average daily intakes in the build up to the big Varsity confrontation...
- 06:00 First breakfast: 2 pieces of toast with butter and jam, bowl of cereal, cup of tea, litre of water.
- 06:30 Erg/weight training: 1 litre of SiS Go during training, 1 litre of ReGo post training.
- 09:00 Second breakfast: eggs, beans, 2 pieces of toast with butter and jam, yoghurt, piece of fruit, coffee, croissant.
- 12:00 Lunch: 300g pasta with tomato sauce, 2 apples, half a litre of water.
- 13:30 Training: 1 litre SiS Go during training, 1 litre ReGo after training.
- 18:00 Dinner: 750g of pasta with 400g of chicken and tomato sauce.
- 20:30 Snack: bowl of cereal or yoghurt.

REPORTS

Lacklustre Lacrosse Blues Lose Varsity

» *Cautious Cambridge can't match the strength of their Dark Blue counterparts*

Charlie Pearson

The men's lacrosse Blues' cracking season reached a rather humbling Varsity climax at Parker's Piece on Saturday as the team suffered a heavy 13-3 defeat to a strong and experienced Oxford band of Varsity veterans.

The Light Blues might not have been hopeful of victory coming into the match, but they trained and they played with tremendous heart in the lead up to this game and should lose no respect for what was in the end quite a mettlesome display.

On the day, Oxford were good, though it turns out perhaps not as good as Cambridge had feared. It seems unfortunate that with a little less deference towards their opponents in the first twenty minutes, Cambridge could well have made a closer game of it than the score line might suggest.

Half of the damage was done in the first quarter, during which the noticeably diffident Light Blues allowed Oxford all the space they needed. The visitors were clearly skilled enough to exploit Cambridge's kind start and by the first break had eased in seven

Cambridge	3
Oxford	13

goals without the home side troubling the scorers.

A competitive recovery from such an infelicitous opening sadly never really looked on the cards, but, to the team's credit, a Cambridge capitulation definitely wasn't either.

Play was much more evenly matched in the remaining periods and the Blues' Carl Tilbury was the first to bounce in a goal in the second quarter. Cambridge might have had another through the stick of Ed Cassels who was denied by the post from close range, and keeper Sam Spurrell earned the man-of-the-match award for his resilience in goal and 71 per cent save record.

Oxford were able to add two more to the score before the end of the second period, but the balance of power was visibly levelling; possibly because Oxford had no great need to score, but equally because Cambridge continued to improve.

Phil Hall ran his little cotton socks off in the midfield and stood out as one of

the men intent on making something happen, while Chris Jones – when he wasn't coting in the sin bin – put in some inspirational hits to flatten Oxford attackmen.

Thus Cambridge respectably drew the third quarter 1-1, Todd Nichols the deserved scorer having had a goal disallowed in the first, but with Oxford still 8 goals clear, there seemed only to

be pride at stake.

The Dark Blues squeezed in two more at the start of the final period to make it 12-2, but Ed Cassels was positively elated to hurry in Cambridge's third, a sign that the Light Blues were still stoically committed to the contest.

Oxford had the last word and finished the match 13-3; a not unexpected result perhaps, but hurtful nonetheless.



Daniel Pennington defends the crease

SOPHIE PICKFORD

TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS IN AN EXCITING WEEK OF LENT BUMPS



Emma W1 bump First and Third on Wednesday to go top of Div. 1

DAVID BARRACLROUGH

It was another predictably exciting week on the choppy Cam in the annual Lent Bumps. In the Men's First Division there was little change at the top, with Trinity First & Third still reigning supreme, and LMBC (John's) and Downing just switching places. More exciting was Trinity Hall's emphatic elevation from 11th to 7th in a fantastic four days of racing.

Meanwhile Girton and Peterhouse hauled themselves up out of the Second Division, claiming the scalps of Selwyn and First & Third II along the way.

There was much afoot in the Women's First division: Emmanuel (pictured) bumped on their first day and then maintained the top spot over First and Third. Dramatic rises from Queens' and Christ's, but equally dramatic falls from the unfortunate Clare, Newnham, and Girton left all to row for in the middle of the table.

Selwyn and Peterhouse were the two teams able to row their way into the First Division in an equally disordered Second Division.

Varsity Catch-up

Indoor Athletics

Saturday saw the Varsity Field Events and Relay Varsity, and Cambridge had high hopes of victory.

The men's team were phenomenal, winning the track 6-0 and the field 6-2, with many promising individual performances. Ben Richardson broke the individual record in the 60m hurdles, and the Light Blues dominated the throws, with wins in the discus, hammer, javelin, and shot.

A one-two in the triple jump from Humphrey Waddington and Ian Simson helped to consolidate the team's triumph.

The Cambridge middle distance squad were also on top form. The victories in the 4x800m and 4x1500m were so comfortable that the Cambridge team were practically jogging.

The most exciting relay of the day had to be the men's 4x400m. The teams were virtually neck and neck for the entire race with the Light Blue team just striding away in the final lap courtesy of Rory Graham-Watson.

Last year was a disappointment for the Cambridge women, and they were keen to get revenge. Their determination paid off with an unexpected draw in the field.

The stars of the women's show were definitely the throwers, as they managed to win the hammer, discus and shot with individual wins for Clare Palmer and Laura Duke. Emma Perkins then won the high jump.

On the track, there were impressive displays by the 4x200m and 4x400m teams, with the latter narrowly missing the record for the second year running to prevent an Oxford clean-sweep. An individual win in the 60m failed to be enough for the Light Blue team, missing out on victory by only a tenth of a second.

The Cambridge team can come away from the winter season proud of their performances and looking forward to a bright summer season ahead.

Varsity Catch-up

Real Tennis

Cambridge were comfortably victorious in both the men's and the women's competitions at Lord's. Deborah Jenkins was unfortunate to lose her match 4-6, 6-1, but teammates Jules Clarke, Sarah Vigrass and Karen Hird, playing a little below their level, didn't drop a game between them. The doubles were conducted in similarly unyielding fashion. Final score: 5-1.

In the men's doubles, Ali Hakimi and Ed Pearson struggled in the second string match losing 4-6, 0-6, 6-4, 3-6, while Rob Hird and Jamie Douglass unexpectedly lost their opening set but came back to win.

Ed Pearson bullishly won his first set in the singles 6-0 but rather shyly gave his opponent a sniff in the second, eventually winning 6-4. Ali Hakimi won a three set nail-biter 6-3, 5-6, 6-5, and captain Rob Hird eased unflappably to a 6-1 6-4 victory. Jamie Douglas was confidently battering Oxford's top seed before a rogue power cut plunged Lord's into darkness. Oxford were offered the light, and, rather poorly, took it. Final score: 4-1.

Varsity Preview

Boxing

In the grand surroundings of this 1500 capacity venue overlooking Tower Bridge, the Light Blue boxers will look to pummel their Oxford counterparts. With seating divided between the two sets of students and covered this year by Channel 4, the atmosphere is sure to be electric. Only a few tickets left...

Tues March 10th, from 6pm, Old Billingsgate, London.

Varsity Preview

Ice Hockey

Ice hockey has been played at Cambridge since 1885 and the rivalry is intense. This year should see an epic battle between the two teams, it could go either way. By nature violent and fast-paced, a great chance to cheer on the Cambridge team as they (hopefully) crush the Dark Blues.

Sat March 7th, 4.30pm, Planet Ice, Milton Keynes.

Varsity Preview

Women's Rugby

The Women's team have had an awesome season, having not lost a match since October last year. Having taken the BUCS League and currently sitting atop the RFUW League, they are looking for a win on Saturday. Last year's match was a thrilling affair, with Cambridge clawing back a 12-3 deficit to win 13-12 in the final minutes.

Sat March 7th, 2.30pm, Grange Rd.

Varsity Preview

Golf

Last year's confrontation saw Oxford manage to steal the win 8-7, so Cambridge will be keen for a comeback this time around. The first match between the teams took place back in 1878 so the rivalry is one of the longest running in the sport. Expect high drama, in a very civilised setting.

Fri March 27th-Sat March 28th, Rye Golf Club.

Sport



Up for grabs...

Varsity Sport and Olympic rower Tom James discuss the Boat Race.... p34

VARSITY MATCH RUNNING TOTAL: CAMBRIDGE 16, OXFORD 15. NEXT UP: WOMEN'S RUGBY, BOXING, BOAT RACE, FOOTBALL

Lax Ladies Avenge Lads' Loss

» Cambridge girls come up trumps in thrilling display of attacking lacrosse on Parker's Piece
 » Everpresent and relentlessly energetic, Ellie Walshe guides the team to Varsity victory

Frankie Brown

Having seen their male counterparts utterly outplayed barely fifteen minutes prior to the start of their game, Cambridge put in a commanding performance to overcome Oxford 8-5 in front of a large and vociferous crowd at Parker's Piece on Saturday.

The venue turned out to be even more spectator-friendly than promised, though the home fans were anything but amicable: Cambridge supporters lined up armed with banners, spoons, pans and horns as both sides took to the field, and the game began as it was to continue throughout the afternoon.

Oxford tore forward, passing accurately and running aggressively deep into Cambridge territory, only to lose the ball and be caught out by a swift counter attack from the seemingly ubiquitous Ellie Walshe. She passed to Morland, who continued the surge upfield, and after some patient build-up around the goal the ball somehow found its way into the net to give Cambridge an early lead.

The frenzied supporters grew louder as Cambridge stole the ball from the restart and Walshe once more charged towards the goal, but now was the turn of Oxford to counter. After a superb attacking move, the ball found its way to an unmarked attacker hovering near the goal, who made no mistake in slotting the ball home.

This end-to-end Lacrosse continued throughout the quarter, as each side played a fast and attacking game, but Cambridge snatched goals either side of the break courtesy of co-captains Gem Gotla and Georgie Hurt to leave them in relative comfort at 3-1. The onslaught continued, as Oxford were pinned in their own half for much of the second quarter, Cambridge adding another two good goals to leave Oxford with a virtual mountain to climb after the short half-time break.

With loud chants of "bosh the

Cambridge	8
Oxford	5

scum!" echoing around Parker's Piece, Cambridge sought to keep up the momentum. Oxford, however, had other ideas, managing to string together some decent moves and keep the ball away from the Cambridge nets.

The pressure began to show, and eventually Oxford scored two goals in quick succession to leave the supporters feeling rather more anxious. The air grew still, the atmosphere thickened and the tension began to silence the worried onlookers.

This tension soon began to show on the field, as frantic passages of play saw each side struggle to retain possession for any meaningful length of time. Finally, to the crowd's relief, Cambridge managed to grab another goal to leave them with a strong lead of 6-3 going into the final quarter.

With Walshe and Morland in particular dictating the play in attack, Cambridge refused to take their foot off the pedal, and Oxford's chance appeared to have all but disappeared when another goal was scored.

A couple of consolation goals were added towards the end they threatened briefly to stage a comeback, but a final emphatic goal confirmed Cambridge's victory, and the final whistle followed soon after with the score at 8-5. A relieved and delighted Cambridge all piled on top of each other, before gathering their composure to commend their opponents on a close match. The supporters had been treated to a fantastic game, they themselves creating a superb atmosphere, whilst the players provided a great antidote to the embarrassment in the men's match earlier in the afternoon.

Player of the match: Ellie Walshe, relentless in attack; all over the field at all times.



Rosie Garvey keeps up the pressure on Oxford

View from the River

Silas Stafford



On Wednesday, the members of the Blue Boat met with journalists and sponsors for the official announcement of the Boat Race line-ups. We walked excitedly into a London riverside restaurant with the grand backdrop of Tower Bridge, bantering about ignorant Americans who confuse it with London Bridge.

While the journalists and sponsors all greeted us warmly and invited us to sit down, Oxford did not budge. I offered a "Hey boys" to our aloof opposition. No response. Later in the WC, I bumped into an American I know from the Oxford boat. "Hey man, what's up?" I asked. No response. It seems that the Oxford camp had decided to ignore our existence. No eye contact, no talking, no acknowledgement.

Awkward interactions with our opposition are not infrequent. The boathouses we train out of in London are practically next door, and yet we rarely even say hello. It is striking, because our lives probably have more in common with Oxford rowers than with anybody else on the planet.

We both intimately know and share the weary bones and constant exhaustion, the early mornings and sleep deprivation, the rushing off to lectures after training, as well as the faint and peculiar recognition we gain from success at rowing.

Some of us have been teammates of Oxford rowers before now. In rowing, exceptional bonds of friendship form out of the mutual suffering experienced by teammates. If the Oxford rowers are our brethren in suffering, why are they not our friends? The answer is, of course, that on March 29th they want to take something away from us which we have worked incredibly hard for. And for that, we hate them.

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