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“A violation of basic rights of free speech”

Varsity exclusive: Benny Morris speaks out against the cancellation of his talk

ELLEN DAVIS-WALKER & OSAMA SIDDIQUI

Renowned Israeli historian and Cambridge alumnus Professor Benny Morris has condemned the decision to cancel his talk after accusations of “Islamophobia” were made.

Speaking to *Varsity* yesterday, Morris said, “I believe that the attempt by several Cambridge students and a lecturer to prevent me lecturing in Cambridge is a violation of basic rights of free speech – just as preventing publication of cartoons depicting Jesus, Moses or Mohammad are violations of free speech.”

Morris also criticised the Israel Society for caving to pressure and cancelling the talk. He said, “I think the Israel Society’s bowing to Muslim-Arab pressures to cancel the lecture was a terrible mistake, evidence of weakness and a bad precedent.”

Morris was originally scheduled to speak this Thursday on the topic of “1948 Revisited” at an event organized by the CU Israel Society.

The decision to cancel the talk was made after a petition signed by members of the Islamic Society and the English Faculty, among others, was sent to CUSU.

The signatories of the petition said they felt that the decision to invite Morris, who has talked in the past of “a deep problem in Islam... in which human life doesn’t have the same value as it does in the West”, could lead to incitements of racial tension.

Morris has been hounded by accusations of “Islamophobia” since an

interview with *The Guardian* in 2009, in which he claimed that Palestinian Arabs have “no respect” for democratic values.

Previously, he came under attack after a 2004 interview, in which he stated that Palestinians should be “contained so that they will not succeed in murdering us”.

Morris has said that his comment has been mischaracterised, and is “always trotted out by critics out of historical context”. According to him, the remark referred specifically to the proposal to build a security fence to prevent suicide bombers from entering Israel.

In a statement, CU Israel Society said that they never intended to “provide a platform for racism”, and regretted the fact that Morris’s personal views were “deeply offensive to many”.

The society defended the decision to host Morris, stating that the planned Question and Answer session was meant to be an “open space for anyone, including those with grievances, to challenge Morris.”

Speaking to *Varsity*, Jake Witzenfeld, President of the Israel Society, said that he “decided to cancel for fear of CU Israel Society being portrayed as a mouthpiece of Islamophobia.”

“To be clear, it was a very cautious, necessary and respectful approach to Cambridge student politics that drove this difficult decision.”

Witzenfeld added, “Cancelling the lecture and choosing to recognise the sensitivities of those offended by Morris was unfortunate yet noble.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Flying the RAG in Abu Dhabi

Last weekend, over 100 teams of students took up the challenge of travelling as far away from Cambridge as possible, with only their own initiative to assist them. Clad in tuxedos and performing magic tricks for donations, the winning pair from Fitzwilliam College raised the £449 they needed to buy return tickets to New York, astonishingly reaching their destination in only 19 of the 36 hours allowed for the task. Other groups too, met with great success. Second place went to a pair who reached Abu Dhabi (pictured), and third to a group reaching Dubai. The sponsored hitchhike raised £16,000 for RAG charities last year and, although the numbers have not yet been finalised, this year looks set to surpass this figure significantly. AVANTIKA CHILKOTI

Richard Evans will be next Wolfson President

TABATHA LEGGETT

Professor Richard Evans will become the fifth President of Wolfson College on September 30th 2010, when current President Dr Gordon Johnson retires.

The Governing Body of Wolfson College elected Evans, currently a Fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Regius Professor of Modern History and Chairman of the Faculty of History.

Evans graduated from the University of Oxford, and went on to teach at the University of Stirling, the University of East Anglia and Birkbeck College, London. Whereas most previous Regius Professors were simply chosen, Evans applied for the position and was selected by a panel.

Evans said, “I am very grateful to the Fellows for selecting me as President of Wolfson. It is a unique institution, which prides itself on its distinctively cosmopolitan, egalitarian and informal character and I look forward with enthusiasm to leading it over the next few years.”

Evans’s work concerns the social and cultural history of Germany, and he has been editor of the *Journal of Contemporary History* since 1998.

Johnson told *Varsity*, “I’m thrilled by the election of Professor Evans to succeed me in October: he brings great academic distinction to the College and valuable experience from outside Cambridge, particularly with graduate students.”

Essayp11
AC
Grayling:
The
problem
with
prohibition



On **varsity.co.uk** this week



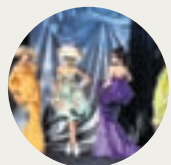
COMMENT

Catch up with out Man About Town, Jamie Pollock, as he leaves the city behind on a Jailbreak mission to Abu Dhabi and Rob Peal looks at the pros of having a little restraint.



SPORT

Head online for sports coverage from across the University, updated throughout the week, and to check out our SuperSports videos (see p.31).



FASHION

Charlotte Wu explains, plain and simple, why it's okay to say you love fashion.



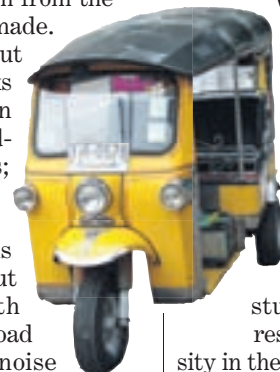
ENTERTAINMENT

Colm Flanagan expounds the virtues of ABBA's classic 'Gold' and we suggest procrastination possibilities with a look at 2010's must-see TV programmes.



City Council approve plans to bring tuk-tuks to Cambridge

Plans are underway to introduce tuk-tuks to Cambridge this summer as Cambridge City Councillors accept their proposal by entrepreneur Malcolm Fulcher. However, the three wheeled motorised rickshaws, characteristic of many Asian countries, will only be permitted to operate as private hire vehicles; this will restrict their activity to pre-booked guided tours. A decision over whether it will be legal for individuals to hail them from the street has yet to be made. Restrictions may be put in place because tuk-tuks fall short of certain licensing laws regarding disability access; they do not have the capacity to accommodate wheelchairs. Concerns have been raised about the proposals, with fears about safety, road overcrowding and noise pollution. Local taxi drivers, of whom 320 operate in the city, may also find their business disrupted.



Chinese universities could rival Oxbridge, says Ivy League president

Chinese universities could soon rival Oxbridge and the Ivy League, according to Professor Richard Levin, President of Yale University. Speaking in London on Monday, Professor Levin suggested that within 25 years Chinese universities could rank among the top ten most elite academies in the world.

While the higher education sector in England faces drastic funding cuts, China is spending billions on university education. Nevertheless, one Cambridge student maintains, "As more international universities increase their standards, students will no longer be restricted to attending university in their home country. Hopefully this will increase links between top universities across the world and provide a plethora of opportunity".

Upgrade modern buildings, says Cambridge Professor

Prominent University of Cambridge Professor of Architecture, Alan Short, has criticised comments made by Paul Morrell, the Government's construction tsar, about demolishing some buildings constructed in the 60s and 70s, as they are environmentally unsustainable. Short has rejected Morrell's assertion that many buildings from this era need to be demolished in order to comply with the government's objective of significantly reducing carbon emissions in the construction industry. Short argues that upgrading many of these modern buildings – such as the famous Cripps Building in St John's College – is quicker, cheaper, and less disruptive than demolishing them and starting again. Modern techniques allow most, if not all, buildings to meet the same environmental standards as newly-constructed ones.



University pressure to recognize employees' union

AVANTIKA CHILKOTI

The University of Cambridge is coming under significant pressure to formally recognise its branch of the University and College Union (UCU), the biggest trade union in the UK for academics, lecturers, researchers and academic staff. The organisation represents over 120,000 workers in the UK, protecting their employment and professional interests.

The Cambridge division of UCU first called for formal university recognition 3 years ago. They are now continuing their pursuit working alongside Unite, the country's largest union which has a membership of over 2 million workers. The aim of the campaign is to gain formal recognition for "academic staff", a term that encompasses those involved in both education and research, in either a professional or administrative capacity.

There appears to be some hope for success in the unions' claims as

an informal arrangement has been agreed whereby the Trades Union Congress will work for the University of Cambridge's academic staff. This is being seen as a promising step towards an accord that allows for full recognition.

A UCU spokesperson has commented: "We think there are substantial benefits to both staff and management from having orderly industrial relations". He also added that USU is, "the recognised union for academic and academic-related staff working in the universities across the UK".

If the workers' union was fully, formally recognised, staff would then be able to take part in collective talks with the university concerning the terms and conditions of their work. With wage award negotiations taking place at the national level, such negotiations have not been missed in the field of wage bargaining but with more local issues such as the terms and conditions of work, negotiating rights are of essence for employees.



University and College Union protesters in Leeds

The argument against formal recognition is that the system and structure of government at this university is unique. The university's governing body, Regent House,

gives academics great powers of self-government and includes 3,800 academic and administrative staff. It is thought that the role of this body would simply be duplicated were the

Cambridge branch of UCU to receive formal recognition.

Furthermore, relations between the unions and the management of the university have always been positive and cooperative, with members permitted to join national strikes when they wish to. A spokesman for the university confirmed that, "the University of Cambridge has a positive relationship with trades unions. UCU, Unite and Unison play an active consultation role and assist in the effective running of the University".

Rather than this being deemed sufficient and full, formal recognition of the organisation thus redundant, a representative of UCU sees these good relations as an incentive for the university to give the union fuller recognition: "We already work positively with the university and other campus unions to ensure our members are effectively represented and have welcomed the recent constructive dialogue with the university on these issues".

Get involved

If you would like to find out how to write for *Varsity*, come to one of our weekly meetings.

News: Monday 4pm, Queens' College Bar

Magazine: Wednesday 5.30pm, The Maypole (Portugal Place)

Alternatively, email the relevant section editor (right) with your ideas.

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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Caius students vote on overhaul in dining system

GCSU propose the introduction of a kitchen fixed charge and a cut in the minimum dining requirements

JAMES WILSON

Students at Gonville and Caius College will be voting this week on key measures that could dramatically overhaul the format of hall dining.

Caius currently has a system whereby students are required to eat in hall at least 43 nights per term at £6.40 each. There is no fixed charge and students are required to buy tickets in order to dine. This has resulted in many wasting money, as students choose not to eat at hall and do not use all of their dinner tickets.

A survey carried out by Caius JCR in Michaelmas Term 2009 indicated that only 31 percent of students used all their tickets. In Lent Term last year this number was as low as 23 percent, whilst one percent of students used none at all.

The college now plans to establish a booking system next year, which will require students to reserve a place at a particular hall in advance of the night in order to eat.

The news has received a lukewarm reception from the Gonville and Caius Students' Union, who believe that the proposals will only add to the inflexibility caused by the current system. Pranav Khamar, GCSU food and bar officer and chair of the GCSU Hall Working Group, told *Varsity* that the proposed system "will make things even worse".



Caius dining room

They have put forward an alternative proposal to introduce a kitchen fixed charge, reduce ticket prices proportionately and cut the minimum dining requirement to a compulsory 30 nights per term. Students would pay £3 per meal, with the choice to take as many additional meals as they choose. This would run in addition to the college's booking system, allowing further cost reductions once savings become evident.

Those students who currently eat

30 or fewer dinners per term could save up to £40 if the changes are brought in.

"Separating costs into KFC and meal tickets will make it much easier to reduce the number of dinner tickets we have to buy, as there's no worry about having to cover overheads of running the college kitchens," Mr Khamar told *Varsity*.

"We believe the proposed changes will give Caius students a lot more choice. We believe no one will be made worse-off by our system and

our survey shows most students will also save a fair bit of money each term."

College authorities have indicated that while they believe the GCSU's ideas to be feasible, they will not implement them until they are convinced they have the student body's support.

"The bursars and tutors have been receptive to our ideas so far," added Mr Khamar. "We're aiming for a record turnout in this poll. If we get this, and students strongly

support our ideas, I'm confident that we can agree with college to implement our proposals very soon."

The issue brings to light a controversial debate regarding the advantages and disadvantages of having a kitchen fixed charge and compulsory eating in hall.

"It's a massive improvement in students' degree of choice," stated Mr Khamar. "Instead of having to buy meals to eat in hall most nights every term, students will only pay for the meals they do choose to eat."

Others are more skeptical. "We're still being made to eat in hall for a substantial number of days," said one undergraduate. "I'd rather eat elsewhere and the college's proposals would allow me to do that without wasting money."

It is general practice at Cambridge colleges to have a fixed charge of around £146 that students are required to pay every term, with some stipulating a certain number of nights that students must dine in for. Gonville and Caius has long been the exception.

James Polyblank, the JCR president, said: "Caius students have spent years, if not decades campaigning for cheaper and fewer dinner tickets. It's beginning to look like we've finally cracked it!"

Students at Caius will be voting from Tuesday to Friday, with the possibility of an extension.

Benny Morris protests cancellation

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

However, Cambridge resident and writer on Israel and Palestine, Ben White, argued that the attitude conveyed in the statement released by the CU Israel society, was equally alarming.

"It is unfortunately still not clear what the Israel Society finds 'regrettable' - Morris' actual views or the fact that many people were offended by them."

White also added that the decision to invite someone who "has publicly expressed such vile views about Arabs and Muslims" was a "worrying sign".

He said, "Imagine if a student group organised an event for someone who had said similar things about Jews or Africans? The choice of Morris indicates a certain way of thinking that should give us all reason for serious concern."

These sentiments were shared by a first-year member of the Islamic Society at Fitzwilliam College who felt that it was not the first time that a speaker had been chosen with a "less than tolerant attitude towards Arabs".

Nevertheless, many felt hopeful about the decision. Rob Mindell, president of the CU Jewish Society, said that "the Israel Society committee have shown an unprecedented amount of compassion and consideration towards minority views in

cancelling the talk.

"I have felt offended by countless hateful and anti-Jewish talks that have taken place in Cambridge over the past year. It fills me with hope that we have now adopted an

atmosphere of understanding and co-operation in Cambridge."

Morris will speak on the same subject today at 1pm at the Department of Political and International Studies.



Professor Benny Morris, Israeli historian

Report on climate change printed by CUP toned down

GEMMA OKE

An influential document published by Cambridge University Press for the Government on the possible effects of climate change has come under scrutiny as it emerged that claims made in the original document were unable to be scientifically supported.

The Stern Review, published by HM Treasury, made claims about changing climate conditions such as rainfall and hurricane patterns and habitat loss. However, in its second publication in January 2007 by the Cambridge University Press (CUP), some of the predictions contained in the first report were scaled down because the scientific evidence they were based upon could not be verified.

Claims relating to the changing climate of Australia required particular amendments. Assertions such as an expected increase in eucalyptus and savannah habitats, lower rainfalls due to rising ocean temperatures and increasingly strong regional typhoons were all removed in the report's second publication. While these claims were given strong media coverage, their removal was not publicly announced.

A statement from the CUP defended its involvement in the

altered publication, highlighting that the Cambridge University Press had no involvement in any of these changes made to the body of the report or its findings, except for the normal editorial processes such as correcting spelling errors.

A spokesperson for the Press said: "We are aware that some changes were made to the Report before the manuscript arrived at the Press, but we were not involved in those changes."

She continued: "The Report is Crown copyright and our contract was for the book version of the Report as delivered to us by HM Treasury."

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Global breakout for RAG Jailbreakers

Teams reach Washington and Abu Dhabi for the charity fundraiser

ANNA FAHY

An annual Cambridge ritual, the RAG Jailbreak competition challenges pairs of University students to get as far away from the city as possible in just 36 hours, without spending any of their own money.

This year's event has been widely regarded as one of the most successful yet, with the winners managing to get to Washington DC. Nick Millet and Reza Khorasane, both from Fitzwilliam College, raised the £449 necessary for return tickets to New York, primarily through performing magic tricks.

Dressed in tuxedos, Reza promised to solve a rubix cube in under 40 seconds, while Nick performed card tricks, resulting in the boys raising £120 on the train to London alone. Once in New York, the pair's tricks continued to impress, earning them enough money to get to

Washington just before the 36 hour deadline.

Despite the success of their magic tricks, the boys also noted the surprising number of connections they found with people on the trip.

"Someone in the city knew my uncle, and a lawyer we met in America had just listened to a talk by Professor Michael Lamb, one of my lecturers," Nick, an SPS student, told us. "Even on the train to Liverpool Street we met an ex-RAG rep who donated £40."

Other Jailbreak teams also managed to travel incredible distances this year. The second placed team made it to Abu Dhabi, 5478.7km from Cambridge, while the third pair got as far as Dubai.

Three teams managed to get to Turkey, and over four fifths of the 101 teams competing made it out of the UK.

While the majority of far-reaching teams used the money they'd raised

to buy airline tickets, some pairs decided to hitch-hike all the way. The most successful reached Alicante in Spain, an impressive 1539.64km from Cambridge city centre.

Other impressive hitch-hikes landed students in Berlin and Bratislava, Slovakia.

Of the hitch-hiking experience, Katie Forster, who made it to Spain along with Simon Whitaker, enthused, "I'm so glad we did it. It was a great experience. It could have been dangerous, but we didn't really think about it at the time."

With the pairs' 36 hours coming to an end at 9pm on Saturday evening, the couples were forced to return to reality on Monday morning. As Reza marvelled, "I was back in dissection by 10am."

Cambridge RAG supports a wide variety of charities, including the Alzheimer's Society, Jimmy's Night Shelter and the East Anglia Air Ambulances.



Winners Nick Millet and Reza Khorasane in Washington



James Kemp and Lana Whittaker in Paris



Roland Chanin-Morris and Elaine Davis in Portugal

The Best of the Travel Logs...

Eccentric European truck drivers featured heavily in this year's Jailbreak. Thanks go out in particular to Stanislaw who dumped his team outside the channel tunnel; and Antonio, who memorably lamented "I can't handle people calling my mum a bitch, maybe when she was 45, not at 70, she hasn't had sex for 40 years".

Wayne, action man cum drug dealer, whose startling comments included – "I once caught, killed, stripped, skinned, cooked and ate a chicken in an hour," and "I can't eat cheese...cos of what my brother made me do..." is likely to spawn a cult following.

Our Jailbreakers seem to have resorted to rather unorthodox methods. One team grew so desperate that they attempted to pick the pockets of a homeless man, whose response was quite simply: "I AM charity."

Whilst some teams were grovelling in the gutter, others sought more luxurious means of getting ahead. The Bentley sounds nice, Alex and Palika, as does dinner with a Count – note that slutty maid's outfits guarantee same day flights and haute cuisine upon arrival.

Whilst the majority of the teams were trudging through the hinterlands of west Germany, others were enjoying distinctly more exotic climes; from skinny-dipping in the Finnish gulf, to strolling

along the beach in Alicante and southern Portugal.

There were low points along the way: stranded outside the aluminium factory, one team could only muster "I think Dunkirk is where trucks come to die." For some, it was a trip down memory lane; it seems like more than a coincidence that Robin got to revisit the scene of his lost virginity.

Nostalgia aside, one team arrived at their destination 500 miles away from Cambridge as the Proclaimers' '500 miles' burst forth from the radio, setting a triumphant tone. This year's Jailbreakers emerged victorious over their '09 counterparts, even in the face of extreme adversity. "Pay for a bus you tramps" was a hit to our M25 massif, but merely a blip of abuse in an otherwise epic weekend.

FLO SHARP AND JESS NICHOLLS,
RAG COMMITTEE JAILBREAK
REPS



ARU set to cut 1000 places for next academic year

HUGO SCHMIDT

Anglia Ruskin University has announced that it will be cutting 1,000 student places in the next academic year. This decision has come in the wake of £215 million reductions in the Education budget, a cut which will rise to a total of 950 million by 2013.

This decision has come at a particularly bad time for ARU. The number of applicants had increased by 30% in previous years, and this had led to ARU planning an extension to their campus. The new University Centre at Harlow has recently had its planning permission approved, with intended facilities including a 96 seat lecture theatre, an i-Lab and conferencing facilities.

Michael Thorne, the vice chancellor of Anglia Ruskin University told *Varsity*: "It is not places that will be lost. The Government is capping the number of full time UK undergraduates any university can recruit this September to the number recruited in 2008.

"Because of a baby boom 17 or 18 years ago there are more sixth formers than ever before wanting a university place and likely to be academically qualified to get one.

"At Anglia Ruskin applications are up more than 30% and we would normally have expected to take an additional 1700 students this coming summer as a result of that increase. Instead, however we shall have to turn them away."

People estimate that across all universities more than 200,000 students will be turned away this year."

His statements are echoed by Professor Steve Smith, the President of Universities UK, who has sharply criticised the Government, saying that similar losses in University places will be felt throughout the country.

But the Minister for Higher Education, David Lammy, has described this prospect as "scaremongering" and assured his listeners that HEFCE, the Higher Education Funding Council for England, would cut in such a way as to minimise the impact on staff and students.

Whilst the bulk of the cuts are being targeted towards capital projects and expansions, the teaching grant is scheduled to fall by £215 million, with a further reduction of £48 million from postgraduate and foundation courses. Professor Smith has said that these cuts will inevitably reduce the quality of teaching.

CU Amnesty take to the streets in 'Shell Hell Day'

JULIA LICHNOVA-DINAN

Yesterday saw the coming of 'Shell Hell Day', part of Cambridge University Amnesty International's campaign to end Royal Dutch Shell's pollution of the Niger Delta and the use of gas flaring in the region.

Protesters donned white jump suits and gathered outside Senate House, calling for Shell to "clean up their act".

According to the 'Shell Hell Campaign' Facebook group, which has over 300 members, the UK-based petroleum company "makes millions of dollars while polluting eco-systems".

Gas flaring and oil pollution are cited as the main culprits of environmental and human damage. Catherine Lough, one of the organisers of the protest, stated that 30,000 tonnes of oil are spilled every year over the Niger Delta.

Hannah Perry, CU Amnesty Chair and protest organiser, said: "Oil pollution severely affects local communities who depend so strongly on clean rivers for fishing and unpolluted land for farming in order support their families."

The protest was supported by Dr Julian Huppert, the Lib Dem

parliamentary candidate for Cambridge and a Fellow of Clare College. The Trinity graduate who introduced Model United Nations in Cambridge has maintained a lifelong interest in international affairs and human rights.

He described his visit to Nigeria: "I've been out there, I've seen for myself the bright, smoky jets of waste gas. The levels of pollution this produces are really affecting the people."

Students were quick to comment

on the possible influence of a Cambridge campaign. "Many colleges have investments in Shell, and the company often employs Cambridge graduates – for example, engineers from Churchill", noted Sarina, CU Amnesty Treasurer.

Fernandes added, "Our aim is for the Colleges to affect direct pressures on Shell."

The CU Amnesty group is hopeful for the future. "Cambridge's voice is not alone", said Perry. "We are part of a massive movement."



CU Amnesty Protesters at 'Shell Hell Day' form the Shell logo



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Hi! Society

AIESEC

AIESEC

Did you forgo a gap year, and now always feel a pang of envy when your well-travelled friend recalls their various adventures hugging monkeys and orphans in a far off land? Well, the good news is that the Association Internationale des Étudiants en Sciences Économiques et Commerciales, AIESEC for short, can offer you a second chance.

AIESEC was established in 1948 with the aim of promoting greater cultural understanding through international exchange programs. This is no pen-pal scheme, however, as today's members undertake both voluntary and paid work placements in professional organisations, schools and charities for a period of 2-18 months across 100 countries.

The program doesn't end there: once you return a more well-rounded individual, the 'Heading For The Future' conference awaits, enabling you to "learn about capitalising on your experience and about how to get the job that you want in the future".

Even if going abroad is not for you, these conferences occur regularly: the Cambridge heats of the AIESEC National Leadership Tournament, described by the president, Mark Sommerfield, as being "like a one day Dragons' Den experience", is due to take place on February 27th, and is open to all Cambridge students.

The society extends far beyond the parameters of the bubble, working in 21 universities across the UK with around 40,000 members worldwide. Last year it sent seven Cambridge students on high quality internships to places like India, Ecuador, Kenya and Poland. This year they are hoping to send twice as many.

Competition for this CV-booster is rigorous: the admission process searches for those who "have what it takes to succeed, who are prepared to work and play hard". This is evidenced by their impressive list of alumni including a former prime minister of Japan and Bill Clinton (reassuringly, George Bush didn't make the grade). Experience comes at a price, costing £350, but in terms of "keeping up with the Joneses" of the gap year, it's worth it.

ROANNA MOTTERSHEAD

NEWS INTERVIEW

True blues and keen greens



Rising Tory star Zac Goldsmith tells Jessica King why every good Conservative is also an environmentalist

The elusive Zac Goldsmith arrives late to the party at which I have been promised an audience with him. Goldsmith is the Conservative parliamentary candidate for Richmond Park, and a rising figure within the Conservative party.

As ex-editor of environmental journal *The Ecologist*, his role seems to be to strengthen the new eco-friendly face of conservatism. On joining the party in 2005, he famously declared, "A Conservative who is not also in his heart an environmentalist cannot legitimately be described as a Conservative."

Goldsmith is also famous for his personal life, having inherited a vast fortune from his late father, which he has put to good use in funding both his journalism and his political career. Given his ample celebrity, I am disappointed, and not a little embarrassed, when he charmingly declines to be interviewed, citing the continued tendency of journalists to misinterpret his comments.

I assume he is referring to the furore surrounding his financial management: Goldsmith recently admitted to claiming non-domicile tax status despite growing up in southwest London. I assure him ingratiatingly that I, for one, believe him to be an honest politician. He promises to answer any questions I may have via email, and responds promptly.

One would be forgiven for thinking that Goldsmith occupies a paradoxical role in influencing Conservative environmental policy. In the 'Gummer-Goldsmith' report, he recommended such measures as capping flight numbers and banning night flights from Heathrow.

He was also instrumental in persuading BAA to scrap plans for

a third runway if the Conservatives come to power. Yet he also takes great pains to point out that the main aim of Tory environmental policy is, "reconciling the market with the environment".

Surely reducing the number of flights will have a negative impact on airlines' profit margins? He responds with an air of economic sensibility: "Green policy shouldn't be about punishment or stealth taxes. It needs to incentivise the right behaviour, for example through tax breaks, and that needs to be paid for by disincentives on polluting behaviour."

I suspect that Conservative policy towards airlines may also have something to do with noise pollution – an attempt to cater to the middle-class suburban voters who form their principal support base, at least in Goldsmith's constituency of Richmond.

These constituencies are also likely to react positively to the Conservatives' proposed measure of decentralising energy provision. Conservative Party policy is apparently committed to "developing and expanding renewable forms of energy" such as wind turbines and combined heat and power.

Energy is to be increasingly generated on a small scale within the local community, encouraged by a system of "feed-in tariffs", which Goldsmith elaborates on thus: "The Feed-in-Tariff is a mechanism for fixing the price of energy generated by renewables, so that homeowners can know exactly how long it will take them to earn their initial cost back."

He does, however, stress that Labour have proposed a similar policy, but one on which apparently "the levels are to be set very low". Conservative policy, he says, will be

"at a much more ambitious level".

Although Goldsmith is clearly dedicated to combating climate change, there has been some uncertainty as to whether the majority of the Conservative party are as committed. Recent concerns over published material from the East Anglia Climate research unit, which suggests that evidence for anthropogenic global warming has been exaggerated, have reinforced the sceptical position.

Not only this but many of the proposed measures, regardless of Goldsmith's best attempts, will be costly, and the Conservative old guard especially hate unnecessary expense. When asked about this,

"There has never been a nuclear power plant that wasn't run at the taxpayer's expense. In a free market, nuclear wouldn't exist"

Goldsmith minimises a possible rift in the party, but admits that the leaked emails are a "real problem. Scientists should never seek to manipulate data for political reasons."

His own view, however, has not changed: "There is as close to a consensus as science allows that we have a problem, and that we ought to take the precautionary approach."

Another controversial issue for environmental campaigners

is that of the increasing interest and investment in nuclear power. Official Conservative doctrine states that "Nuclear power will be part of the energy mix if it is economically viable," a suitably ambiguous position.

Goldsmith's view, however, is that "nuclear power cannot deliver that value for money." He adds, "don't forget there has never been a nuclear power plant that wasn't constructed and run at the public's expense. In a free market, nuclear wouldn't exist."

I also have a chance to ask him about economic policy. Conservatives have proposed a number of measures to solve the current crisis: working with councils to freeze council tax for two years by cutting spending on government advertising, cutting government spending and introducing a £50 billion National Loan Guarantee Scheme to encourage banks to lend to small businesses again.

Although Goldsmith is keen to stress the necessity of a "combination of policies", spending cuts are the first thing he emphasises, using the example of the criminal justice system, the cost of which has "nearly doubled in 10 years," without obvious improvements.

A less obviously Conservative proposal is the freeze on council tax, intended to "help struggling families". Finally, the National Loan Guarantee Scheme, according to Goldsmith, is based on the sound economic science for which the party is reputed. Labour's VAT cut he dismisses as "nonsense".

There you have it. Zac Goldsmith, a rare example of a green campaigner with a sound grasp of economics. Long may he continue to act as a force for innovation in the Conservative party.

VARSITY PROFILE

Piotr Duda

Reflections on Cambridge from the Trailer of Life's haute-cuisine hero

We won't fully appreciate the warmth and comfort that the Trailer of Life brings to our post-Cindies wanderings until it's no longer with us. Having moved on to the City or wherever, walks home from a night out will always lack the relief offered by an uplifted canvas to shelter under, the intoxicating aroma of a hard-at-work deep-fat fryer, and the friendly face of a bespectacled proprietor waiting to take your order and waving his tongs around like a madman.

Before I absent myself from this world forever, I took the opportunity to chat to Piotr Duda, the chap mentioned above. Like mine, Piotr's relationship with the Trailer of Life ends this year. "My wife is running a restaurant and I plan to run it with her back in Poland," he tells me.

But he has promised to return to the Trailer once a year for eight weeks to help his cousin: the Trailer of Life is a family business, and Piotr and his cousin are business partners.

I ask Piotr, who has been in Cambridge since 1998, if he's ever had a few rough nights at the Trailer of Life, or if there's anything customers do that annoys him particularly. "What makes me really upset," he begins, "is either people calling me a foreigner or drunk people thinking they've got the wrong change. At the end of last August we had a lot of trouble."

But to my question on what he thinks of University students he says

there is "only one answer: they are most polite, most friendly, and very good people".

Yet not without their own irritating habits; remembering the grin on a friend's face as he placed an order at the till giving his name as Quivern. Piotr has had plenty where that came from: "People give names like Jesus, as well as very rude names that I won't repeat."

Out of interest, I ask at what time Piotr gets to bed in these cold Cambridge nights, "6am", is the immediate answer, "and we start at 6 pm, but I sleep all day in between."

I assume social lives are a low priority then, but decide in any case to ask Piotr if he's a fan of Cindies, "I haven't been to Cindies in over two years," he responds, "these days if I do go out I usually go to La Raza or Fez."

I decide to round off my interview with some Trailer of Life trivia, and find out that Piotr's own order would always be a chicken fillet burger with cheese alongside cheesy fries and gravy.

I am less amused to learn what it takes to obtain a discount at the Trailer, having always considered myself slightly special for receiving 10 percent off. "Students automatically get 10 percent off, and very few of them know that!" Oh, I see. Eager to complete the advertisement, Piotr continues: "Bring your student cards along and you get immediate discount." MATTHEW SYMINGTON



ALASTAIR APPLETON

Cambridge Spies



Sock Blocked

Donning his lucky socks, this football-mad son of the manse rounded off an evening of intemperance by leaving in the company of a wee smasher. Extending the hand of fellowship to a fellow Scot, they returned to her room, where the frisky filly undressed her man, leaving him sporting nothing but his auspicious togs. Not so lucky. The light blue emblem stamped across our hero's socks proved too much for the lass, herself an ardent Celtic fan. Old Firm rivalries springing to the fore, our beau in blue was promptly ejected, his clothes following him soon after. Lacking the candour to ask for his shoes, a long hobble home followed, his socks providing a soggy reminder of the failed venture.

Helping Hand

By the time second year comes around, most of this University's students know their onions. They know their Mahal from their Curry King. They know when they should stop on the VKs. One unfortunate chap of the swapping brigade, however, had rather too "ruddy good" a time this Sunday eve. Making his way back up The Hill, our fine-mannered gentleman was compelled to telephone his collegiate pater for what turned out to be rather too helping a hand. The obliging fellow dutifully came down, but found himself somewhat overwhelmed with this here trollied rah deciding to revert to his birthday suit amidst the shrubbery belonging to some revered College Fellows and insisting upon taking a tinkle with this "helping hand" coming to his aid most directly.

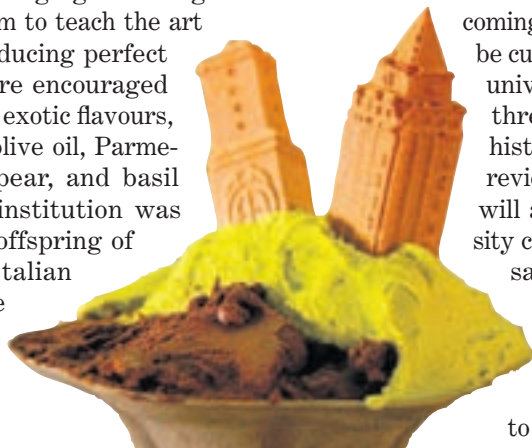
SkinnyMan Cans Fan

One grimy clubber last week responded to a visiting artiste's charitable appeal with a heckled demand to "shut the fuck up and rap". At which point our skinny hero did just that for the first time that evening, responding with a torrent of rhythmic jibes that would make even the hardest soulja blush.

University Watch

Gelato University in Bologna

When the Gelato University in Bologna was established in 2003, it could hardly have been expected that the number of enrolments to the institution would experience an 89 percent increase by 2009. Indeed, between 2008 and 2009, enrolments in the £600-a-week course nearly doubled. This rise is partly due to job losses during the recent recession, with ex-businessmen flooding to the university to try their hand at gelato-making and create a new future for themselves. The institution runs six courses, ranging from beginner to advanced, which aim to teach the art and science of producing perfect gelato. Students are encouraged to experiment with exotic flavours, such as red wine, olive oil, Parmesan cheese with pear, and basil with lemon. The institution was established as an offspring of Carpigiani, the Italian company behind the manufacture of 70 percent of gelato-making machines worldwide.



University of Cumbria

The University of Cumbria is facing a financial crisis, which will lead to top university officials submitting a bid for a £25 million emergency aid package to the Higher Education Funding Council for England next month. The bail-out is unlikely to protect jobs, but will instead go toward upgrading the university's real estate and developing new academic courses in areas including tourism, energy and food security. These changes are to be made in order to reflect the needs of the local economy, part of the reason for the creation of the university. In the coming months, up to 200 jobs could be cut, while a restructuring of the university from five faculties to three, cutting such subjects as history and law, is expected. A review of extracurricular services will also take place. The university currently has the highest staff salary costs of any English university at 71 percent of income, compared to a national average of 56 percent. Decisions are due to take place in late February.

University of Bath

Karl Woodgett, 37, a registrar at the University of Bath, and formerly at the University of Surrey, has been sentenced to nine months in prison, suspended for one year and ordered to do 200 hours of community service. He was convicted of forging degree certificates for two Cameroonian women in return for sexual favours. His system for distributing fake degrees had already been honed by his experience with his ex-wife, also of African origin, and her family, before he enlisted Elsie Neh and Mbone Kemba for a "pain management study", as Woodgett described it in an email. He filmed himself caning and spanking the women to feed his caning fetish during the "study", which they had consented to participate in. Judge David Ticehurst, who presided over the case, made the point that Woodgett has undermined the aim of universities by knowingly falsifying documents. ESMÉ NICHOLSON



Map of Cameroon, home of Woodgett's victims

Students lash out against “homophobic” remarks of Lib Dem councillor

CLAIRE GATZEN

Cambridge students have reacted furiously to ‘homophobic’ comments made by a Cambridge Liberal Democrat councillor.

Cambridgeshire County Councillor Kilian Bourke created a group on social networking site Facebook called “Romsey 27 – The Legacy”. On the group page, Bourke boasted that the group could “ridicule all and sundry with their dazzling repertory [sic] of scathing insults, such as: That’s gay! Don’t be so gay! Are you gay or something? and Get out of my face you raging homo!”

Bourke also tells an anecdote on the site about going to a party, talking to a room full of men, and “feeling secure”, only to discover that some of them were gay.

Bourke’s remarks came under fire from students of all political affiliations.

George Owers, Chair of the Cambridge University Labour Club, described Bourke as a “principle-less opportunist”. Speaking to

Varsity, he said, “These comments are an absolute disgrace, the kind of thing you’d expect from a BNP councillor, not from a ‘mainstream’ politician.”

He added, “If he decides to stay on, I hope they have the good sense to kick him out at the next election.”

John Oxley, vice-chairman of Cambridge University Conservative Association, told *Varsity*: “Homophobia is an outdated and abhorrent prejudice, and has no place in modern politics.

Mr Bourke should strongly consider both his actions and his position, which I for one believe is untenable in light of such remarks.”

CUSU LGBT President Raymond Li, speaking to *Varsity*, said that he was “disgusted and surprised that such comments could come from a Lib Dem councillor, especially when the party he is working for is regarded as being LGBT-friendly.”

Chair of the Cambridge Student Liberal Democrats Dom Weldon told *Varsity*, “I despise homophobia and homophobic insults.” However,

he was keen to emphasise that “Bourke has apologised wholeheartedly for the offence caused by this unfortunate lapse.”



Lib Dem Councillor Kilian Bourke

Bourke said that he apologised “unreservedly” for any offence caused by his comments. He said, “I assure you they do not reflect my views. They were made several years ago when I was a student and were intended as a stupid joke between friends.”

Student to stand for Labour in Council elections

KATIE FORSTER

A Cambridge student has been selected by the Cambridge Labour Party to run as one of their candidates in the upcoming city council elections.

George Owers is a 3rd year PPSIS student at Jesus College and the head of the Cambridge University Labour Club. He will run for the position of City Councillor for Abbey Ward, an area to the East of town. The ward is a marginal one and the battle for seats between the parties is said to be fierce.

Abbey Ward currently has three councillors: two Labour and one Green. Owers has told *Varsity* that he is “determined to hold the seat for Labour”. If elected, he plans to work for change in the Cambridge community, promising to “fight to improve people’s lives in real ways, from helping to fix problems with drainage and anti-social behaviour, to the bigger city-wide issues”.

However, societies in Cambridge that support other political parties have been quick to criticise the decision. Dom Weldon, chair of the Cambridge Student Liberal Democrats, believes that Owers was selected out of necessity. He says: “I think the party having to select a student, rather than finding a local resident shows just how much the support for Labour in Abbey has died away.”

Nick Hillman is the Conservative candidate for Cambridge in the 2010 election and a resident of Abbey Ward. He has highlighted his surprise that Owers is standing in a ward with a relatively low proportion of students, saying that “perhaps he

knows how unpopular Labour’s cuts to universities are among students”.

One of the most contentious subjects in the upcoming City Council elections is the proposed redevelopment of the site of the current private Marshall Airport to make way for new homes. The Labour Party oppose the rebuilding of the site. Owers says that the plans will “rob the city of thousands of skilled jobs and cause infrastructural and traffic chaos”.

However, Dom Weldon points out the need for affordable housing in Cambridge, stating that “building on the airport is the only way to tackle this human crisis in an environmentally friendly way.”

The Conservatives also oppose the move and have highlighted discrepancies between Labour policy and action, as Nick Hillman points out: “The Labour Party claims to be against the development, but it is the Labour Government that is pushing for so many new homes to be built.” The City Council elections will be held on May 6th 2010.



George Owers, head of CULC

Thatcher’s private papers from 1979 released at Churchill

Documents include details of ex-PM’s pre-election diet

EMMA MUSTICH

A collection of approximately 25,000 private documents from Margaret Thatcher’s first year as Prime Minister (May-December 1979) was released last Saturday for public viewing and consultation at the Churchill Archives Centre in Cambridge.

Among the documents are unexpected details of a protein-rich diet Thatcher took up only months before her 1979 election, and notes on Thatcher’s original choices for her first Cabinet, in addition to crucial texts relating to both foreign policy and domestic relations in the former British premier’s first year.

A folded sheet found tucked inside Thatcher’s 1979 pocket diary and entitled “Mayo Clinic Diet” outlines a nutritional regime designed to help its follower lose up to 20 lbs in two weeks.

The sheet bears Thatcher’s handwriting, including check-marks and “x”s next to each day’s recommended foods. The document suggests that Thatcher tried to lose weight at some point before the May 4th 1979 general election, when she stopped using the diary.

The discovery of the diet sheet is especially interesting in light of a statement made by Thatcher in an interview for *The Sun* published in mid-March 1979. In the interview, Thatcher said, “I have no special dieting regime of meals, I just try to

eat little.”

The Mayo Clinic Diet recommends 28 eggs per week. Other foods on the political candidate’s diet included spinach, steak, cottage cheese and cold chicken. A note at the bottom warns that whisky is the only alcoholic beverage to be consumed, and that it can only be taken on days when meat is eaten.

Crucial documents in the wider collection include notes on the brainstorm behind Thatcher’s first Cabinet appointments. These show, for example, that Michael Heseltine, later instrumental in Thatcher’s fall



Thatcher’s pre-election diet regime

from power, was originally intended to be Secretary of State for Energy, rather than Secretary of State for the Environment.

They also reveal that Thatcher considered giving Nicholas Ridley a Cabinet post in 1979, but changed her mind, later appointing him Secretary of State for Transport in 1983.

The simultaneous opening, with this new collection, of parts of the collections of Thatcher Press Secretary Bernard Ingham and Policy Unit Chief John Hoskyns, will allow for increased understanding of the behind-the-scenes work of Downing Street staff.

The papers released on Saturday under the 30-year rule complement the set of Thatcher’s official papers for 1979 that were opened last month in the National Archives at Kew. This marks “the first time that a British Prime Minister’s private and official papers have been released in tandem,” according to a Churchill Archives Centre press release.

The Margaret Thatcher Foundation, in partnership with the Margaret Thatcher Archive Trust and the Churchill Archives Centre, also announced Saturday that it plans ultimately to make all of Lady Thatcher’s papers, from the beginning of her career through 1990, available to the public for free through a digitisation scheme.

Documents that have already been released can be viewed online at www.margaretthatcher.org.



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Comment



ROB PEAL

What did Blair really do for us?

Blair's performance at the Chilcot Inquiry will secure his reputation as a wild egotist and a compulsively dishonest man

Blair's personality is hard to understand. At the centre of it there is a paradox: he is undoubtedly a man of immense faith and conviction, but he is also terrifyingly dishonest. The Chilcot Inquiry has confirmed that at the root of this paradox lies Blair's juggernaut of an ego.

It is highly revealing that as a student Blair did not want to be Prime Minister, he wanted to be a rock star. He still has the rampant self-regard of a demented celebrity, and this is behind his capacity for insincerity. For Blair, his messianic self-belief that whatever he pursues is right, justifies lying on a grand scale in order to get there. So he has made deceit his political art.

In 1997 the newly elected Tony Blair let the Labour Party accept a £1 million bribe from Bernie Ecclestone to change legislation on tobacco advertising, and then declared to the nation that he was a "pretty straight kind of guy". Britain should have taken note: you should never believe someone who tells you they are honest. And if ever there was a fundamental discrepancy between claims and deeds it can be seen in Tony Blair's

subsequent career.

Watching him come back from the dead at the Chilcot Inquiry was an unnerving experience, like reuniting with a former friend who had

"He believed in the threat of WMDs simply because he wanted to."

let you down. All of those famous mannerisms which once convinced the electorate he was a decent man had a very different effect last week. The staccato intonation, emphatic hand movements, nods of the head, little chuckles and complicit smile almost seemed disrespectful in their flagrant insincerity.

Some have praised Blair for his robust defence at the Inquiry, but the strength of his assertions was completely at odds with the weakness of his arguments. Blair's style of justification has always been solipsistic, demanding that the public just accept his

own conviction. Such defences are completely insufficient. His tedious refrain, "I did what I believe was right" is little different from claiming, "I believe what I did was right." As a frighteningly self-regarding man, Blair is incapable of seeing past the imagined infallibility of his own judgement.

This can be seen in almost all of his answers to panel. In defending the importance of 9/11 he simply ignored the irrelevance of al-Qaeda to Iraq, and fatuously stated, "I regarded it as an attack on us." Equally, his defence of the infamous dossier entitled 'Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction' depended on what it was that he thought. Why was a document assembled like a piece of A-level coursework, ripping claims off PhD dissertations found on the Internet, presented to Parliament as "extensive, detailed and authoritative"? After dramatically removing his glasses, Blair answered, "I did believe it, and I did believe it frankly beyond doubt."

The panel weakly accept Blair's profession of 'belief' as sufficient. However, 'belief' is not an answer: it merely opens up the question of

why Blair believed what he did. Some of the earlier revelations of the Inquiry can help us with that question. Many, such as Foreign Policy advisor Sir David Manning, have testified that Blair pledged British support to Bush at his Texas ranch in April 2002. So by the time the dossier was published four months later, Britain was already on course for war. It is clear that such dossiers were not objective cases for war pieced together by professionally impartial Civil Servants, but hack jobs cobbled together by Alastair Campbell to justify what was in fact a foregone conclusion. Blair believed in the threat of WMDs simply because he wanted to believe it. What is more, he wanted Parliament and the public to believe it.

Blair also let slip in his interview with Fern Britton last year that even if he had known before that there were no WMDs, he would

"Fetishising marriage and calling for censorship are the unintelligent reflexes of moralisers."

AC GRAYLING

have wanted regime change in Iraq. So if it wasn't about the weapons, we still have to ask: why was Blair so intent on taking us to war? Once again, the answer is his ego. A friend of Blair's recently described him as "like a girl who wants to go to all the best dances". When the big players were going in against the baddies, Blair desperately wanted to be part of a battle between good and evil. The opinions of one million Britons who marched in protest, the two MPs who stood down from the cabinet and the UN were never going to stop his mission.

Like the egotist who fantasises about his own funeral, Blair is preoccupied by his legacy. Behind Blair's catchphrase "move on" is a belief that all his actions represent political progress/Godly providence. Blair depicted himself as the grand interpreter of progress, perpetually 'moving on'. But we have not moved on. In terms of peace in the Middle East and Britain's respect in global politics, we have taken a big step backwards. That is Blair's legacy.



Read Rob's blog, 'The World Outside', at varsity.co.uk/blogs



GEMMA GRONLAND

So it turns out Education is for sale

Social Sciences should defend its doomed little corner

All this Education Tripos talk is beginning to wear thin. This isn't because I'm apathetic towards the issue, or because I think that Education is a 'nothing' subject whose students should all fuck off back to Homerton. On the contrary, I am an Education student myself, and I'm disappointed at the decision to eradicate my Tripos. Still, I find it hard to be anything but pessimistic about its future.

The Tripos is currently set to end by 2012 because of financial constraints, yet another rejig of the social sciences and perhaps a general feeling that all of us studying Education are just a little bit shit. This last reason is why I am pessimistic. If

it were all about money or the need to reorganise the PPSIS faculty (I think this is right... it's changed so many times I'm probably missing a P in there) then the horizon might look brighter. These issues are minor in comparison to the rather insulting claim that those of us who have chosen to study Education are not quite as clever as the rest of the Cambridge student body. So how does the subject overcome this wave of discouragement? Well, it probably won't. Fast forward to 2012 and "... yeah, I study Social Psychological International Politics with electives in Anthropology, Education and Criminology. I think they call it SPIPAEC ..." You get the idea.



The ramifications of ending the Tripos go beyond the damaged egos of its students. Social sciences will become even more ridiculously amalgamated, with even less opportunity for specialism. This talk about uniting the social sciences under one faculty and creating a new, independent Faculty of Psychology speaks volumes for the University's general attitude towards social sciences. While it welcomes with open arms the formation of an independent faculty for the most scientific-sounding social science, it assumes that all the others can be consolidated without any detriment to the depth and breadth of the subjects themselves. If I wanted to study Anthropology, I would want to know that

I could in a faculty that doesn't just offer it as a Part II after two years of compulsory study in other disciplines. This is where I think the University is failing its Social Sciences students. Future applicants looking to study Education will be disappointed to find it has been replaced with a tokenistic Part II option rather than a full, in-depth degree. This might lead them to look elsewhere. It baffles me that the University boasts the best Education degree in England whilst questioning the prestige of the course.

Whilst I have a bleak outlook on the future of the Tripos, I have not resigned myself to do nothing about it. I'm just unsure about the best course of action. One justification for the course as it is now is

that many Education students go on to do PGCEs and the Teach First graduate scheme. So what? Students from lots of other subjects go on to do exactly the same. This reasoning only perpetuates the notion that those of us who study Education do so because we definitely want to be teachers, which isn't the case. Nobody says to Geographers, "Oh, so you want to draw maps?" It should not be assumed that an Education degree is only worthwhile if the student wants a career in the field. Those of us willing to contest the current decision should be making better arguments for the value of the subject and, more importantly, emphasising the enthusiasm and ability of the students. Oh, and just to clear things up: we don't all go to Homerton.

VARSITY

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Speaking freely

CU Israel Society's decision to cancel Benny Morris's talk this week has clearly sparked a controversy. Morris himself is something of a difficult figure to pin down, having divided opinion between historians in the past and garnered accusations of being both pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian.

What is clear is that he is prone to making attention-seeking statements. This is the man, after all, who said, "When the choice is between ethnic cleansing and genocide – the annihilation of your people – I prefer ethnic cleansing," and suggested a pre-emptive nuclear strike on Iran as the only alternative to stop Iran's nuclear prospects.

But free speech is a basic right, even though it might sometimes come at the cost of allowing incendiary, even dangerous, viewpoints to be expressed. Last year's Nick Griffin *Question Time* debacle brought this to our attention. The aftermath of the broadcast saw, rightly, widespread disgust and disapprobation towards Griffin and the BNP. Unfortunately, it also seems to have provoked an increase in the radical party's membership. However, in allowing Griffin a voice, the BBC ultimately showed up his vile, reproachable views.

By inviting Benny Morris to speak, were the Israel Society giving his reputedly anti-Palestinian views a promotional platform, or were they simply allowing him to express these views, so as to enable us to question and possibly criticise? The true nature of Morris's views can only be tested and demonstrated if those views are aired, to be thoroughly questioned and debated. If his ideas are dangerous or offensive, surely it is better to know their mettle in order more effectively to combat them.

Yes to NUS

This week, students will vote on the issue of CUSU's continued NUS affiliation. Disaffiliation could free us from what the 'NO' campaigners see as extraneous costs and ineffectual politics on the organisation's part. But affiliation, which costs about the same as two pints per student per year, has saved us vast amounts in the form of interest-free bank accounts, allows us a greater sense of solidarity with university students nationwide, and - crucially - voices our concerns on the national stage.

Referenda on NUS affiliation in recent years have seen a repeated failure to attain the requisite 2,000 votes in a discouraging display of apathy. So many students complain that CUSU is irrelevant, but, if this is true, we are merely perpetuating the fact by not participating in its elections. We must get the number voting well over 2,000 this year.

We do not need to rehearse more detailed arguments for or against NUS affiliation now; these are freely available online. In three sentences: Voting is now open. We vote 'YES'. We hope you will too.



Letters to the Editor

As leaders of students' unions from around Britain, we urge the students of Cambridge to vote YES to remain affiliated to NUS. NUS is the most powerful voice students have within society to shape their educational experience and defend their rights. The work done by NUS to support our unions and represent students nationally is simply irreplaceable. Having campaigned alongside CUSU and shared best practice with your sabbatical officers, we would hate to see Cambridge shrink into isolation.

Public expenditure cuts, a higher education funding review dominated by business interests and a general election which looks set to result in a hung parliament, place today's students in a unique position. If ever students needed a strong national voice to defend the quality of their experience, it is now.

Cambridge students deserve to be at the centre this movement, rather than out in the cold. Please vote YES for NUS in the referendum and leave CUSU best placed

to improve the lives of students in Cambridge.

Stefan Baskerville (Oxford)
Aled Dilwyn-Fisher (LSE)
Thomas Graham (Edinburgh)
Andrew Bradley (Warwick)
Ryan Wain (KCL)
Paul Tobin (Sheffield)
Fabian Neuner (Birmingham)
Dannie Grufferty (Liverpool)
Emma Dilorio (Bristol)
Roxy Shamsolmaali (Nottingham)
Sarah Hutchinson (Oxford)
Emilie Tapping (KCL)
Brigid Fisher (Birmingham)
Alexander Erdlenbruch (Sheffield)

Would that more Christians were like Rosie Tegelaars ('Confessions of a Christian'); sadly, CICCUCU aren't. I was the fresher who



started the thread on The Student Room her article refers to. Back then, I asked "What's wrong with CICCUCU?" Now a finalist, I can answer my own question. CICCUCU's problem isn't how they spread their message, but the message itself. They think that all gay relationships are bad and that gay people

are disordered. They think that everyone who isn't a Christian gets sent to hell: an eternal concentration camp for non-believers. They think this is a good thing, and exactly what my loved ones and I deserve because of who and what we are: human, but not Christian. I won't follow Tegelaars' suggestion to 'join the debate' with CICCUCU because I consider their beliefs beneath contempt, and I think this, rather than endemic relativism, is why Cambridge students dislike them. If CICCUCU had courage in their convictions they'd debate instead of preach. Perhaps they're scared they'd lose; listening to their speakers, those fears would be well-founded. For an organisation devoted to spreading and defending the 'Good News', CICCUCU are remarkably light on apologetics. They have much to say sorry for. **Gregory Lewis**
Gonville and Caius

Email **letters@varsity.co.uk** for the chance to win a bottle from the Cambridge Wine Merchants. Letters may be edited.

Overrated

Week 4: Stephen Fry



Firstly I want to apologise to Mr. Fry; this is nothing personal. I adore QI, and I love the fact he's raised awareness

of gay issues. In some areas Fry is criminally underrated, such as with his film writing debut *Bright Young Things*, and the astonishingly personal *The Secret Life of the Manic Depressive*. But I still don't understand why everyone fawns around Fry to the extent they do.

As I write this, Fry has 1,289,721 Twitter followers, and they are increasing by the second. And what does he do with it? Put pressure on the government? Make a movement for change? No. He encourages political apathy and publicly refused to vote in the 2005 election. I've had many conversations with people who abstained from voting and been told that if the nation's scrumptilicious teddy-bear doesn't,

why should they?

Fry also decried tax-payers for being upset over the MPs' expenses scandal. "Who hasn't fiddled expenses?" he said, and though he has a point, this is unsuitable coming from such a figurehead. "A tedious, bourgeois obsession", says someone who has clearly benefited from financial fiddling at the tax-payers expense. Hardly the ideal role model.

The media reporting Fry's every move is tedious. Maybe it's just me, but I don't care if he stops using Twitter or not. Not everything he does is news; nor should he be the 'go-to-celeb' for a comment on any technology-based advance or news story.

No-one can criticise Fry without

fear of umbrage from the social media community. Back in October, when one microblogger dared to say that although he admired Fry, he found his tweets "a bit... boring", the uproar was ludicrous, with even the BBC finding it necessary to run the story. The poor chap who dared to say anything was bombarded with rebukes from Fry's many followers. There are numerous Facebook groups demanding Stephen Fry be made King, Prime Minister and/or Poet Laureate (maybe all of them at once). One group appears to think he already is, declaring "Bad Mouthing Stephen Fry should be classed as Treason". He apparently has his own day (24th Aug), and there is even one group with the sole aim of

aiding his escape from a lift.

I want to make it clear; I do not hate Stephen. I just feel it is possible he has spread himself a little thin; the moments of excellence are diluted by inane comments regarding the weather or darts scores. I hate his sycophantic fans who fawn on his every word, making complaints about news articles they have yet to read (by their own admittance), simply because Fry has frowned upon it. I re-iterate: I do not dislike Fry; I merely wish he was a little less ubiquitous and less revered by those who appear to be under the illusion he is God.

But Stephen, please don't send your Twitter army after me. I'm scared of them. All 1,290,282 of them. **MICHELLE BROOK**

THE ESSAY

Back to Victoria

There are fashions in morals as there are in everything else, but though fashions in clothing or music are usually harmless and sometimes amusing, the oscillation between reactionary and liberal moralities is another matter, especially when its direction is reactionary. Alas, I perceive just such a movement occurring now; which invites comment and an assemblage of reminders.

Here are some straws in the wind. Mr David Cameron, perhaps the next Prime Minister, has announced a policy of tax breaks to ‘support marriage’. At time of writing the policy’s details are still in flux, but its aim of providing a money inducement to people to get and stay married – which at a minimum specifically means acquiring a relevant piece of paper from the municipality – has a clear premise. It is that there is something about that piece of paper which turns long-term committed relationships into something ‘proper’ and worthy of reward. In the background of this view are residues of theology and control of sex, and a wish to revive and re-emphasize ideas of social acceptability, in effect by making the state a third contracting party to relationships.

Mr Cameron says his policy is based on the claimed fact that when both parents in addition have a municipal document, their children do better than if the municipal document is absent. This claimed fact is one that needs inspection, now that magical thinking about these matters is less common. In the long and unhappy history of Church and state interest in licensing cohabitation and reproduction, the argument for marriage was not about children but the supposed magic: marriage was a ‘sacrament’, ‘ordained of God,’ and so forth. The obvious fact that children flourish if they have a plurality of kind and happy adults caring for them is these days somehow parlayed by moralizers into pieties about marriage, leaving the ‘sacrament’ part to be taken care of by the wedding dress industry.

In a speech outlining his tax breaks Mr Cameron further said that the media and advertisers should be discouraged from flaunting saucy, explicit, flesh-revealing images (he ignored a cry of ‘Page Three!’ from the audience, because *The Sun* is on his side) in order to protect children. Moves to turn public space into a kindergarten are one of the earliest signs of moral chill, and one of the surest. Other people call it censorship, but not Mr Cameron; challenged directly about this, he did not reply.

These moralistic indications from the Conservative Party, not hitherto best known for keeping its trousers up and its hands out of tills, tend in the same direction as another of those laborious Labour government initiatives consisting of all gesture and no thought, namely, its efforts to



Criminalisation and legislation are the last resorts of the fussy moralizer, argues **AC Grayling**. We can’t let society be controlled by finger-wagging prudes

deal with prostitution by prohibition and criminalisation. It passed a law last autumn criminalising customers of sex workers if these latter had been trafficked. Now, genuine trafficking is an extremely horrible crime involving kidnapping and coercion. Someone who had sexual relations with the victim of such treatment is surely committing rape. As this latter point suggests, there are laws already in place to punish the crimes implicated in genuine trafficking. The Labour government, with its bad habit of duplicating existing laws, and too often on the basis of bad thinking, was unable to

“If the example of Prohibition in 1920s America teaches anything, it is that prohibition and criminalisation make all problems worse”

resist gesture politics here.

For one thing, the definition of trafficking is so broad that it obscures the serious problem of real trafficking. So if a young gay man comes to the UK from Poland (where homosexuals are persecuted) to work in the sex industry, and if a friend helps him make any of the arrangements involved in moving to Britain and finding somewhere to stay, he is thereby officially ‘trafficked’ and his friend and his clients are officially criminals.

Many people find it hard to believe that some other people might actually choose to be sex

workers. They deny that anyone would become a sex worker if not coerced by pimps, drug habits, or desperate poverty. This is the thinking behind the current Glasgow campaign to stamp out prostitution by criminalising its customers. Glasgow City Council’s hope is that the Scottish Assembly will adopt the same measures for the country as a whole. The sponsors of such measures, convinced that sex work is always unwilling and horrible, would accordingly be surprised when they hear about, for example, Tuppy Owens and the Tender Loving Care (TLC) Trust, which puts disabled people in touch with sex workers willing to help them with their needs. Think of the deprivation experienced by, say, armless or paralysed men and women; think of the extraordinarily warm imagination of those who recognise that deprivation, and respond to it. A *Times* article reported that “The TLC has helped hundreds of people with disabilities... many sex workers offer a concession to disabled clients who genuinely cannot afford what they offer.”

Like most other activities, sex work has a large lower end where drug addiction, violence, disease and misery are rife: not all or even many sex workers are Belles de Jour. Does it solve such problems by driving it further underground, further into the arms of crime, further into stigma and exclusion? Laws against brothels force sex workers onto the street, alone, in all weathers, when they could be safer and warmer in a house together. Less stigmatization of everything to do with the sex trade would encourage its workers and clients to access health advice and care, and to reduce the abuses that too easily occur when it is driven into the shadows. If the example of Prohibition in 1920s America teaches anything, it is that

prohibition and criminalisation make all problems worse.

There is of course a better alternative in all these matters. Families with children should be helped to stay flourishingly together; however constituted and whether or not a marriage licence has been bought. People abused, coerced, harmed, no matter in what line of work, should be protected. Addicts should be helped, and criminals given less opportunity to exploit human misery in any respect. This applies to the areas where matters of morality tip over into problems; by no means all of them do, and those that do not should never be the business of the police or even of finger-wagging prudes.

Fetishizing marriage, calling for censorship, promoting ‘wars’ on drugs and prostitution through the criminal law, are the unintelligent reflexes of moralizers who do not want anyone else to do, be or see what they themselves dislike or are frightened of doing, being and seeing. In the days of Mary Whitehouse, who did not want anyone else to see on television what she personally disapproved of, the great puzzle was why she had bought a television without an ‘off’ button. Today’s new moralizers have to be reminded that if they seek to do good, it is best done through working along the grain of human nature, not against it, and in particular by sympathetic, constructive and tolerant means. But first they have to be sure that their moralizing impulse is not simply a matter of having forgotten where the ‘off’ button is when they are tempted to meddle in other people’s lives.

AC Grayling is Professor of Philosophy at Birkbeck, University of London, author of over twenty books on philosophy and other subjects, and a columnist for *The Times*.

Not-Sci



Scientific reporting in The Daily Fail

According to *The Daily Mail*, some things that increase the risk of cancer are: aspirin, babies, bacon, being a black person, being a woman, being a man, being Southern, blow jobs, bras, a broken heart, children, cod liver oil, crayons, dogs, Facebook, flip-flops, being tall, large heads, left handedness, pregnancy, sex, teen sex and working.

If you are a southerner who wears bras, has a broken heart and wears flip-flops, you might, understandably, be concerned. Visit the Facebook group ‘*The Daily Mail* list of ‘Things that give you cancer’” to see a list of the many other things that *The Daily Mail* has linked to cancer and to read the original articles. But really, there has been no paper over the last decade that has demonstrated consistently and unashamedly that scaring its readers into buying it is more important than credible journalism.

I’m not going to deny that I occasionally read *The Daily Mail* when I’m looking for some entertainment. Even this week I read ‘The tell tail clue to a happy dog...they wag it to the left’ and ‘Lord of the dance: Prince Harry ditches ceremony and gets down to the Calypso beat in Haiti fundraising effort’. I even perused ‘Not so steady cam! The first film to be shot entirely by chimps using bash proof cameras’ with interest.

Even if these stories are completely inaccurate – even if a happy dog wags its tail to the right and Harry never ‘got down’ to any beat, Calypso or otherwise – it is unlikely to change my life in any way, and more importantly it won’t have widespread consequences for the public in general.

But sometimes it is serious. While the media in general were careless during the MMR scare, *The Daily Mail* was particularly irresponsible. In fact, I think the paper has yet to produce a well written, informative and balanced science article.

The Daily Mail is to science what Jedward were to *The X Factor*: entertaining and popular with the public, but not for the right reasons.

SITA DINANAUTH

Last week you hopefully received a copy of Mark's Gospel - this coming week, Rico Tice will be giving five evening talks to help you look into the claims that Jesus makes in this book.

I am very much looking forward to 'Rescued?' next week and count it a real privilege to have been asked to speak each night at Great St. Mary's Church. Obviously the question is why bother coming?

The reason to give a little precious time to come and listen to either the lunchtime or the evening talks is this: If the coming of Christ at Christmas is not the best news you've heard in your life, you can be sure, you can be certain, you've misunderstood it.

It would be great to see you.

Best wishes

Rico Tice


RESCUED?
www.rescued.org.uk

THE HEARTBREAKS YOU EMBRACE

New theatre cabaret starring **Stuart Flynn**
written by **Orlando Reade**



8pm
Thursday 11 & Friday 12 February
Michaelhouse Cafe
All tickets £5 on the door

workshops

with **helen mort**
fridays: 12.02, 19.02,
26.02, 05.03, 11.03

The *mays xviii* and the *Marlowe Society* bring you a programme of poetry and script writing workshops. In collaboration with prize-winning poet Helen Mort, we will be organising a weekly laboratory in Cambridge for a group of new writers to work on their poems or drama, with a particular emphasis on new play writing.

The Other Prize. The Mays anthology. The John Kinsella / Tracy Ryan Poetry Prize. Future fame. It's all to play for.

If you are interested please send an application detailing who you are, what you are currently working on or have already written, and what you would like to work on were you to join the group. If you have any work to submit for consideration then please limit it to two pages maximum together with your application. All are welcome to apply though places are limited.

Please send your applications to Mark Maughan (mjm91@cam.ac.uk) and Helen Mort (hm317@cam.ac.uk) no later than midday on **Monday 8th February**.

Workshops will take place every Friday of term from the 12th of February onwards.

**the
mays**

<http://mays.varsity.co.uk>



The Zeitgeist Tape

The fortnight’s entertainment water-cooler gossip, digested for your pleasure



It was the Grammys on Sunday night. Do you care? Not really. The Grammys have only slightly more relevance to good music than a block of slightly off Roquefort. Take, for example, Taylor Swift, who has been bestowed four Grammys by the Grammy gods. Wikipedia claims the judges are members of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, but *Zeitgeist Tape* prefers to think of them as a shadowy war cabinet of recording executives in Hugo Boss, strategising on how best to leech as much money as possible from a dying industry. You can imagine the decision process that led up to Swift’s annunciation as the youngest ever Grammy winner: “Beyoncé?” “She does have the voice...” “Yeah, but can she really sing about being in the bleachers and falling in love with

football captains convincingly?” “Good point. Let’s give Beyoncé six Grammys and hope Sasha Fierce subsumes her entire ego.” A few months ago, Swift was better known as the one Kanye West interrupted. Now, West is not among the most amiable people on Earth. This is a man, after all, who wears floor-length chinchilla fur coats and then accuses people of not having “fun” with fashion. However, after seeing Swift perform an excruciating rendition of ‘Rhiannon’ with Stevie Nicks of Fleetwood Mac, we may be forced to admit Kanye was right. We were led to believe that Swift was a “preternaturally gifted songwriter” (*Rolling Stone* magazine) or a “hugely talented person” (John Mayer) in the mould of a female Elliot Smith. Or even a second-rate Liz Phair. But no. Sample lyric: “Romeo, save me, they

try to tell me how to feel / This love is difficult, but it’s real”. Dire Straits this ain’t. But just try telling that to your little sister. In other showbiz news Simon Cowell, having started with Leonard Cohen’s ‘Hallelujah’, has moved on to ruining more classic rock songs: this time, R.E.M.’s ‘Everybody Hurts’. Among other notables, the single features Mariah Carey, Cheryl Cole, Susan Boyle, JLS, Miley Cyrus and, uh, Mika. This is the problem with charity singles. For every Take That, there is also a James Blunt: the name in the room that nobody wants to acknowledge. Pity the Joe McElderrys of this world, cursed to play second fiddle to Jon Bon Jovi. You can imagine the phone call: “Hi Joe, listen, Simon really appreciates your talent and he’d like for you to record a charity single. You’ll be singing the line “when the day is

long”, except you’ll be harmonising with Mariah. And Michael Bublé. And Mika. It’ll be great.” Has a more random selection of musicians ever existed? In any case, Cowell’s finger puppets are lending their voices for charity Helping Haiti. And Cowell’s producer-in-crime? *The Sun*. Now, we’re not one to besmirch any charity effort to help an impoverished country in need, no matter how ill-conceived or celeb-studded, but come on now. *The Sun* is not exactly synonymous with the word charitable. If any Haitian refugees came over to English soil, with nothing but a tale of tragedy and woe, *The Sun* would ask two questions: “Are you a key worker?” and “Are you a welfare thief?” before promptly filing a deportation order. It also doesn’t help that the British charity single is going up against its American counterpart, a

re-recording of ‘We Are The World’. It clocks in at 75 singers and features everybody from Barbara Streisand to Carlos Santana. It’s like your Auntie Doris’ weekly local parish sing-along going up against the Vienna Boys’ Choir. No matter how hard they try, no matter how many po-faced American rock songs about pain and suffering they cover, British charity singles can never really escape the cheesy whiff of naffness. Here’s the solution: embrace the naff. Get Bill Nighy to cover ABBA with Wallace and Gromit on guest vocals. Send it out with a badly Photoshopped cover of Nighy’s head on the body of David Hasselhoff. If nothing else, somebody might launch a Facebook campaign to propel it to number one. ZING TSJENG

Head online to read Victoria Beale’s ‘Self-Help’ column.

HOT

CHATROULETTE.COM Links you into a random webcam chat with fellow procrastinators, drunkards, and weirdos across the world. Now with genius drinking game. tinyurl.com/ygsjs9c



HOWARD THEATRE AT DOWNING COLLEGE

It flushes with rainwater, heats with solar panels and entertains with theatre. What more could you want?

GRAZE.COM Delivers your daily dose of fresh fruit and nuts to your pigeonhole, all for £2.99. Genius.



LOST

Final season of famous series returns to UK shores today. Refresh your memory of season one to five: tinyurl.com/y9v6aq7

EMMA WATSON FOR PEOPLETREE Harry Potter actress and Cambridge runaway designs for ethical fashion label. Still should have gone to Homerton.



NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

Reformed boyband have announced a string of reunion gigs. Altogether now: “NKOTB, had a bunch of hits, Chinese food makes me sick...”

GAEL GARCIA BERNAL *The Science of Sleep* star’s marriage is on

the rocks as he demands a paternity test for his child. Ay, papi...

BRITNEY SPEARS Her black lace D&G Grammy dress was classy... until you got to her lack of a skirt.



Street Profile

SISTER VALERIE WALKER
71, NUN



Which words do you most overuse?
Astonishing and mamma mia.

What’s hot?
Being with friends and having good discussions.

What’s not?
Being ill or unwell.

What is your guiltiest pleasure?
Chocolate.

Tell us a secret about yourself
I enjoy reading detective novels.

What do you dream of?
I dream of lots of intelligent young women joining the convent.

And finally, dogs or cats?
Both, but dogs.



Week 4: Songs For A Swap

Jay-Z - ‘Girls Girls Girls’
Rugby Swap. Mahal. Standard. Superhero fancy dress theme. Tonight you’re Misogyny Man, wearing a costume of boxers and a cape. Jokes.

Velvet Underground - ‘Femme Fatale’
Sitting beside you in the Curry House is Katy. She can down six VKs in a row and had a walk-on role on Hollyoaks last summer. Fit.


Fat Les - ‘Vindaloo’
Wine is flowing, pennies are flying, korma decorating the walls and the staff are crying. Banter.

Beastie Boys - ‘Fight For Your Right’
The Cindies Bouncer won’t budge. Katy’s already in the club. Cringe. You tell him you’re synonymous with Cambridge. Everything goes black. Heavy.

The Strokes - ‘Last Nite’
Waking up bruised in the doorway of Heffers (lad), you stagger home, switch on your computer and check out VarsTV. That guy being slapped on Cindies Stories seems really familiar...

Our Tube

SEARCH:
worst+line+reading+ever



Oh God. Oh man. Oh God. Oh man. Oh God Oh man. Oh God oh man. OhGodOhManOhGodOhM-anOhGodOhMan. Ryan O’Neal’s acting is actually THAT bad.

Overheard

“That’s the last time I’m ever giving a handjob in someone’s back garden.”

(9pm, outside Trinity)

Where the buzz is at

Before they headline the NME Tour, **Eleanor Careless** chats to **Hugo White**, guitarist with The Maccabees about their rapid rise to fame

If success is a honeypot, The Maccabees have flown to it. Following a second album generally rapturously received, they are set to headline the Shockwaves NME Awards Tour in February along with Bombay Bicycle Club, The Big Pink and The Drums. Not long ago Roots Manuva rang up “out of the blue” to undertake an “effortless” and long-awaited transformation of the song ‘No Kind Words’ into ‘Empty Vessels’. Yet they are oddly unperturbed by their rush to fame. Hugo White, the band’s guitarist, openly confesses that rehearsals for the tour have yet to start; but they’ve played these venues before, at least the big ones. Playing at Brixton Academy, in particular, feels like “a home coming venue” to this South London band. Their ambition second time round is to “make it better... not saying it was bad last time”. There will be some new songs, but they’re not yet fully formed. The Maccabees compose in an exceedingly collaborative way, taking a “skeleton” idea and by a slow (“there are hundreds of stages”) and often argumentative process (“at times we’re not very laid back... but we can be”) bashing it into a meatier shape. Not that their songs are meaty. The original skeletal form lingers in their

sparse vocal lines and hooky, jerky rhythms. This refined transparency of texture has become their trademark sound, and bears a ghostly witness to their self-admittedly laborious composition process. It was this “really slow and draining process,” Hugo says, that was responsible for the unusually large gap between their first and second album. When they make their

third, their project after the NME tour, they “don’t want to leave it so long” and are planning to be more independent in their song-making, working individually rather than as a group. ‘Precious Time’ is clearly catching up with these casual music makers.

This is a band who are self-professedly “not very good with our instruments”. In fact, most of them only picked up a guitar or microphone for the first time four years ago. So why, I ask Hugo, set up a band in the first place? His

answer is breathtakingly nonchalant. “[We] kinda met each other... Knew I wanted to play guitar with someone... put me on the phone to someone, I said I heard you play the guitar, I’m learning to play...” They hammed up a few quotidian institutions (a local leisure centre, for example), spot on trend for glamourising the mundane, and got away with it. In Hugo’s own words, “it just happened that we were there and ended up doing it”. Gamely, he hopes that

“we’re now a bit better at playing our instruments than we were then...” Such an exponential learning curve makes their success all the more impressive. He continues to explain how “none of us were like these amazing guitar players, we weren’t gonna be in a band cos we were going to do solos the whole time... it was more about making music as a group.” What about their name, the ‘Maccabees’, an initially arbitrary choice pulled from the Bible? Has this come to mean something, anything, to the group who bear this name? Refreshingly, no is the answer. When asked to define The Maccabees in a few words, Hugo wryly replies “a religious group” (almost correct). The Biblical Maccabees were freedom fighters. Perhaps the most appropriate part of this (unintended, but inevitable) association, though, is its intimation of a united force, of pulling togetherness. In which case the most apt part of The Maccabees’ name is its last syllable; the ‘Bees’ certainly seemed to have mastered the art of making their own buzz, from scratch.



The Maccabees: Apparently “a religious band”

The Shockwaves NME Tour comes to the Corn Exchange on Friday 19th February.

Britain: the litigious nation

Science journalist extraordinaire **Ben Goldacre** of *Bad Science* fame meets **Sita Dinanauth** to discuss the woes of British libel law

“And that’s why *South Park* is wise. At the end of the Scientology episode Tom Cruise shouts ‘I’m gonna sue you, I’m gonna sue you in England!’” Ben Goldacre tells *Varsity* when he refers to the ludicrous state of British libel law and how it is against credible journalism. Goldacre lectured in Cambridge as part of the public 2010 Darwin lecture series (taking place from the 25th January until the 5th March); he talked about AIDS denialism, UK journalism, the ludicrous state of British libel law and being sued.

Ben Goldacre has become a media champion for “unpicking dodgy scientific claims made by scaremongering journalists, dodgy government reports, evil pharmaceutical corporations, PR companies and quacks” via his notorious ‘Bad Science’ column in *The Guardian* since 2003. It has spawned *Bad Science*, the book which has sold 180,000 copies and reached number one in the paperback non-fiction charts.

South Park jokes aside, Goldacre

is more than happy to discuss his own experience. “I got sued by Matthias Rath, the vitamin pill salesman from Europe and America who went to South Africa and started taking out adverts in national newspapers saying that anti-retroviral drugs would kill you, that they were a conspiracy by the pharmaceutical industry and that the answer to the AIDS epidemic was here and it was vitamin pills. I pointed out the danger of this, especially within the context of a country with an AIDS denialist president, Taibo Mbeki, a country where around 350,000 people died unnecessarily because of AIDS denialist policies pursued by the government. When I pointed out the foolishness of that, he sued us.” He continues “and that is not the important part of the story; the case ran for nineteen months, he failed, it cost us £535,000 to defend the case and we only got £365,000 back. That means the cost of successfully defending a libel case that is brought against you is 170 grand and that is roughly the same as an average-priced home in the UK.”

Whist the Matthias Rath case has been well publicised, he is keen to point out this is something which affects all journalists in the UK, he refers to Peter Wilmshurst, a cardiologist, who is currently being sued by a medical device company and Simon Singh, interviewed recently by *Varsity*, a science journalist, who is being sued by the British Chiropractic Association. “What that means is with the costs being so high the ultimate end product of that is that people do not write challenging stories and if you don’t write challenging stories then the public don’t have access to information. This isn’t about journalists wanting to be able to write about stuff, this is about whether the public have access to information and at the moment the British libel laws deprive people of that.”

British libel laws are so bad that people are coming to England just to sue. “There are newspapers in America that are talking about pulling out of the UK market and not distributing papers in the UK and blocking UK web access because they are concerned about

our libel laws and they’re right to be. There is a Tunisian Sheikh who sued an Arabic TV station based in Dubai, broadcasting in Arabic, not in English and he sued them in London. When a Danish newspaper writes about an Icelandic bank, they get sued in London.”

Court cases aside, does he think British journalism has improved with respect to accurate reporting?

“No, absolutely not, nothing has changed in British media news reporting. British

news media coverage of health is in many cases so bad that it poses a serious risk to public health.

You need to make sure people know that they can’t trust what they read in the papers and I think anybody who argues against that is frankly irresponsible.”



Ben Goldacre: Sue him at your peril



“NEVER SPEAK DISRESPECTFULLY OF SOCIETY. O

Photographer: Zing Tsjeng, Assistants: Michael Derringer, JPR. Makeup: Rebecca Felton. Korma [£11.50] Eucharistic Liquor [£7.50] Naan-Wafers x6 [£11.70] all from The Bombay Brasserie; Jesus wears French Connection; Male Disciples: Swap Wear. Other Disciples [from left to right] wear blue blouse from Urban Outfitter



ONLY PEOPLE WHO CAN'T GET INTO IT DO THAT."

OSCAR WILDE

rs and skirt from Udaipur beggar lord, pearls: stolen. Blue dress from Cult. Arabic Tunic from Arabia. Turquoise silk dress from Frou Frou Crew. Chiffon pink dress, model's own. Engineers' pennies: Barclays. Table cloths: Colonial Lowwwot. Watch our behind the scenes video of the shoot: VarsiTV.co.uk/e/cj72d4

Suzie's success

"RANDY, hard, and working-class" were Union President Roger Evans' feelings for Suzie.

Suzie was the girl who stripped at the Union Ball last Saturday night. Only she wasn't really Suzie because the Suzie proper was cancelled on the preceding Tuesday. Due to the fact that she refused to drop her G-string during the act.

TRANSVESTITE PROTEST

BECAUSE he doesn't approve of women's "further encroachment on men's collegiate prerogative," David Spens, 2nd year law student at Corpus, is planning to dress up as a woman and create a demonstration in Corpus Hall tonight.

He has strong feelings about the experiment in which Corpus authorities are allowing women to sit in Hall every Saturday night for this term. Spens is intending to accompany a friend as a guest and half-way through the meal to walk out "in a dramatic manner." This may include sleeping someone's face. For added realism to his disguise, Spens even wants to use make-up.

"I approve of women in the Union," he told Varsity. "Because there the conversation isn't offensive." But Spens thinks that Corpus undergraduates cannot control their "offensive conversation" even on one night of the week.

OVERHEAD in a pub: "You know, Hailsham is a fool—and he's an Oxford man as well."

Oriental Drugs at Unashamed orgy

Mirror the People-man Gorth O'Sigmund reports;

YESTERDAY I was witness to the orgiastic horror of a full-scale drugs party of the type that has made Cambridge notorious as the "Vice Centre of the Student World." The party took place within the tradition-soaked walls of Caius (pronounced "Keys") College—and only three staircases from the rooms of top history don Amos B. Shuttleworth. Mr. Shuttleworth was in the saloon bar of a local hotel at the time.

The first disturbing sight we were greeted with was a young girl, no more than 20 years of age, sitting with her legs poking provocatively out from what can only be described as a dress. As many as 20 young people were present at the party. Some were drinking lemonade, others what might have been wine. A magazine lying about the room contained an advertisement for gin.

On the plush shag carpet lay a hideous and sordid litter, including used sweet-wrappings, several bottle caps, and what could well have been the remains of a partially-burnt contraceptive.

Drug-taking was, of course, continuous. One young girl, her hands erotically entwined with those of the long-haired youth beside her, was taking tablets of aspirin, which she told us was "freely available". This drug has been described by one leading medical expert as "dangerous in large doses". Yet it is available in any chemist! Oriental garavay seeds were scattered everywhere, often being administered with large chunks of bread. Elderly porter and part-time voyeur, Dan McGraw, said to Mirror of the People: "We are powerless to combat all this. Young men often come here with members of the opposite sex; women, with members of their own sex."

It costs over £1,000 a year to keep a student at university, most of it out of the taxpayer's pocket.

Girl of the Week

★

MEET Ingrid: the most beautiful Icelandic girl in Cambridge. Ingrid was successfully boosting the International Centre's membership at the Societies' Fair. She moved out of Iceland a year ago, liked Cambridge so much she's still here. In between having her portrait painted by Jonathan Sweden and visiting Paris, she learns English at the Tech and is so pair with a new family. She is also extremely charming.

★

by
Jeremy Paxman

If you wish to become an Undergraduate, an Undergraduate, that is, with a capital U, you should first clear your mind of all preconceived ideas. An undergraduate is an undergraduate is an undergraduate. He is not a student.

You may recognise the student by his cheerful hoarse tones or by the beard and college scarf which he sports, but the Undergraduate, you will find, wears fashionable clothes casually, speaks languidly and uses after-shave lotion. He drinks draught Guinness.

So remove that lumpy green sports jacket and the trousers Mummy made you buy, slip on your hush-puppies and you will be ready to effect the metamorphosis.

Your first task is to acquire the correct air and manner of an Undergraduate. This may be defined as a lordly indifference which shuns enthusiasm like the plague and does not admit to reading the "Sunday Times". There are few things you may get excited about: last year they included Henry Miller and TW3 but the latter may now be unsafe. Walk slowly round the city-centre three times looking everyone over coldly and practising your air of nonchalance.

Melody Maker

One Trinity undergraduate has taken to wearing his sex-life on his sleeve. Lacking a rifle to cut notches in, he has decided to sew a patch with picture of a musical instrument on his jacket to record each of his conquests. A clarinet is his highest mark of esteem we hear, while a trumpet marks the sexual equivalent of a 2:2. One disgruntled music lover, however, commenting on his orchestral manoeuvres in the dark claimed that the timpanis hadn't rolled for her: "he's got the sensitivity of a sousaphone" she confided.

High Jump

WHEN R. Pearey, a second year Girtton student, lost her bicycle recently, she looked high and low for it.

But she didn't look high enough. Last Monday morning the bike was seen hanging from the windspeed indicator on the roof of the Geography Department.

It has been carried up a steel ladder attached to the indicator itself, and up two other ladders as well.

No one knows who managed to do this, but a national daily states that "undergraduates are believed to be responsible." It could be.

Photo] Vaneglorry. [Quayle

FORTUNE FOR CHRIST'S MAN

ROBERT DE STACPOOLE, who went down from Christ's last year and is now earning £5 10s. a week as a clerk with the Workers' Travel Association, inherited nearly £144,000 this week. The bequest is from his grandfather, who has left it him on condition that he does not become a monk.

De Stacpoole, who was educated at Downside, had once contemplated entering the Benedictine Order, but now he has expressed his hope of entering the House of Commons as a Conservative.

He also intends to complete a novel, which he began while at Cambridge, and to marry, "as I have lots of girl friends."

He stood as a candidate for the Secretaryship of the Union in the Michaelmas term, 1947.

Pit Club

A NEW CLUB for members of the University who have worked in coal mines was formed at a Meeting held in Jesus this week. The President of the Club, which calls itself the "Forty-niners," is David Perham, Trinity. A proposal to name the club the "Pit Club" was defeated.

SICK WORLD SEX-STARVED

"THE world is sick, neurotic, unhappy and full of hate of all kinds," said Mr. A. S. Neill, Principal of Summerhill School, speaking to the C.U. Labour Club last night, on "Freedom, Sex and Education."

"What is wrong with humanity is sex repression," continued Mr. Neill. "We give children an anti-life complex from the word go."

Mr. Neill said that he often got children too late at Summerhill. "I blame doctors and nurses as well as pedagogues for the warping of society by their stupid timetables and methods."

"If I hadn't been so old I might have chucked the school and started a maternity home."

Mr. Neill claimed that teaching of any kind was hopeless and that one could only learn by living.

At Summerhill they took a scientific attitude to the children. "We stand by and see what they do," he said.

The teachers have to decide that they won't be an authority in any way. The children were completely free to go to lessons as they pleased. A general meeting was held on Saturdays, which made laws and tried offenders.

"We dance a lot at Summerhill," said Mr. Neill. He described how when at Harlem he had seen the negroes dancing. It was very similar to that at Summerhill.

CAMBRIDGE overrun by "grinning picaninies"

as Powell called them. Is this the prospect which faces Cambridge in 30 years?

The council were unable to say how many immigrants there are in Cambridge. An official hazarded a guess at "about 200". The sheer ignorance of the situation is an indication of the small size of the problem in Cambridge.

The nearest town with any sizeable immigrant problem is Bedford where the community is quite large. In Cambridge, however, the immigrant population is quite small, due in large part to the lack of industry. And yet this does not mean that the problem is very small. The complete adequacy of the primary and secondary schooling in the city, means that the children soon learn English, and integrate fairly easily. The fathers generally pick up English at work. But it is their wives who often know no English at all.

An undergraduate organisation—the Overseas Service Information Group—is helping many housewives learn English. As Thom Hardy (Christ's) put it, "It is this communicative isolation which is probably at the root of the prejudice in Britain which we seek to remove."

Misogynists muster to oust women

CAMBRIDGE misogynists are rallying. Since women were admitted to the Union on Tuesday, 20-year-old Trinity Historian Ashak Rawji has received "a far greater response than expected" to his proposal to form a Misogynist Society.

The Society's inaugural meeting will be held within two weeks, and Rawji is confident that a "prominent don" will accept the post of Senior Treasurer.

He stressed that he is not forming a Society for homosexuals. "Known homosexuals will be excluded," he said. "Nor do we hate women in the narrow sense. We want to see them changed from intellectual robots into very human and natural fountains of warmth and joy."

Rawji blames female intellectual and social climbing for the disintegration of family life in Britain. He believes women are more suited to Kindergarden teaching and Welfare work than University courses, which "could more usefully be allotted to the thousands of men now being turned away."

Commenting on the entry of women into the Union, he said, "The Union President and his Committee are unprincipled sex-maniacs."

The Society will be an active pressure group. Rawji already has plans to convert Girton into a male College "by easy stages."

"There is still time to check this malignant growth," he maintained confidently, adding: "If only Bernard Shaw were alive to day!"

Gunga Din

If you can get up when the bedder calls you

And not feel tempted to lie in,

If, however much it galls you,

You can hop out with a grin.

If you can get to lectures early

And pay attention to the head

And although he seems so surly,

Keep from wishing he was dead.

If you can swot

When those around are drinking,
And look upon their revelry as sin,

And see the depths to which
Their poor damned souls are sinking,

You're a better man than I am,
Gunga Din!

"BRAM."

ADC IN PORN PLAY SHOCKER

Gorgeous wenches on novelty train

THE SERVING WENCHES for the banquet at Sidney's Regency May Ball come from all over Europe. "The world seems to have beaten a path to our door," commented Gabriel Barta, one of the committee.

There are girls from Austria, France, Switzerland and even Hungary. The Hungarian girl is Anna Kosztolanyi, who studies English and Russian at the University of Budapest. "I am here visiting relatives and improving my English," she said. "I saw a copy of Varsity and had to ask what 'gorgeous wenches' meant. When they told me, I applied."

One novelty is a promenade train which the committee discovered in St Albans, where they were looking for barrel-organs to use at the ball. It will take revellers on tours of the college.

'Coloured drug addict murders Vice-Chancellor's mistress'

THE IDEAL headline as en- motto of Forward with the visaged by LARRY LAMB. People has been dubbed editor of The Sun. The Forward with the Nipple

IF YOU WANT
TO GET AHEAD...

get a
hat



NOT VERY NAUGHTY, BUT THE PROCTOR CAME TOO

AMID velvet curtains and exquisitely clashing wallpaper, Page Three dined this week at the latest mushroom in Cambridge night clubs, the Café Royale. Nestling between Downing and the Police Station, with a rather forbidding figure guarding the entrance, the club "for

adults" is an unhappy compromise between its sister Indian restaurants and the less exciting haunts in Soho.

We crept in and merged with one of the darker shades of wallpaper, waiting for something to stir. A waiter, rather uncomfortable in his tall coat, presented us with the set menu and waited impatiently for a nod of approval.

A P.R. man glided towards us, extended a sleek cigarette lighter and lit the candles in the centre of the table. On went the fairy lights studding the ceiling, off went the house lights, on, off. A waiter served us with our meal, battling all the while to hold his tinted spectacles in place.

A man coughed into a microphone. "On behalf of the management..." There was going to be a happening.

A recalcitrant young lady in a reinforced dress was ushered on to the postage stamp dance floor and began to sing. An enthusiastic undergraduate took a photograph; everyone

else continued eating. As she finished, the woman behind the cigarette counter applauded in strict tempo. Toni would be back in an hour's time.

The next turn was the arrival of the Senior Proctor. He left his disgruntled bodyguard talking to the cigarette woman and, after a peremptory glance at the clientele, disappeared downstairs into the basement. A hush awaited the protests of disturbed couples and the flight of half-naked women through the emergency exit.

Above bawd

The Proctor emerged looking a little disappointed. Clearly there was nothing to disapprove of. The undergraduate with the camera flashed another photograph and made as if to dash for the door and the telephone to the Mirror. What headlines—and in full academic dress too.

At the departure of the Law, the P.R. man hurried over and made a statement. Someone had dared to suggest that undergraduates shouldn't have

their minds sullied with the wares of the Café Royale. The Senior Proctor had been invited to come and see that they weren't getting their money's worth.

The microphone coughed again. The famous magician (what was the name?) showed us how his first few tricks were done. There was a faint shuffle of embarrassment. His assistant adjusted her black net stockings for the finale. Doves appeared miraculously from mid-air and disappeared less miraculously into the false bottom of their cage. Toni would be back in half an hour.

We made downstairs for the bar. The thick-set Irishman behind it looked surprised to have customers and was dismayed when asked for a vodka and orange. After a few minutes' hard work, he produced a gallon jar of neat orange from the debris supporting the bar. "We're not quite organized yet," he flushed. A monologue on the beauties of Ireland softened the bill.

We left to the strains of Toni.

Loathsome

Dear Sir,

May I be allowed, through your columns, to express a loathing of mine, which although I know is totally irrational, I cannot keep concealed.

I loathe freshmen. I loathe everything they stand for, I loathe the way they walk about the streets, I loathe the way they ask loud and stupid questions. I detest their inseparability from their gowns and I hate the way in which they try to make polite conversation in hall.

I am quite aware that their behaviour is inevitable—poor new little lost lambs in a wicked, strange and baffling community—and I am quite aware that I should in all fairness be tolerant towards them.

But they are so awful.

Yours faithfully,

PETER DIAMOND,
Christ's.

UNION POLITICIANS SWAMPED BY VENGEFUL ARTISTS

Bookshop 'til you drop

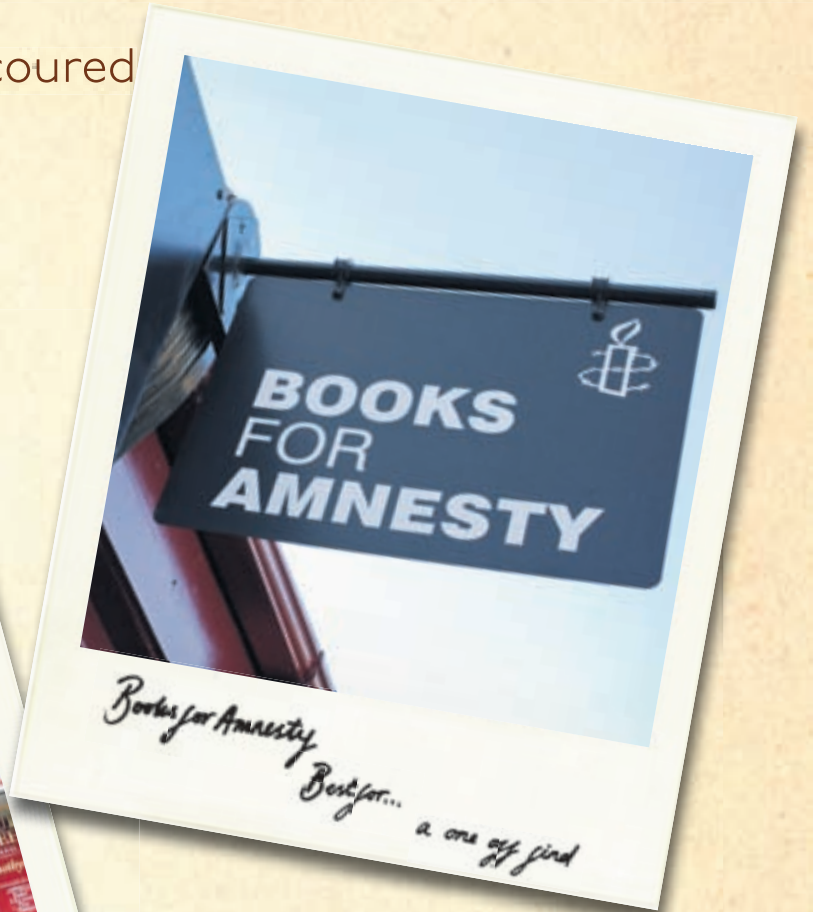
With no more Borders, and Waterstone's fatigue setting in, our intrepid Cambridge bookworms scoured the city for better alternatives...

The Market Bookstore

Market Square

The great thing about the Market Bookstore, as owner Paul Neeve says, is that it's its own advertiser. Pared down from a shop in 1981, it has only the bare essentials: a marquee and some books. And maybe some CDs and the odd DVD thrown in as well. Relying solely on donations to replenish his stock, Neeve can't guarantee he'll have what you're looking for, although he's certain on the flip side that there's a buyer for every book. A quick reminiscence takes him back to the time he took in a tray of dictionaries of obscure languages, and a travelling professor specializing in British-Columbian natives "hit the roof!" at her own unlikely jackpot. Each book is judged by its cover and then priced, so if you're looking for a bargain it might be worth your time. Open when the Market's open: 10:00-16:00 Friday to Monday, and then on Wednesday, it's good for a quick browse whilst you're on your way somewhere; and you can drink your coffee as you do it, though that's probably necessary given the combination of Cambridge weather and a lack of walls. Lastly, a recommendation? *Three Men in a Boat* by Jerome K. Jerome.

RACHEL KUO



Books for Amnesty

46 Mill Road

I thought I'd wait for a quiet moment to speak to the volunteers in Books for Amnesty and entertain myself in the meantime by exploring a little. But there was a steady stream of eager book buyers, so eventually I had to tear myself away from the books and seize my moment when I could. Part of the charm of the place is that you never know what you are going to find, or what is going to be donated. A volunteer once found a letter written on Downing Street stationery tucked inside one of the books she was cataloguing, but regretfully admitted that it was "tediously domestic", not the "political hot potatoes" she was hoping to find. The shop has previously received parts of private libraries, once from a prominent Oxford academic, so they often have quite specialized books that you might not expect to find in any old second-hand shop. Indeed that morning they had sold a book out of the special editions cabinet; a copy of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* once owned by Wyndham Lewis. Chatting to the volunteers, I admitted that I was a bit of a book geek but they smiled and assured me that this was the place for me; they had spent what must have been hundreds of pounds working there. And what would they recommend for other bibliophiles? This week they are reading *Map for Lost Lovers* by Nadeem Aslam, and Eliot's *Middlemarch*, and would thoroughly recommend them both. GIVERNY TATTERSFIELD

Heffers

20 Trinity Street

My personal favourite thing about Heffers is that they provide a free boyfriend-sitting service in the best-hidden Caffè Nero in Cambridge. I go off to lectures, to supervisions, to the library, safe in the knowledge that my own little darling is unlikely to get into any trouble ensconced in the corner with a cookbook and a cappuccino. Even on a busy Saturday, when it feels sort of like an astonishingly well-stocked Waterstone's, the shop is fairly quiet (apart from the whisper of turning pages), and there are still a few tables left for the taking.

However, quite apart from the considerable lure of browsing potential purchases over a coffee, Heffers is a Cambridge institution on entirely different merits. It stocks according to University reading lists, can order in books on request within two to five days, and sells those cute bags printed with literary witticisms (there's also a new light blue bicycle-print version, so if anyone fancies buying me a present...).

In fact, judging purely from the number of Heffers bags I see being toted around on a daily basis, it's hard not to feel like I'm preaching to the converted. Not surprising really – this bookshop effortlessly bridges the gap between the commercial and the specialist, has a second-hand section worth a browse and incredibly helpful staff, so it's hard to find fault. Now, about that present...

SYLVIA CHRISTIE



Libra Aries Alternative Bookshop

9 The Broadway, Mill Road

G David

16 St Edwards Passage

If you stray far enough down St Edwards Passage you will stumble upon a treat: G David, a (seemingly never-ending) chocolate-box bookshop, floor to ceiling in antiquarian books and publisher's remainders. "It's been in the family since my great-grandfather started his market stall in 1896," says David Asplin, one of three family partners now running the shop. Asplin is sanguine about the current market and knows that while the future is not shiny bright, it certainly isn't dull grey either. Having moved to its current premises around 1940, the shop is currently in the process of expanding into a further room to be finished next year. Customers are plentiful, and range from students browsing for original presents to book collectors sniffing out a valuable find. And valuable some most certainly are. "We once had a first edition copy of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. It took a year to sell but it went for around £20,000," says Asplin with a glint in his eye. But do they ever feel hidden away? "Something like this on the main drag would be cost-prohibitive," explains Asplin, and there is no denying that, for a customer, emerging back onto the leafy path there is a certain smug feeling of exclusivity – a feeling of having been to a real bookshop.

ALICE HANCOCK



Libra Aries Alternative Bookshop
Best for... the occult

Jean, the co-owner of Libra Aries Alternative Bookshop, arrived 15 minutes after opening time and breathlessly motioned me into the red-fronted single room on Mill Road. She quickly disappeared behind a curtain of the sequined, coloured fabric found in any 'alternative' space, leaving me on my own to browse. Run by a couple, this shop has been here since August 2004, and there is evidence of a community built around it – the board of ads for spiritual therapies being one example.

The website had got me excited at the prospect of paganism, witchcraft and hallucinogens. It turns out, though, that 'alternative' refers not only to Satanism and astrology (both present in abundance), but also to protest, parenting and nutrition. The shop's category system is also fascinating. I wondered what Philip Pullman would have made of the inclusion of *The Amber Spyglass* under 'Esoteric Books', or what I should make of finding the computer game *The Sims* under 'Fiction'. Alternative thinking indeed.

Just before I left, I spotted the magazine rack. Issue 16 of *Now or Never!* had, on its front page, Christ on the cross and a leprechaun sporting a swastika armband, along with the immortal headline "Jesus! Acid! Nazis!"

I very nearly bought it. PAUL MERCHANT

Galloway And Porter

30 Sidney Street

Although this Sidney Street bookseller has its genesis in a 1902 business venture made by the aspiring Porter family, today it operates under new ownership. This switch has meant modernisation, but not at the expense of Galloway and Porter's gawky and intimate charm. Its affordable, miscellaneous aesthetic – most of the stock arrives courtesy of returns and remainders, sometimes from larger supermarket chains – now finds itself counterpointed with new copies of Stephanie Meyers' *Twilight* novels, leaving the shop slung nicely between the commercial and the personal. In spite of this pressure to cater for trends and crazes, the staff at Galloway and Porter preserve its independent ethos, many having worked there for several years. As the current manager, Bernie, informs



G. David
Best for... collectables

ELIOT D'SILVA

The Haunted Bookshop

9 St Edwards Passage

"The haunted bookshop? You mean the one by Indigo, right?" There's a lot more to this bookshop than its proximity to the best bagels in town, although those bagels are rather welcome after a minute's browse turns into hours of rumination over the casually piled-up faded first editions. A shelf of ghostly tales on your left as you enter nods to the shop's name, although the owner encourages a far from ominous atmosphere: "Hushed voices are banned". Although rather averse to answering my journalistic enquiries, she guided me through her collection of Iris Murdoch as an acquaintance rather than a saleswoman. You do need to spend some time to unearth the real finds (and exercise extreme Jenga precision to extract them without causing a literary avalanche), but the rewards can range from an 1800 edition of William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* to a Morocco leather-bound anthology of *Poets' Cats*. It's especially good for illustrated collectibles: rootle in the alcove behind the desk for divine Edward Ardizzone children's books and curious editions of Lewis Carroll. CHARLOTTE WU



The Haunted Bookshop
Best for... a haunting read



Galloway & Porter
Best for... avoiding Waterstones



GUY KIDDEY

Arts Comment

“Never look back”. But I have to say that I cannot help it

For me – and I know it’s passé – the ‘60s represent the epitome of cultural revolution, an era of subversion where the connotations of those transformations that took place drove deep into all facets of life. My dad swapped knee-length shorts for the first pair of skinny jeans, and my mum knee-length convent socks for hip-length skirts.

Culture – creative endeavour and its effects – is all about subversion. Society needs this subversion. Accepted societal protocols and customs, ideas and interpretations need sustained attack and questioning. There is nothing new in this argument, or in asserting that the abstractness of art is the perfect way to do this, to avoid stereotype by constant reassessment.

Art allows us to say and show what real life cannot. Admittedly, we live now in an age where there are fewer overt taboos. Even the titty tabloid has ceased to be very

risqué. But, today’s taboos are more insidious; the 60s scratched away at the surface, challenging blatant prejudice and discrimination. Now we must deal with the core – the kind of taboos that are attitudinal ills like our unrealistic, deleterious work ethic.

The major transformations that took place in the 60s were social and political, though very much

criticisms are passive in this era of political correctness. We question perceptions, rather than acts and facts. One of the tenets of political correctness is inclusiveness – or inclusivity, the new, more politically correct term.

This is not political comment, however; my point is that in order to ensure inclusion, the current consensus is that cultural offerings must be accessible to the masses. Culture must be populist. Not that we should all start going to the opera, but if culture is going to be populist, let it be popular, as well – and of its own accord.

The beneficiaries of this populist rule are talentless narcissists like Simon Cowell. Conceptual art is our most valued aesthetic offering, if we look at the money it generates. But sensuous worth? I’m

sorry Tracey, Damian, but yes, my five-year-old *could* have painted that. And the most prevalent cultural memories of the decade just passed? Reality TV and a putative comedian who leaves mucky messages on answering machines.

The subversive heart of art is still beating strongly.

There has been a resurgence of live music in recent years. The short story, as an antidote to what Zadie Smith calls the ‘nauseating novel’, is enjoying a comeback. Nothing could kick the life out of true art, but the leading purveyors of cultural cuisine are suppressing it. Commercial viability is to blame, as it nearly always is.

To buck the trend, to feed subversion, it is time to dig out the underground. Our cultural managers must be brave and visionary, like the curator of the Bristol City Museum, who let Banksy take over the space for a one-off exhibition last year. You have to fight for things that are worth doing – inclusion included.



“What we face today boils down to cultural stagnation”

reflected and steered by culture. What we face today boils down to a cultural stagnation. Culture generates change, but it also needs an audience. There is not enough of either.

Petty politics has ousted art from its popular subversive seat. Our

FOOD & DRINK

Diner chez La Ratatouille

This week, Michelin-starred rats feed the imagination of *Varsity*’s chief *cuisinière* Rosie Corner

Inspiration this week came from one of the greatest kids’ films ever made for the adult market: Disney and Pixar’s *Ratatouille* (2007). The film’s premise is deliciously simple: a rat called Rémy, who happens to be a natural Michelin-style chef, escapes family, responsibilities and his life of crime, to pursue his career at Gusteau’s in Paris, aided by the poseable thumbs of Linguini, a hapless cook with a heart of gold. All very Disney fairytale ‘be who you were born to be’, but with a stylistic twist: all of the food in this film is the stuff of Technicolor celluloid dreams. For a target audience that probably hasn’t yet discovered the joys of olives and coffee (I still aver that you develop a liking for these with age; I did, but I may just have an uneducated palate) the image of delicately assembled haute-cuisine on brilliant white plates may not hit the spot, but it will leave the over-sixteens in the audience weeping with joy (again, probably just me).

At one of the many dramatic climaxes of the film, the food critic Anton Ego, voiced by Peter O’Toole – phwoar – is asked by the

all-American action hero Linguine: “If you like for so much, how come you’re so thin” to which Ego replies, “I don’t swallow unless I love it.” Excellent advice, ladies. The real gastronomic crux of the film occurs just before the credits (accompanied by the glorious ‘Le Festin’ by Camille) when (spoiler alert) Linguine and his girlfriend Collette open a bistro called La Ratatouille where Rémy can fulfil his life’s ambitions away from the scourge of the Health and Safety Man. The bistro serves home cooking at its finest, and even the crepuscular Anton Ego finds happiness in the nostalgic plate of ratatouille just like his maman used to make.

Thus envisioned (and very hungry) I embarked on a bistro-inspired menu based on the recipes in the wonderful book *Bistro* by Sharon O’Connor. All of the recipes in this book come from real Parisian bistros, so my student-friendly version was assembled with the greatest accuracy and cultural sensitivity i.e. we didn’t wear strings of garlic and paint on curly moustaches, however much we wished to.



Rat’s the way to do it.

Menu du jour

Hors d’œuvre

*Petits Pates de Cèpes et
Ris de Veau en Croûte*

Entrée

Cassoulet Façon Allard

Dessert

*Mousse de Chocolat et
<<Boudoir>> Biscuits*

Mousse de Chocolat et <<Boudoir>> Biscuits

*220g dark chocolate (chopped)
155g unsalted butter (cut into
cubes)
8 eggs (separated)
155g sugar (Fairtrade)
180ml double cream*

Melt the chocolate in a bowl over a pan of boiling water. Remove from the heat and stir in the butter. Whisk together the egg yolks and sugar in a separate bowl and beat into the chocolate mixture. Stir in the cream. In another bowl, pay someone to beat the egg whites with a whisk until they form soft peaks. Stir ¼ of the whites into the chocolate mixture and fold in the rest (i.e. draw figures-of-eight in the bowl with the whites till everything turns brown). Divide into 10 individual ramekins, teacups of small bowls and refrigerate for at least 3 hours. Serve with a ladies finger or seven. *Bon appetit!*



RHODRI KARIM

Varsity

Listings

Pick of the Week

虎

Film

The Princess and the Frog

VUE CINEMAS DAILY 11:50 14:10 16:40 19:10 21:30 (SAT & SUN 9:30)

Breaking down barriers with Disney's first African American princess, but with a fairly unadventurous storyline of stern fathers and frog smooching.

Tony

ARTS PICTUREHOUSE DAILY 14:00 16:20 18:40 21:00

Serial killer movie in social realist mockumentary style, like The Texas Chainsaw Massacre re-imagined by Mike Leigh. Tony is a nerdy psychopath with a bad haircut who kills for kicks – perfect date movie.

Super 8 My Brain

PORTLAND ARMS, SUNDAY 7TH FEBRUARY, 20:00

A night of spooky short films presented by the Cambridge Super 8 group; freaky, funny and frightening films that will make you sleep with the light on.

Sex, Drugs & Rock and Roll

ARTS PICTUREHOUSE DAILY 14:00 21:15 (SAT 13:00 22:00)

Pick of the week Film

Ex-Gollum Andy Serkis plays Ian Drury, punk music hall star & lyrical genius, following his path from polio stricken weird kid to anarchic rock musician.

Still Walking

ARTS PICTUREHOUSE DAILY 13:30 18:00 (SAT 13:00, SUNDAY 17:00 ONLY)

Tragic deaths and seething resentments, Japanese-style.

Youth in Revolt

VUE CINEMAS DAILY 12:10 14:40 16:50 19:00 21:15 23:30

Michael Cera in off-beat teen comedy shock. A small town boy obsessed with New Wave Film, existentialism and Getting It On meets the girl of his dreams. But stuff doesn't go right! For a bit!

Astro Boy

VUE CINEMAS DAILY 11:30 14:00 16:20 18:45

Japanese robot boy thing transfers to big screen with perky primary coloured graphics and loud noises.



Music & Nightlife

Friday February 5th
Nico Muhly Workshop

MUSIC FACULTY, 16:00 (FREE)

Pick of the week Music

Wunderkind composer talks about “composing music with live and pre-recorded elements”, and workshops student compositions. A fantastic opportunity for those interested in contemporary music: there aren't many opportunities to do stuff like this in Cambridge.

Saturday February 6th
Rachmaninov, Grieg, and Whitley

TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL, 20:00 (£5/8)

Not, as advertised, the UK premiere of Grieg's Symphony in C Minor, but one of its rare performances. Trinity College Music Society also performs chamber orchestra pieces by King's music student Kate Whitley.

Sunday February 7th
Vampire Weekend

CORN EXCHANGE, 19:30 (£17)

What, like you don't know who Vampire Weekend are? Really? After their triumphant return with Contra, sure to be one of the year's most exciting sing-along gigs.



Tuesday February 9th
Don't You Love Me Baby?

CINDIES, (£3 BEFORE 10:30, £4 AFTER)

The obvious way to conclude your RAG blind date: sticky floors and Hanson? If it sounds like your thing, get there early: first fifty couples get free champagne.

Thursday February 11th
Hot Club de Paris

PORTLAND ARMS (£6)

For those of a less classicist nature, an evening of yelpy Liverpoolian dance-punk for the NME-reading set. The perfectly cramped confine of the Portland is Cambridge's most reliable hipster pit. Bring yr skinny jeans.

Theatre

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

FRI-SAT, 19.45, ADC (£6/8)

Pick of the week Theatre

Contradictory in title and of genre, this could be the only musical-awkward-romantic-comedy-sketch-show you catch all term. Friends meets Andrew Lloyd Webber.



Cigarettes and Chocolate

FRI-SAT, 23.00, ADC (£4/6)

Shhh...

Pale Horse

FRI-SAT, 19.30, CORPUS PLAYROOM (£5/6)

Wire-esque poster: drool. Gritty little insight into London, complete with a soundtrack of the big smoke's bands. Rum will be consumed, as might Lucy the barmaid.

Medea

FRI-SAT, 20.00, £4, JESUS COLLEGE FORUM

The freshers of Jesus modernise this cheerful classic of raging feminist infanticide.

Smoker

TUE, 23.00, ADC (£4/6)

A great goody bag of Footlights comic talent. Six years of sell-out crowds can't be all that wrong. Go munch on the next Emma Thompson/Stephen Fry/David Mitchell etc.

The Final Countdown

TUE-THU, 19.30, FITZPATRICK HALL, QUEENS' COLLEGE, (£5/8)

Du-du-duhhh-duh. Du-du-du-duh. From the people who brought you last year's Crystal Maze, this new musical trails three finalists as they face The Future. If a CV is sung, it will be time to leave early.

Dawn of Man

WED-THU, 19.45, AUDITORIUM, HOMERTON COLLEGE

Creationism is meeting evolution in a unique take on the origin of man. Four loveable apes will be on stage.

Arts

Ongoing Exhibitions
Clouds and Myths: Monotypes by Lino Mannocci

9TH FEBRUARY – 9TH MAY, FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM (FREE)

Pick of the week Arts

Anglo-Italian Lino Mannocci works with ink painted directly onto a printing plate, and a selection of the resulting ‘monotypes’ will arrive at the Fitzwilliam this Tuesday. They explore the experience of landscape through a soft palette of blues, browns and off-whites.

State of the Art

9TH FEBRUARY – 13TH FEBRUARY, THE SHOP, JESUS LANE, 7.30PM (FREE)

For the first time this term, The Shop comes out of retirement to exhibit new student artworks in everything from abstract sculpture to surrealist photography.

Mixed Print Exhibition

30TH JANUARY – 28TH FEBRUARY, CAMBRIDGE CONTEMPORARY ARTM, 09:00 – 17:30 (FREE)

Spacious, mostly vacant gallery displays an assortment of works made famous by their refusal to fit into more distinctly thematic showings.

Matthew Boulton and the Industrial Revolution

8TH DECEMBER – 5TH APRIL, FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, TUE-SAT 10:00-17:00, SUN 12:00-17:00

2009 marked the bicentenary of the death of Boulton, a Birmingham manufacturer who revolutionised metalwork alongside James Watt. Numerous coins and medals on display.

Photographic Exhibition

9TH JAN – 15TH FEB, MICHAELHOUSE CAFE, 07:30-17:00

Damian Gille's photographs chronicle the creation of a new set of bells for Great St. Mary's church.



Talks & Events

Friday February 5th
The Architectonics of Blame-Avoidance

LADY MITCHELL HALL, 17:30-18:30

The Risk lecture series continues as Gladstone Professor of Government Christopher Hood points the finger.

Saturday February 6th
Drawing Workshop

KETTLE'S YARD, 11:30 (£5/8)

Let's face it - you suck at drawing. Come to Kettle's Yard and let's see if we can't sort you out with some new tricks.

King's Affair Launch Party

KING'S COLLEGE BAR, 21:00-01:00 (FREE)

Free music? Cheap drinks? A surprising and unexpected theme? What more do you want from a night at left-wing hugbox King's?

Monday February 8th
Equipoise Cheese and Wine Evening

HARKER RM 1, DEPARTMENT OF EARTH SCIENCES, 17:00-18:00

Adam Law, geologist, explains how he sizes up the massive petroleum wealth of otherwise boring places whilst you stuff your face full of camembert. Sound fun?

Same-sex Marriage: European Perspectives

RUSHMORE ROOM, ST. CATHARINE'S COLLEGE, 18:00-19:15

Wouldn't it be nice to hear a lucid and informed talk about same-sex marriage? Y'know, without some thick-as-pigshit Kansas pastor screaming about “the family”? No such nutcases here!

Wednesday February 10th
Vita Futurista

KETTLE'S YARD, 18:00-20:30 (£5/7)

Pick of the week Events

Lutz Becker introduces his film, shot in 1989 and 2009, which explores the revolutionary and transformative genre of Italian Futurism. Features rare archival footage and interviews with the artists and their descendants.

TO HAVE SOMETHING LISTED ON THESE PAGES, E-MAIL DAVID PEGG AT LISTINGS@VARSITY.CO.UK BY NO LATER THAN MONDAY ON THE WEEK OF PUBLICATION.

Boxed In**Week 4: Lost**

Five years ago, as we began to scrape away at the impenetrable veneer of mysteries that coats the show's delicious creamy narrative, talk of seven seasons abounded. Polar bears? Underground hatches? Surely not seven seasons, whinged the naysayers after *Lost*'s 2004 debut. The premise is now famous: 48 lucky folks survive a plane crash on a South Pacific island, and from there it's just gotten more complicated.

From its beginning, flashbacks to our heroes' lives before the crash have been integral to plot revelation, but now *Lost* is constrained by neither location nor chronology, shifting freely on and off the Island, as well as backwards and forwards through time. It's this fluidity that has allowed *Lost* to expand its scope and drawn unflinching devotion from its obsessed fans, but perhaps at the cost of a wider audience impatient for immediate plot payoff.

Mystery elements alone, however, would sell *Lost* short; it's also a surprisingly literate beast. Inspirations range from Flannery O'Connor to *The Godfather* via the Book of Genesis, and religious influences in particular permeate. Jacob, Benjamin and Aaron are all characters crucial to the show's convoluted mythology, and the Island itself demands the most devout faith from its believers, chief amongst them John Locke, ostensibly rewarding them with life after death.

Season 6 hinges on the cliff-hanger of its antecedent: Island hottie and fertility specialist, Juliet Burke detonates an abandoned nuke amidst a pocket of the energy that affords the Island its freakish properties circa 1977, in an effort to prevent Oceanic 815 crashing in 2004. All we were left with last May was a climactic whiteout. But it promises the most intriguing season yet – never before has television explored multiple realities with any depth or intelligence (*The OC*'s parallel universe episode notwithstanding).

The producers know what they must now deliver: answers. The Numbers, the Monster, and the Island's origins must all be explained, for *Lost* is a show that's manoeuvred itself into a position wherein answers are all it has left to give. **DAVID PEGG**

MUSIC**Dazed and confused****Adam Green**

THE JUNCTION

★★★★★

“I’m a Jew,” Adam Green announces. “I was born into the Jewish faith. And if you like that, then that’s cool. If you don’t, then... I dunno.” He has at this point exceeded the capacity of the stage, spilling over the guard rail for a spot of unsuccessful crowd-surfing; the five people that do want an opportunity to molest him seem unable to sustain his weight. All that remains visible from the back of the crowd are his feet and their oh-so-fashionable trainers. His performance is such: Green is a keen exhibitionist. As his set opens, he swaggers on stage wearing an absurdly tight leather jacket. His exposed midriff jiggles unenthusiastically as he staggers wildly around the stage, arms flailing limply; a rat-arsed Gollum with a stunted jewfro.

“I like to do drugs / I like to

have drugs,” Adam mumbles incoherently. The song is called, appropriately, ‘Drugs’. Dedicated Green enthusiasts whoop like baboons at a mating ritual as they lean over the barrier at front of stage, arms outstretched. His performance is intriguing: how do his eager fans differentiate between his universally identical songs? Or the more intriguing question: what is he on, exactly? He exhibits the energy one associates with smack, but also the apparent clamminess of heroin.

As the gig progresses, Green develops an increasingly vicious loathing of his mic stand. “I own this piece of shit,” he informs us. He beats the microphone against his head, hard. “I own that too.” With his exhibitionism (girls squeal inexplicably; his tummy’s oscillation is almost hypnotic) comes the natural corollary of self-fixation. “What’s a low IQ?” he demands of the meagre but enthusiastic crowd. “Never mind. How hot is fire? Like, 200 degrees? That’s me.” More

stumbling. “That’s my IQ. What’s with this fucking microphone?”

As annoying and semi-deranged as he can be, however, Green is possessed by an undeniable energy; in happier numbers he bounces up and down, left wrist limply raised, hands clawed, like a 5-year-old with a sugar-high at a rave DJd by Pingu. He’s also naturally, casually funny, if puerile, and the crowd likes him. His voice is resonant and deep, carrying confidently over a heavily amplified kick that made my sternum shudder. Over the less distorted guitar lines, his crooning even begins to sound a little like Elvis, if Elvis spent less time eating and more time crooning about blow jobs and stomach-churning rounds of soggy biscuit (and let us remember that there’s a fine line between delicate crooning and interminable droning; Green floats over this more adeptly than he does the crowd). Mere stage presence, sadly, cannot redeem 90 minutes’ indistinguishable indie rock.

DAVID PEGG

Ke\$ha

ANIMAL

★★★★★



Stepping out of Flo Rida’s shadow, Ke\$ha has proved with ‘TiK ToK’ that she can go it solo. Now on debut release *Animal* it’s time for her to show that she isn’t just a one-hit wonder.

Teaming up with Dr Luke and Max Martin, Ke\$ha is able to do just that, unleashing a flurry of

over-the-top brat pop that’s at its best when it’s clear that Ke\$ha really isn’t taking herself too seriously.

Across tracks such as ‘Your Love Is My Drug’ and ‘Kiss ‘N Tell’, Ke\$ha draws on the strengths of her contemporaries, taking Avril’s attitude, mixing it with Gaga’s production and adding a pinch of Katy Perry’s all-American charm for good measure. The result is an example of pop at its finest.

It’s only when Ke\$ha trades in her insults for introspection that *Animal* becomes a little confusing. It’s not that disco-ballads like ‘Hungover’ don’t work, just that they suggest an artist who’s trying to cover too many bases at once. Next time round, Ke\$ha should stick to vomiting in the closet. **JAMES KEMP**

Fucked Up

COUPLE TRACKS

★★★★★



Still on the victory lap following their massively critically-acclaimed *Chemistry of Common Life*, Canadian hardcore punk unit Fucked Up return with a compilation of their many rare and out-of-print singles.

Unlike *ChemCom*, which exploded out of the hXc

Selwyn Jazz vs. Fitz Swing

CLARE CELLARS

★★★★★

This was far too civilised an occasion for a face-off; it was two gigs in one, with two quite different bands on stage. Selwyn were there for the crack; smiley faces and a certain cheesiness to their sound marked them apart from the more musically serious and agile Fitz Swing.

Vocalist Emily Sherwin is good as the face of Selwyn Jazz, but needs more power to push over the band. Admittedly, the sound man should have addressed the imbalance, which was very rhythm-section-heavy, emphasising the annoyingly plinky-plonky bass lines from the quarters of the rhythm section.

There is an energy to Fitz Swing that is infectious; it is not volume, not speed and not conceit, but a detectible musical tension generated and propelled by the band’s leader, Gwilym Bowen. Besides his impressive piano skills, he keeps the players in rank and file with professional panache. If Fitz have a notable section, it’s the saxophones. Although not especially strong in their own right, as an ensemble, they really tune in with each other. The dynamic was very much father-son at this gig; there was a hint of ‘old dog-young dog’ at the finale, with both bands on stage for a climactic jam. Fitz Swing raced, Selwyn Jazz chased, but Selwyn have some snappy players biting at the feet of the big boys, particularly in the trumpet section, where there was none of the fluffiness often afflicting up-and-coming brass sections.

The Cambridge jazz scene has picked up in recent months, with a tempting selection of offerings on the musical menu. With more professional musicians filling the bars and cellars of the city, student jazzers are being challenged for their audiences. Nothing could be better; more experimental repertoire and innovative arrangements should result from this competition.

GUY KIDDEY

underground by tempering F.U.’s assault with innovations like melodic vocals, reasonable tempos, and the occasional flute solo, *Couple Tracks* is more old-skool. Sub-two-minute songs, hyper-speed rhythms, and frontman Pink Eyes’ acid-reflux screams all mean that it’s less suited to the hardcore punk newbie.

However, much of the fun of this chronologically-sequenced album is hearing F.U.’s development from thrilling but undistinguished brutes (amply demonstrated by debut single ‘No Pasarán’) to the thoughtful innovators who mixed up their hardcore. From the gorgeous autumnal guitar of ‘I Hate Summer’ to the Arabic chanting on ‘Generation’, F.U. are doing more than anyone else to redefine what punk means right now.

SCOTT WHITTAKER

FILM

Record prophets

A Prophet ARTS PICTUREHOUSE ★★★★★

A *Prophet* is good. Any review will tell you that. It snatched the Cannes Grand Prix. It is acted immaculately. Its barbaric moments are filmed with staggering beauty. Its subtle virtue, however, is its accuracy in portraying human ambiguities. If you walk away chilled, it's not for an emotionless passage, but for the impossibility of favouring one character's triumph over another's downfall.

This is the anti-Shawshank, a grim prison epic spanning the six year sentence of a young French Arab. It's not Malik's sentence which interests Jacques Audiard: it's his passage from inarticulate pawn in the prison yard to calculating king of internal favours and external crime. The journey is catalysed by Corsican crimelord César, who offers Malik protection in exchange for the murder of fellow inmate Rayeb. In the tensest twenty minutes of film you're likely to witness this year, Malik must recast himself as murderer in mind and body. The retaining of a blade between the gums is not an easy practice to swallow, and the eventual encounter is as horrifically vivid as Viggo Mortensen's bathhouse confrontation in *Eastern Promises*.

Tahar Rahim conceals his

character behind inscrutable resignation. Ever-watching, Malik is as unknowable as the cinemagoer besides you, a curious whelp whose subservience bursts sporadically towards rebellion. Such minimalist disclosure feels suitably cold. Characters and events are introduced by a paused screen and bold titles, fleeting chapters in the Dickensian bombardment of prison life. The stylish Tarantino slices cut a neat parallel with the film's tenderness, for even César is pitiable, stagnating, old and alone in his privileged cell. Just when *A Prophet* is unbearably bleak, however, it indulges a strange element of the fantastical. Rayeb is a constant presence in Malik's cell. The ghost is sometimes stern, sometimes cackling; his throat

remains slit in each encounter. Audiard could so easily have created a symbol of guilt, but Rayeb is a confidant, and the catalyst for Malik's bemusing moments of psychic insight which offer the film its title.

Mysticism, crime, tragedy: sometimes *A Prophet* yearns for its epic status with too dogged a desperation. The intricacies of double deals and broken loyalties aren't easy to keep in check; better to let them play out in sleek exchange after sleek exchange. Difficult to watch for its bleakness and its complexity, *A Prophet* is made more unbearable – and impressive – in its insight of men, none of whom secure sympathy; each of whose souls are impossible to define. **ABI DEAN**



Malik: calculating king of crime

Precious ARTS PICTUREHOUSE ★★★★★

This film is miserable – I mean really, truly grim. It is every misery memoir bundled together, compounded, with an extra rapey twist. I think this is the only non-horror film I've seen where others in the cinema audience winced and gasped, or even at climactic moments said "Don't go in there!" *Precious* is a fairy-tale

crossed with a Greek tragedy.

You could be forgiven for thinking, from watching the trailer, that after the first half, the film becomes a standard education-is-the-way-out tale, complete with photogenic and inspirational teacher. But for every time a character tearfully whispers "I love you Precious!" another character tries to kill her by dropping a television down the stairs. The plot of this film, while gruelling, is nothing new – if you really do want to see this film, it would be for the acting, with two

incredible central performances by Gabourey Sidibe as Precious and Mo'Nique as Mary, her ogre of a mother.

Precious is the story of Claireece 'Precious' Jones, a morbidly obese black teenager, pregnant with her second child. Both children are the result of being raped by her father, and one has Down's Syndrome. Precious' mother abuses her, beating her and screaming at her on a daily basis, because she resents the 'attention' which Precious' father gave her. Precious' life is hideous – her dangerous, debilitating weight is rarely if ever discussed or alluded to on screen, mainly because it's the least of her worries. When her high school discovers she is pregnant with her second child, they insist she is transferred to an 'alternative' school, where for the first time Precious is treated well, learning to read and write with the help of a diligent teacher. However, as I said, any progress which Precious makes is overshadowed by the figure of her mother, who graspingly pursues her ever more high achieving daughter in the hopes of re-obtaining her welfare cheque.

This is a well-made, thought-provoking, and brilliantly acted film, but it is one that I never want to watch again. **VICTORIA BEALE**

Art & Literature

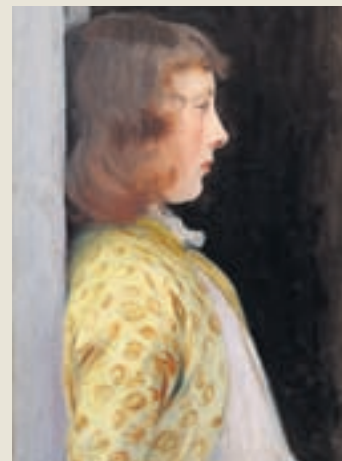
Sargent, Sicker, Spencer: Hidden Depths

FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

★★★★★

Best to state baldly: this could have been deeper. Perhaps the main thing to be disappointed with about Hidden Depths is the discontinuity between Sargent and Sickert on the one hand, and Spencer's artworks on the other. Yet in spite of the special techniques and mannerisms of these very different artists – there's watercolour and lithography, impressionism and primitivism – all three do supposedly share common subjects: travel, music, the Great War and (most perplexingly) love. But then, who isn't interested in travel, music and love? These appear less as shared aesthetic preoccupations than as one-size-Fitz-all themes by which to group these interesting, but quite different, artists. By all accounts, Sickert dismissed Sargent's Venetian paintings as "slapdash gauches", a comment passed when Stanley Spencer was but a lad, residing in the Berkshire village where he would spend his working life.

However, the exhibition's sketchy curation has nothing on some of its content. Entering the gallery we are greeted by nothing but mixtures of Sickert and Sargent's frigid European landscapes (from which the artists made a fortune) and largely unprovocative portraits, many of which will appeal only to an interested minority. Their art is one of detachment. Coolly cerebral, it often postpones the viewer's emotional engagement. Even Sargent's admittedly brilliant oil rendering of a Sicilian peasant, where a thoroughly normal, heavily moustached worker is imbued with a dignified grace, was conceived as a visual "study". But if Sargent and Sickert could be accused of thinking too much, then Spencer was prone to not thinking enough. Spencer's 'Self-portrait with Patricia Preece', hung in the center of the gallery, should be singled out for criticism. Maybe the worst in a collection of nudes, Spencer prefaced this work by stating "I like to celebrate all loveable acts", a declaration which becomes preposterous when confronted by the solipsism and misogyny of the scene he depicted. His brash and cartoonish canvases make Sargent's watercolours look like works of genius. **ELIOT D'SILVA**



Sargent: Dorothy Barnard 1889

Cambridge: A New History

GILLIAN EVANS

★★★★★

Gillian Evans is perhaps Cambridge's greatest rabble-rouser: from corporate sponsorship to disabled access, she will speak out – nearly always against the establishment. Her crowning achievement came when, after years of legal struggle, she forced the University to recognise her claims to promotion, ending up as Professor of Medieval Theology and Intellectual History. She has now repaid the favour by writing the first apparently comprehensive history of this institution for several years.

The book has already had criticism from inside the University: Peter Linehan, Dean of St John's, wrote a scathing review in the *Times Literary Supplement*, centring on the work's alleged inaccuracies. Most of these, however, are too slight to trouble the general reader much (with the exception, perhaps, of the assertion that the Tripos is "so-called because it is taken over three years", an odd fabrication); more worrying is the wild, uneven focus of the book.

Much of this New History seems aimed at those completely unfamiliar with Cambridge's history: it explains early on that "Cambridge's life is...an intellectual life", tells us who the Apostles are more than once, and usually avoids referring to the monumental 1990s CUP history of the University. On the other hand, however, Prof. Evans dwells extensively on disputes over points of theology and University governance (intellectual property rights, anyone?) of no interest to the non-specialist.

This book, with its scatter-gun approach and lengthy quotation from literary sources such as Wordsworth and Francis Cornford, often seems more like an anthology than a coherent history. Yet the anthological approach only works if one has confidence in the anthologist's judgment; here the author undermines herself, for repetition, spelling mistakes and personal bugbears fatally subvert the bigger picture. Sadly, it is hard to imagine an audience for this book. **HUGO GYE**

Big girl, you are beautiful...



View from the Groundlings



Cambridge Theatre

It's an interesting one, this. I'm not easily phased. I can deal with vaginas. I can deal with witchcraft. I like my *Macbeths* bloody and bold. I am shocked and awed, however, at the arrival of *Silent Canon-fire*, the world's first silent piratical adventure. Storming into the Larkum Studio come Wednesday, it arrives with the disclaimer: "This is not a joke!" Really? *Really?* We're also promised "silent facial hair". I'd be more excited about the vocal variety.

Witches are pretty abundant this week. Good conversation post-last orders in the College Bar: name your favourites. Hermione's too nouveau. Think *Sabrina*. *The Worst Witch*. *Samantha*. *Macbeth's* trio are up there. *Double double toil and trouble...* They created the alternative Halloween verse, the lines geeky kids regurgitate when trick-or-treating. Probably destined-to-be Cambridge English students. The batch occupying *The Crucible* are a more ambiguous case, of course; the kind of case which might leave you longing for caricatures of broomsticks and warts. It's looking as bleak and beautiful as the eerie publicity fluttering about town, which always brings to mind *Wisconsin Death Trip*.

When such publicity acquires a vocabulary of its own, you're in for a treat. Look out for 'pussy posters' and 'gash stash' in your p'lodge, because *The Vagina Monologues* are coming. All profits from the BATS late show are going to Women's Charities, and it's a better bet than RAG Blind Date, so head over to Queens' with a bottle of wine and a male friend you don't mind losing. Their first run went with 'much hilarity', but if improvisation's more your thing, Alcock are shaking up the ADC Lateshow and making comedy out of randomness. PLATYPUS. JESUS. Spontaneity.

Comedians should check out The Chortle Student Comedy Awards, who've added a Cambridge leg to their competition. If you're funny and fancy a grand in prize money, apply pronto at www.chortle.co.uk/student10. ABIGAIL DEAN

The Relapse

HOWARD THEATRE, DOWNING COLLEGE
★★★★★

"This is not so wise an age, but your own follies may supply the stage". Whatever the age, of course, people stay the same. We lie and cheat, vow to improve and then relapse, prey to our vanity or the seductions of others – and it makes for some wonderful theatre. Alex Lass' production of John Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* combines biting satire, uproarious fun and sparkling wit to probe beneath fine manners and even finer clothes, revealing the seamy underbelly of the 17th century.

The choice of the inaugural play for the brand new Howard Theatre couldn't have been better, exquisite classical architecture complementing *The Relapse's* opulent period style. The relapse of the title belongs to Loveless (Josh Walker), a reformed rake who soon collapses into the arms of the beautiful Berinthia (Kate Mason). She in turn urges Loveless' wife, Amanda (Sophie Rixon), to avenge herself on her husband by succumbing to suitor Worthy (Phill Howe). Meanwhile, penniless Young Fashion (Edwin Ashcroft) has another scheme in mind: stealing the fiancée of his rich beau brother, Lord Foppington (Andrew Brock).

The Relapse's main target is the 17th century beau, whose cloying manners and ridiculous clothes were exactly embodied by Brock. His affected accent never faltered; his ridiculous gestures

and repeated exclamations of 'stab my vitals' always raised a laugh. Ashcroft was the ideal foil as his outrageous brother. Nervous at first, he soon grew into his role, his honesty believable despite some pretty doubtful conduct. By the scenes at Sir Clumsy's country house Ashcroft was coolly ordering Foppington to be bound by a riotous posse of country bumpkins. The plan was masterminded by sinister old lecher Coupler, played in grotesque contortion by James Swanton; the concept of the 'sub-plot' was crushed by bawdy action and flawless acting.

In the spotlight, then, Loveless paled slightly in comparison: less outrageously funny, more thought-provoking. Rixon played his long-suffering wife to perfection; the play's lonely figure of cool

grace. Mason's Berinthia cut a nice contrast with her vivacious expressions, deepened by a tarnish of the world-weary. When carried off to bed by Loveless, her tiny cry of help was a great comedic moment. Walker seemed more strained in his acting: the seducer, after all, has to appear comfortable in his role of libertine.

The production was gorgeous to look at and to hear. Wonderful

“We lie, cheat, improve, relapse - and it makes for wonderful theatre.”



JOE PITT-RASHID

period costumes were complemented by an orchestra showcasing the original composition of Jonathan Williams from the wings. Still, no amplification could have been used to hide the creaking of the curtain, and the Howard Theatre might have mastered more impressive lighting. Minor flaws didn't detract from show's splendour, but for all of the glamour

of the theatre's opening, there remained the feeling that in minor aspects it's still twitching its limbs. Amidst a hilarious script delivered to perfection, and the most impressive wardrobe you're likely to witness, technical gripes seem rather irrelevant. *The Relapse* is a tour de force; the next production to hit the Howard walks in an outstanding shadow. RUTH HALKON

Comedic timing is elusive; pause too long and you're labouring the point. Too short – the audience overlook the joke. Unfortunately, during *Pale Horse*, I often missed the comedy in what is undoubtedly a brilliant script.

Charles (Laurie Coldwell) runs a pub, and his wife has died. He convenes with various bizarre individuals, including an

Pale Horse

CORPUS PLAYROOM
★★★★★

unintentionally camp 'ard man. He also buries a body and falls in love. Busy night. Coldwell was fantastic: he loped across the stage with real presence, and his monologues ranged from the hilarious to the moving. It was when other characters were introduced that it went a bit downhill. An embalmer's affected manner could have worked, if it were, well, funnier. This held true for most encounters; I was calculating comic potential, rather than laughing. And the reverse case scenario was worse: wanting to laugh at things that were not meant to be funny.

There were moments of respite. Giulia Galastro was compelling as Lucy, Charles' lover, more irresistible with every arrogant thrust of her chin. Their love scene – complete with clothes removal – was neither trite nor awkward. No mean feat in student theatre.

Still, the leads' performances couldn't redeem those missed chances for comedy. Go for some beautiful moments between Galastro and Coldwell, but be prepared to laugh in all the wrong places. KIRAN MILLWOOD-HARGRAVE



SOPHIA ZHANG

Ever tried a cigarette and chocolate in tandem? Don't bother: it's pretty horrific. *Cigarettes and Chocolate*, Anthony Minghella's meditation upon silence, is more exquisite encounter, dealing with thought-provoking post-absurdist notions of human interaction. To summarise: the play focuses on the varying reactions of Gemma's friends to her sudden and mysterious vow of silence. Giving up speech is, apparently, better than giving up cigarettes and chocolate, and as we soon realise, casts the protagonist as a blank slate upon which people are able to ruthlessly project their own personalities.

Tamzin Merchant was a fragile and fierce Gemma, whose silence seemed continuously precarious, and yet in her theft of the show, other actors were exposed to falter. There was a certain desperation in their creation of self-absorbed stereotypes, each wildly different in the endeavor for a different reaction to be elicited from Gemma's silence. Lines were often splurged out erratically; I wasn't persuaded that they hadn't

Cigarettes and Chocolate

ADC LATESHOW
★★★★★

just spent a couple months learning how to recite at high speed. Perhaps it was a nod to the value of the things that are left unsaid in human contact, but my impression was that they all needed to relax into their roles, and shake off the visible awareness that they were giving a performance in a play sceptical of speech. Only "rich and pregnant" silences, we are told, pierce through modern society's excessive verbiage, and it was in such silences upon stage that the magic of this production emerged.

Three distinct spaces upon the stage (a trattoria, an office, an armchair) provided a triad of tensions, exacerbated by Gemma, stoic in the chair throughout. She posed a poignant and witty reflection to the silent and watching audience, and such subtleties slotted well with the ambiguities of Minghella's script, in which Gemma's silence is never entirely justified: whispers of an Italian holiday and a young child give the play a dreamlike texture. If only the performances were as sweet as the silences. NICK CHAPMAN

House Party

SECRET LOCATION

★★★★★

House Party is way cool. It's way cooler than me, in fact. Check out the Facebook page: it has more friends than I do. And I basically operate on a come-one-come-all policy. No, no, it's well out of my league. Want to know something else? *House Party* is not even a party, it's a play. Or is it?

Well, tricky one, actually. You see, *House Party* is what people who smoke those brown, licorice cigarettes and watch *The Culture Show* (ironically) might call 'site-specific theatre'. It's all perilously complicated but, roughly, this is when a play is staged where it is set. The thing is, site-specific theatre is so bloody hot at the minute that you turn on BBC Four any hour of the day or night and you're never more than six feet away from one. They're a menace.

So, *House Party*: well, first everyone meets at the ADC and is whisked away to a secret location (told you it was cool). Once everyone's arrived, we're shouted at by

a bouncer and told to line up like we're off to Dachau. Then we're split into two groups, the invited and the not-invited, and the 'play' starts.

You traipse through the party – a party that seems to be populated by girls that look like Russell Brand, and boys that either look like Heath Ledger's Joker or Rufio from *Hook*. After a bit of an introduction, everyone's given a glass of potent home brew. DO NOT DRINK IT – it's fucking horrible. Well, taste it, but be prepared for the experience of urine blended with cold tea. Right, then you're shown snippets of a love-triangle thing between Lucy (Mel Heslop), Seb (Josef Pitt-Rashid) and Jack (Ned Stuart-Smith). As the play goes on, bits of story-line are interspersed with musical interludes, monologues from other characters, heavily accentuated conversations and weird dance routines. Stuff that you might find at a party. Well, a party on *Skins*, anyway.

Now, there's a fair bit wrong with this production: firstly, the nicely established narrative sort of fizzles out as we get lost in the episodic workings of the party. Secondly, the script is a bit uneven,

oscillating uncomfortably from stern, studenty theatrics to warm humorous anecdotes. Thirdly, some of the choreographed sequences sail rather too closely to knee-biting embarrassment for my liking. And I've seen *Stomp*.

However – and by crikey, is there a 'however' – when *House Party* hits the right notes, it is absolutely spectacular. When inside, coloured lights stream in to cast unnerving and unnatural patterns on the walls. When outside, lit rooms provide colorful windows into muted and private scenes. The

music, whether it was played by the cast or by the resident DJ, is perfectly pitched so as to vary between background hubbub, rousing drunken sing-a-longs and surreally transportive codas. At times, the charged performances, played out centimeters from your face, are compelling and utterly disarming.

It's a weird piece, and a controversial one, too. But it is fresh and audacious, and when it captured that precise cocktail of drama and voyeurism, it was simply electrifying. NATHAN BROOKER



JOE PITT-RASHID

Just like the *Carry On* films and institutionalised sodomy, Gilbert and Sullivan exemplify a treasured, quintessentially 'English' entertainment. And just like sodomy, bloody good fun it is, too. Sullivan's pastiching of overwrought opera mixed with Gilbert's elaborate wordplay can be a real treat. It's a shame that this didn't always soar to the heights that its creators often reached, nor quite fulfil the promises of its proposed inter-war twist.

In part, this fulfills a self-fulfilling prophecy. It's a queer sub-genre, the Cambridge University G&S Society, and a queer sub-genre of people it attracts, too. So we have singers who can't act, and singers who can't dance, but very few cast members who can't sing. The deficiencies of this form of natural selection were at times obviously glaring, from mechanical sailors to a gimpy bosun to a sub-panto villain who looked a lot like the Predator without conveying any menace.

Fortunately, the quality of the music almost made up for it. Admittedly, I'd question the diction of many of the singers:

HMS Pinafore

CAMBRIDGE ARTS THEATRE

★★★★★

mellifluous as all the voices were, they did reduce many words to their constituent vowels, and occasionally render an intrinsically flimsy plot positively Kafkaesque. But the orchestra was simply outstanding, adding appropriate oomph in all the right places. Given some very proficient leads and a robust chorus, it was impossible to deny the quality of the sounds splashing all over the audience, like a clutch of healthy sea-men.

My reluctance to endorse this more warmly stems from a sense of disappointment – disappointment that more was not done with the promises of that roaring 20s setting, or with the abundant opportunities for scurrilous naval humour (I just practised a little above, to show how irresistible it is). Most of all, it was disappointing that few on stage seemed to enjoy it all as much as the thoroughly silly Matthew Thorne, who brought a deeply appropriate decadence to his role as the Rt Hon. Sir Joseph Porter KCB. If more followed his lead, it'd be lovely; instead, we have a G&S show I can't imagine anyone ever going to. What, never? Well, hardly ever. GEORGE REYNOLDS



CAMBRIDGE ARTS THEATRE

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

ADC MAINSHOW

★★★★★

Are you feeling down?

Early Fifth Week blues and pre-Valentine's Day

dirth? Fear not: this slick, modern musical will have you rolling in the aisles and wandering home all joyous and uplifted. *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* is more of a sketch show than a traditional musical, as four actors chop and change roles in short scenes exploring the ups and downs in a variety of relationships. Yes, the concept isn't earth-moving. This isn't Beckett or Stoppard, but it doesn't claim to be. Credit should go to Pippa Dinnage for having the balls to put on a spunky, fun musical comedy for the hell of it: this show stands alone as a refreshing antidote to the run-of-the-mill dirges repeatedly rehashed for student stages.

All too often in amateur musical productions, singing comes first, and acting second. There seems to be a presumption that if performers can tackle high notes, the audience won't notice the ropery acting underneath. In *I Love You...*, this is definitely not the case. As a reviewer, one aims to pick out individual actors for praise – I can only refer you to a cast list, since there was no weak link. It is a real testament to the strength of the cast that the play never descended into bitty nonsense; the four actors swapped roles with ease, impressing and engaging their audience from the off.

Sadly, there were some opening night hiccups that prevented the production from being a complete success. In most cases, the cast's indefatigable vivacity made minor mistakes forgiveable, but some unavoidable interruptions meant

that this crucial energy could not be sustained throughout. Microphone issues persistently recurred and obscured the content of some



FIONA BROHAMER

outstanding numbers. Additionally, frequent scene changes infringed upon an otherwise polished performance – costume and set alterations were frantically rushed while the audience sat twiddling their thumbs. Slower numbers such as *I Will Be Loved Tonight* and *Shouldn't I Be Less in Love?*

dragged, as the audience seemed impatient to get back to more of the pithy, comedic numbers that were so successful. Still, the ADC's answer to the rom-com is a must see. Pretentious thespians will hate it, but then they've got some 'serious' stuff to anticipate in the next few weeks. For anyone with a sense of humour looking for an evening's entertainment, this one's a winner. LYDIA ONYETT

Incoming



The Crucible

One of the things that annoys me about theatre is the forced idea of 'relevance', of crudely coercing plays into reflecting contemporary issues. So directors stick prisoner characters into a Guantanamo jumpsuit, or assure us that because their show has two lines about money, it's 'shockingly relevant' to the recession era. *The Crucible* is obviously a special case: though set in the Puritan community of Salem at the end of the 17th century, no one would deny its allegory to the Communist witch-hunts of the 50s. Yet to focus too heavily on the McCarthy angle can distract from the play's enduring greatness, and – I say it with caution – relevance. The play's political and emotional sweep ensure that this relevance isn't limiting: as long as there is greed, prejudice and mistrust in the world, *The Crucible* will, depressingly, remain relevant.

For all my cynicism of the desire to link classic plays into our own concerns, I found myself unable to resist when researching the proposed anti-gay bill in Uganda, which could see "serial homosexual offenders" imprisoned for life, or even executed. One of the bill's most troubling aspects is that you only need to be accused of the "crime" of homosexuality by a "witness". The parallels between this situation and *The Crucible* are clear: both Uganda and 17th century Salem are worlds rife with paranoia and prejudice, where you can destroy your neighbour simply by saying they are a witch, or an homosexual.

"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing," says the famous quotation, usually misattributed to Edmund Burke. In my production of *The Crucible*, the inhabitants of Salem sit outside of the action at all times. They have the choice to intervene, as we all do, to step into the events of the world and influence them for good or for evil. In 21st century Uganda, in 17th century Salem, and even here, in comfortable Cambridge, we are presented with that choice in every moment. What could be more relevant than that?

JOSH SEYMOUR


Josh directs *The Crucible*, showing at the ADC Theatre February 9-13th.

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


BOXING

Gowns wear frowns as Town takes crown

University boxers are taken down by their local counterparts

GOWN

4

TOWN

5

JOSH GAMES

Cambridge University Boxing Club and a coach full of travelling support descended on the Cambridge Motel on Saturday night in the first Town versus Gown contest for several years. The CUABC fighters put in a number of impressive performances against strong opposition which, despite losing 5-4 on the night, gives them every reason to be confident with the Varsity Match fast approaching.

After the inevitable pomp and ceremony the first fight set the tone for a thrilling evening. An old hand in the ring and returning Blue, Ed Chadwick, fought one of five highly experienced fighters from the Metropolitan Police. It was a fiery affair with both men racing out of the blocks, not afraid to pull any punches. Chadwick, however, paid the price for his offensive, being caught off guard and receiving a number of right hooks from the policeman. With his opponent bearing down on him, Chadwick, despite a valiant effort, could find no answer until Head Coach Bob Blowes eventually threw in the towel late on the second round.

The University boxers were under no illusions about the quality of the opposition and the next three bouts all went the Town's way. Fergal McCool was perhaps unlucky to be pitted against such a competent fighter in John Metcalf, again from the Met, and lost on points despite showing some classy moves. Super heavyweight 'Big' Robert Pepper certainly will be feeling aggrieved after dominating the first 90 seconds of his fight before Sam Smith, with what seemed to be his first and only punch, enforced a dubious Technical Knockout. 4-0 to the Town.

Staring at a whitewash, Cambridge fought back into the contest with Elliot 'The Pitbull' Chambers staging perhaps the biggest upset of

the night in his first ever fight. His opponent Dave Goddard was not only ten years his senior but also the reigning Police welterweight champion. But the Robinson Geographer certainly didn't lack confidence. His hubristic pre-fight affirmation that "Amateur Boxing needs me" was perhaps confirmed as he danced his way around the ring like a young deer with Goddard failing to land most of his throws. With his opponent frustrated, Chambers varied his attack well and landed a fine right hook in the second. His quick feet and slipping ensured that he contained all that Goddard had to throw at him in the third and he scored a majority points decision.

If Chambers produced the biggest upset then Segawa Kiwanuka took the prize for performance of the night. In a barnstorming display the Queens' PhD student displayed a power

that few will live with, dispensing of his classy opponent from ICENI ABC with a right hand of fury in the second and had the audience in awe of his stunning raw talent. This is what they had come to see. Kiwanuka, who missed the bus to the contest, told *Varsity* that, "It was a very tough fight and he threw a lot of punches but our three coaches are fantastic and they prepared me for that. I've never knocked a guy down but I gotta look pretty for this opera."

This was followed by a superb performance by Bart Dear who simply out boxed his opponent from Marston ABC. Next up was the all female contest, which one judge labelled the most stylish of the night. However a loss for Heley Matthews put the score at 5-3 to the Town, putting victory out of sight with just one fight left.

Even if victory was then beyond the CUABC, inspirational captain Chris Webb rounded the night off with a show of maturity and skill. He showed himself a cut above the rest with superb agility combined with a jab which stalked his opponent throughout the fight. A unanimous points decision for the captain putting the final score at 5-4 to the Town. Attributing his performance to the coaches, Webb said, "although he was beating me in the first round our coaches have a policy in the gym of fitness first and that's what saw me through."

He could have afforded to be less humble.

In spite of this loss, Head Coach Bill Blowes will be more than content with this performance which he suggested showed that, "we are human after all" following last year's 9-0 Varsity demolition. Make no

mistake, this was serious opposition, who were pushed all the way by the University. In the end the night belonged to the boxing debutants, Kiwanuka chief among them, who provide more talent to add to an already professional unit. CUABC will take some beating come the trip up to Oxford on Tuesday March 9th.



The Anorak

Football
Cuppers (1st Teams):
Round 2

St Catz 6-3 St. John's
Downing P-P Darwin
Girton 3-3 (0-3) Homerton
Long Road P-P Sidney
Fitz P-P Jesus
Churchill P-P Emma
Trinity 4-3 CCCC
Caius P-P Selwyn

Football
The Shield (2nd Teams):

Long Road II P-P Magdalene II
Christ's II 5-3 St John's II
Emma II P-P Caius II
Kings II 1-0 Fitz II
Jesus II P-P St Catz II
St Andrews College (with-drawn) vs Trinity II
Churchill II P-P Downing II
Selwyn II 2-0 Trinity Hall II

Rugby Union
Division 1:

Jesus 24-7 Trinity

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
ST JOHN'S	8	8	0	0	346	40	306	32
DOWNING	8	6	0	2	183	73	90	26
JESUS	7	5	0	2	239	93	146	22
TRINITY	8	3	0	5	128	153	-25	16
GIRTON	9	2	0	7	131	231	-100	15
ST CATHARINE'S	10	1	0	9	27	464	-437	11

Rugby Union
Division 2:

Trinity Hall 26-30 Magdalene

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
MAGDALENE	10	8	0	2	299	104	195	34
QUEENS'	9	8	0	1	228	80	148	33
TRINITY HALL	10	5	0	5	235	188	47	25
FITZWILLIAM	8	4	0	4	162	152	10	20
PEMBROKE	8	2	0	6	148	150	-2	14
SELWYN	9	0	0	9	7	405	-398	2

Your weekly guide to college sport

Sport in Brief

Women's Lacrosse

The Women's Lacrosse team rounded off an exceptional season in their respective league by thrashing Cardiff University away 17-4 in the final fixture of the year. Alana Livesey was the stand-out performer for the Blues, scoring several fantastic goals in spite of an injury sustained to her wrist. Attacking trio Ellie Walsh, Georgie Hurt, and Jackie Vullings combined well, creating a series of fluid moves that tore open the Cardiff defence. Everything looks promising for the upcoming Varsity match, the Blues defeating Oxford 10-6 last Wednesday.

Football

Despite failing to pick up a single point in PWC Division 1, the current holders of the Cuppers crown, St Catz, ensured that they could at least hope for some glimmer of success out of a dismally bad season. In a top division clash with St John's, Catz produced an enthralling performance which saw them run out 6-3 winners. A glance at the score sheet indicates the possible reason for Catz's upturn in form, Blues star striker Matt Stock adding four of the six Catz goals. College regulars Hall and Duhig completed the rout and ensured that St Catz progressed to the quarter-finals where they will face Homerton, extra-time conquerors of Girton.

Local Sport

While the transfer window for the Premiership may be best described as underwhelming, to say the least, non-league Cambridge United boss, Martin Ling, was busy trying to strengthen his squad for the second half of the season. As well as signing Youth Team players Luke Berry and Blaine Hudson to permanent contracts, Ling secured the signatures of former Histon winger Antonio Murray and defender David Partridge. Inevitably the new arrivals came at a price, Cambridge finally losing their battle to hold on to promising striker Chris Holroyd. Holroyd, who was Cambridge's most prolific player, has been prised away by Brighton manager Gus Poyet, the deal finally completed this week for an undisclosed fee.

WEATHER

More fixtures cancelled as weather continues to bite

ED THORNTON

Since the snow started falling in Cambridge over a month ago, the cold, wet weather has wreaked havoc on almost all college playing fields, as well as the University pitches at Grange Road. College football and rugby matches have been postponed and the Blues Football team has struggled to find a pitch for training sessions.

Just when it was starting to look as if the weather had cleared up, last weekend saw the reappearance of the conditions that plagued the start of term, resulting in the abandonment of a series of sporting fixtures. Many groundsmen and captains ruled playing surfaces too treacherous, the ground being frozen and slippery.

Sports which take place on synthetic pitches, such as hockey, had been largely unaffected, but both the male and female Hockey Blues

teams were forced to cancel their respective ties on Saturday, the pitches at Wilberforce Road deemed to be unplayable.

Similar to the start of term, many college pitches appeared to be in reasonable condition, but closer inspection revealed that beneath any coating of snow the ground was frozen solid. When the water held in the soil directly below the turf is frozen, the ground becomes very hard and most sports are deemed too dangerous.

MICHAEL DERRINGER



A scene from earlier in the term, the repeat of similar conditions could cause interesting dilemmas for league secretaries

The hotly anticipated Cuppers encounter between Jesus and Fitzwilliam – which would have seen 11 of the 22 players coming from the Blues set-up – suffered at the hands of the weather: Fitz's captain James Gillingham making the tough decision to cancel the game just one hour before kick-off. Speaking about his decision, Gillingham said, "I know it was probably unpopular with both sides but with the standard of football and the pace of play it would have been dangerous to twist and turn."

Fitzwilliam College groundsman Dave Norman said, "the ground is so hard I can't even get the corner flags in the ground." Even when the weather warms the prospect of rain could mean that, though the pitches will thaw, the combination of the rain and the water produced when the ground defrosts will leave the ground sodden and equally unusable. The ground quickly transforms from too hard to too soft and whilst this is far less dangerous it makes play difficult and can damage the pitches almost beyond repair – cue angry groundsmen.

Last year colleges were forced to deal with similar problems when heavy rain led to flooding and matches were postponed. The nature of Cambridge sport, with its short terms and intense schedule, is affected more than most universities by such problems, as teams are forced to squeeze multiple matches into a few weeks, sometimes having to play two fixtures in close

succession. With the Cambridge tradition of a Cuppers competition on top of the league, time is tight and no doubt the end of Lent is going to be busy as all the teams in the University try to make up for lost time.

Colleges will be under pressure to play their matches: no one will want to forfeit three points in a division where eight of the ten teams are separated by only six points. Also, certain colleges will be hit harder than others, as any sides still having to play games left over from last term could really struggle to fulfill their league commitments.

In PWC Division 1 of the men's football league, both Jesus and Christ's have only played four games, leaving five still needing to be played. Ironically, the situation could be made worse for Jesus if they manage to progress in Cuppers, adding another fixture to be played over the limited number of weekends. With Jesus required to play Fitzwilliam in Cuppers and the PWC League, one option that has been suggested is for this weekend's fixture, originally intended to be a league encounter, to count for both league and cup. Blues teams will be likewise optimistic that their training schedules will not be impeded ahead of key Varsity clashes. Whatever happens, college captains of a number of sports will be keeping their fingers crossed that the weather holds out so that this year's fixtures can be completed. If the weather does strike then the closing weeks of term could be very hectic.

ROWING

Newnham Short Course

Catz and Christ's triumph as big guns stay away

ALI MCLAREN

Catz M1 and Christ's W1 won their divisions on the Cam this weekend as Newnham hosted their annual Short Course race. In the women's side of the 1.6km head race, Christ's W1 (7:22.34) managed a five second victory over bumps rivals Pembroke W1, with Magdalene W1 a further three seconds behind in 3rd. Catz M1 (6:08.59) beat Division 2 rivals Robinson M1 by just 1.2 seconds in a tight finish in the men's first division, with Sidney M1 in third, and Caius M1, strongest on the bumps charts, a surprising 4th.

Results were as to be expected for the women in the top divisions, though Caius W1 (4th, 7:39.28) may be concerned about their bumps position if this race is anything to

go by, with Christ's only two places behind. With FaT, Queens, Downing and LMBC staying away from the men's division, the opportunity was there for Caius M1 to prove their racing credentials, yet they lost to three second division boats in a baffling fall from last week's 5th in the City Head-2-Head.

Looking lower down the divisions, Emmanuel W2 impressively swept to victory in the second division, posting 7:48.8, over 20 seconds ahead of their nearest challengers, Christ's W2. Newnham W3 also posted a very impressive time that bodes well for the getting on race for bumps. Worryingly, St Edmund's W1 were slower than Newnham W3, which could promise yet another year of spoons come bumps. Magdalene M2 (6:31.52) won the men's second division in another tight finish over Pembroke

M2 (6:33.00), which bodes well for their bumps campaign, with blades a great possibility as they look to move up the men's third division.

However, with many of the best crews staying away from this race in the Women's and Men's categories, much of the intrigue was taken out of the event. Jesus W1 have still not been racing on the Cam this term so their challenge to a faltering Emmanuel and a strong FaT has yet to be seen in the race for the women's headship. FaT M1 and Downing M1 still have yet to prove their strength against each other, though the upcoming Robinson Head of the Nene this weekend may prove the first chance to see them lock horns.

Correction from last week:
Issue 711, 29th January 2010, p.32, 'Queens' and Trinity continue domination' – ARU M1 finished 2nd ahead of Queens M1

ATHLETICS

Blues run well in London

Some fast times recorded this week

VARSITY SPORT

At the London Indoor Games this week CUAC showed their talent with an impressive performance despite missing some key athletes. With only three weeks to go until the Varsity Indoor Field Events and Relays competition this was an important opportunity to test the squad and it was a test which they passed.

There were some notable performances across the team with some quick times for both the men and women. Following up from his club record of 7.00 seconds in the 60m sprint last weekend, Mark Dyble ran an almost as blistering 7.05. However, Mark will need to up his game again if he is to beat his Oxford rival who has already recorded an astounding 6.95 seconds earlier this year. The men's sprints are competitive

at the moment, but Eamonn Katter stood out as he continued to build on his achievements in Australia over Christmas, running 23.84 in the 200m and 53.25s in the 400m.

The women all ran well but it was an excellent weekend for Fresher Nikki Moss in particular. She ran a personal best in the 60m with a time of 8.52 seconds, as well as in the 200m clocking up only 27.87 seconds. Club President Lucy Spray scored well all round on the back of some hard winter training, whilst women's captain Kate Laidlow ran her 400m personal best of 60.37 seconds.

It is hard to know how Oxford are shaping up as they have been surprisingly quiet, not sending a team to any competitions so far. Nevertheless, the Blues have reason to be confident, with good times this weekend and with many of the club's best athletes yet to open their season.

VARSAITY

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FOOTBALL

Blues inch closer to promotion in local clash

Winger Baxter continues his electric form for the Light Blues as Cambridge demolish UEA

 CAMBRIDGE	4
 UEA	0

WILL CAIGER-SMITH

Despite the biting cold at Wychfield on Wednesday afternoon, the Blues seemed fired up for this league encounter with third-placed University of East Anglia: the whistle had barely sounded when a cheeky flick from Chris Gotch allowed Danny Kerrigan to slip the ball past a startled (and slightly embarrassed) UEA keeper. This seemed to set the tone for the rest of the match. Cambridge, nipping at UEA's heels in the table, knew they had to keep a lid on their dangerous opponents, and so they did: "We didn't give them a chance," summarised skipper Michael Johnson.

The first-minute surprise gave way to a similarly frantic first half, which saw Cambridge dominate an overcrowded midfield without quite having the presence up front to take full advantage of strong link-up play in their own half and some penetrating runs from Mark Baxter. Twenty minutes in, the Blues' efforts were

rewarded with a corner, which swung in to find Paul Hartley, who directed a powerful header past the UEA keeper to make it 2-0.

The pressure from Cambridge was constant throughout; Ferguson was left twiddling his thumbs during the first half, covering UEA's only on-target shot with ease. The lack of bite up front continued to frustrate, however: three times Gotch found himself within shooting range and three times he hurriedly snatched the ball wide. Johnson also went through on goal after a well-won turnover in the Blues' half, but his effort floated straight into the keeper's hands.

After a couple of changes at half-time, Cambridge really began to dominate, now getting the men they needed up front to exploit a series of mistakes from an increasingly ragged UEA defence. Baxter extended the lead to 3-0 ten minutes into the second half, pouncing on a loose ball spilled by UEA's keeper and just managing to slide the ball into an open goal from a tight angle. Matt Stock was less lucky: picking up the rebound after what was very nearly an own goal for UEA, his left-footed hook found the post. Cambridge's back four was watertight, James Day giving a typically solid performance and Danny Gwyther quietly stopping any threats before

they even happened. This allowed the Blues to surge forward, and for the last 15 minutes, they systematically dismantled UEA, crowning their domination with a slick goal. Stock beat four men before offloading to Gotch, who set up Baxter for an emphatic finish.

With five minutes to go, there was just about time for Gotch to attempt a frankly sarcastic bicycle before the whistle blew on a classy second-half display from the Blues, who will now be looking forward to repeating Wednesday's performance against the same opponents next week, this time in the cup.

Cambridge University AFC (4-4-2)
Goals: Kerrigan, Hartley, Baxter (2)
Subs: Burrows (Michael Johnson), Cook (Kerrigan)



CUAFC are proud to be sponsored by Cantab



WILL CAIGER-SMITH

A rarity for the Blues, striker Matt Stock failed to add his name to the scoresheet.

Varsity Bio



Name: Ollie Salvesson
Sport: Hockey
College: St John's
Height/Weight: 175cm/74kg

RESULTS:

Standing Jump: 218.4cm
Limbo: 70cm
Bag Throw: 425cm
100m: 12.1 secs
Bleep Test: Level 14

SuperSports Score: 30.43

Varsity SuperSports

7 Sports. 5 Events. 1 SuperSport.

The Events

Five events put our athletes through their paces, testing vital sporting attributes. We record the results for each athlete then send them to the mathmos at *Varsity* who work out an overall SuperSports score for each competitor. The Standing Jump tests lower body strength. The Bag Throw

tests upper body strength, the athletes hurling a large cylindrical tackle pad as far as they can – awkward as well as heavy. 100m sprint is designed to discover speed, whilst the Bleep Test is all about endurance. Finally, Limbo tests flexibility – and is generally just quite amusing.

Leader Board

SPORT	SS SCORE
Rugby	25.604
Hockey	24.327
Football	22.998

Week 3: Hockey

This is Week 3, Sport 3, of *Varsity* Sport's newest competition. Each week we're taking a male and a female competitor representing a major Blues sport and putting them to the test. Five events assess specific sporting attributes: speed, strength, stamina and flexibility will all be measured.

Representing our first stick sport, Ollie Salvesson and Eleanor Wiseman took part this week on behalf of hockey. Salvesson soon proved to be a surprise package, although not as muscular as his rugby or football counterparts, he soon showed himself to be a worthy opponent across

all five events.

An extremely impressive display saw him outstrip both Max Wolke and Dave Riley in three of the five events, jumping into first place overall on the men's side of the competition. From relatively inauspicious beginnings in the Standing Jump, Salvesson redeemed himself with outstanding efforts in Limbo, the Bag Throw and the Bleep Test.

However, *Varsity* SuperSports is designed to discover the best overall sport, and, for hockey to claim the overall lead, Eleanor Wiseman needed to pull off a similarly impressive haul across the events.

Unfortunately, while Wiseman showed signs of challenging Cat Murphy and Anne Venner, her results came up just short of her competitors. In the Standing Jump she placed above Murphy but below Venner and did the same in the Bleep Test. It was the tests of strength and speed that proved to be Wiseman's downfall, while her 100m time certainly will not be the slowest of the competition it was not quite quick enough to give her an overall SuperSports score that would move hockey above rugby.

Rugby holds on to top spot, but will their dominance continue? Find out in *Varsity* SuperSports.

Varsity Bio



Name: Eleanor Wiseman
Sport: Hockey
College: Magdalene
Height/Weight: 173cm/60kg

RESULTS:

Standing Jump: 175cm
Limbo: 100cm
Bag Throw: 171cm
100m: 16.44 secs
Bleep Test: Level 10.2

SuperSports Score: 18.22



You can watch videos of this week's competitors by checking out: varsity.co.uk/aztzb5

The University loses out as the Town vs Gown fixture returns

Boxingp29



SPORT



Blues trounce UEA, making promotion a realistic target

Footballp31

FOOTBALL

Trinity avoid potential Cup Disaster

Division I met Division 4 in Cuppers, CCCC narrowly missing out on a huge upset

	TRINITY	4
	CCCC	3

ANDREI ABOLINE

Short of a forlorn hope of catching Downing in the PWC league it was in Cuppers that Trinity maintained a real opportunity to earn some silverware, with Trinity having won five games out of their last six and sitting comfortably near the top end of the table this looked like it would be a walk over. Confident of an easy victory over a Cambridge Chinese Community Centre team with a dubious record and suffering from five injuries, Trinity were undoubtedly the favourites. What ensued however, was a tight game that needed extra time to decide a winner and for most of the match spectators were tempted by a possible David and Goliath story. Trinity found a team that were displaying far more class and resolve than they were expecting taking ruthless advantage of their complacent demeanor. Ultimately the first half was dictated by a lack of concentration that left neither team able to capitalize on a plethora of opportunities. Countless times, at either end of the field, the ball would roll tantalizingly across the face goal with no opportunists ready to finish. As the game progressed both teams felt they should have been in the lead and a mixture of frustration and desperation sent a flurry of long range attempts go over the bar and far wide, only adding to the tense atmosphere.

The first half saw impressive performances by both midfields but both were let down by their forwards' inability to convert the ground into goals. The CCCC keeper was tested early by a shot created by the sheer speed of Dany Gammall. Trinity were however surprised to find an immediate counterattack with a shot from Luang Tran that went just wide, a wake up call that failed to mobilize the Trinity defence into a more rigid structure. Attack after



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counter-attack resulted in more lost opportunities. Just seven minutes in and Gammall, Merchant and Falder had each had a shot whilst Shu Sasaki and Duo Wai had four shots between them, all had missed. This continued as Trinity were consistently incapable of dealing with high passes fed into their box and were only saved by some silly misses. At the other end Trinity were constantly able to counter and were almost rewarded when some eager keeping left an open goal. The score was only kept level by Dang's effort; clearing the ball off the line and out of the net. A game like this was bound to yield goals eventually and half an hour in Trinity found the first when Shati Avwar set up a fine goal from Gammall. Only three minutes later Gammall was given another chance from a clinical corner creating his second goal of the match.

Despite the score, Trinity didn't look comfortable and continued

to play with a lack of precision and drive. CCCC were the far more determined team, with Duo Wai continuing to play despite a minor injury as all three substitutions had been used. Soon, some virtuosic football from Shu Sasaki gave Luang Tran an opportunity to score, which he duly converted. After another fast CCCC attack that Trinity countered, Gammall produced a lightning run down the left, into the centre then into the box where James Rutt took the ball and hammered it into the net.

Even now, with the score at three one, CCCC refused to accept their reputation as a second-rate team and although Trinity were ahead it certainly didn't feel as though the game was decided. CCCC continued to press through the middle, led largely by the unceasing efforts of Shu Sasaki. 73 minutes in they got the goal they deserved as their number 10 ran circles round the

Trinity defence, setting up Tran, who whipped it into the goal. It seemed now as though Trinity were content to play a defensive game and hope that CCCC would not score an equalizer before the whistle. Their position became increasingly precarious when a collision left Chris Peacock with a broken nose and Trinity with only 10 players. It was now, with only four minutes to go, that Sasaki displayed some Ronaldo like skill and burst through the centre. With a clear route to the net, only a desperate tackle prevented the goal. Sasaki was not to be deterred by the foul and the entire Trinity team had to watch helplessly as the perfect free kick curled round the wall and swept directly into the bottom right hand corner. The score was level.

Trinity couldn't believe they had thrown away such a convincing lead and were now fighting in extra time to play in the next round, and with

only ten players. In the nail-biting half-hour to follow it genuinely seemed as though Trinity would not be knocked out. Throughout, CCCC were on the cusp of scoring the decider from which Trinity would not recover.

However, despite the pressure, just as David was loading his sling, Andy Garside tried a long shot that just hit the post and rolled past the keeper. Once again Trinity could only play a defensive game. However, with only five minutes to go even the incessant pressure from CCCC failed to find an equalizer, despite a comical effort by the goalkeeper to start a run down the right wing. Even in defeat CCCC seemed to maintain their sense of humor. Richard Falder, the Trinity captain, had to admit after the match that he was "genuinely sorry for them," whilst the CCCC captain could not help but say that he felt "they were robbed of victory".