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# VARSITY

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 12<sup>TH</sup> 2010

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1947

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## Record turnout for NUS vote

## ‘Artificial pancreas’ may soon be reality

JANE ASHFORD-THOM

Ground-breaking new research by Cambridge scientists has provided new hope for those suffering from type 1 diabetes.

The study, funded by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF), has brought scientists closer to the development of a commercially viable ‘artificial pancreas’ system.

Karen Addington, Chief Executive of JDRF, hailed the study as “proof of principle that type 1 diabetes in children can be safely managed overnight with an artificial pancreas system”.

Type 1 diabetes occurs when the pancreas does not produce insulin, the hormone that regulates blood sugar levels. Living with this condition requires regular insulin injections and fingerprint tests. However, these treatments carry medical risks of their own.

The new technology aims to solve these problems through use of a glucose monitoring system and an insulin pump.

Though both technologies are already widely used, the research has provided a breakthrough in linking the two devices together, to make a system tantamount to an ‘artificial pancreas’.

When tested, the new technology was effective in keeping insulin levels in a normal range 60 per cent of the time, as opposed to standard insulin pump therapy, which is only 40 per cent effective in performing the same task.



## Students vote to continue NUS affiliation and enhance welfare support

FI VICKERSTAFF

In an unprecedented turnout for CUSU referenda this week, Cambridge students decided to remain affiliated with the NUS. They also expressed overwhelming support for a campaign to student welfare provisions.

After polls opened on Thursday, nearly 3,500 students voted in the first referendum, which asked, “Should CUSU be affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS) for 2010/11?” The motion passed with 65 per cent of the vote.

In past years, CUSU have remained affiliated to the NUS by default due to previous referenda failing to achieve the necessary quorum of 2,000 votes. This year, however, the issue appeared to attract greater interest, with campaigns for both sides attracting widespread support across the University.

Speaking to *Varsity*, Thomas Chigbo, leader of the “Vote YES – CUSU Affiliation to NUS Referendum” campaign and current CUSU President, said: “The message of this YES vote is clear: Cambridge students have rejected isolationism and the desperate smears from the NO campaign to reaffirm our commitment to a strong student movement with a national voice.”

He added, “With a general election and fees review on the way, now is the time to intensify our campaigns by working with NUS to strengthen the student voice. Remaining affiliated also ensures that CUSU is best placed to represent Cambridge students and support JCR/MCRs locally.”

Ben Towse, leader of the campaign against NUS re-affiliation, told *Varsity*, “I’m really pleased the referendum got a decent turnout. Both sides put a lot of effort into trying to get students aware and

involved.”

In its 88-year history, the NUS has played a crucial role in many student-related issues, such as the introduction of the student grant system, the provision of cheque cards and free banking for students, and the ‘Stop Fees Now’ campaign.

Those who campaigned to maintain Cambridge’s affiliation with the organisation argued that a continued association would provide the University with a powerful voice to pursue a number of objectives.

Chigbo maintained, “Through NUS campaigns Cambridge students have benefitted from interest-free overdrafts from their banks, a 100 per cent increase in government funding for disabled students, not to mention all the support given to CUSU and JCR/MCRs.”

Those against the re-affiliation, including last year’s CUSU President, Mark Fletcher, have disputed

this. “The NUS is ineffective, undemocratic, out of touch, financially incompetent, and rife with infighting,” Fletcher said.

Grayden Webb, another member of the “Cambridge Students for Disaffiliation from the NUS” campaign, pointed out, “JCRs and MCRs have representation on College committees and CUSU, and the Graduate Union have representation on University committees, but the NUS is ignored at a national level.”

He continued, “In the battle against fees, the NUS failed to rally an aggressive campaign [and] without serious public pressure, [the government] had no reason to give students a seat at the table when it came to the fees review.”

Nevertheless, the outcome of the poll will prolong CUSU’s affiliation with the NUS for at least another year, affording the university further opportunities for policy research,

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## Essayp11

Sarah Duncan:  
Don't be a  
romance  
novel snob





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We look back at Wilco's alt-rock masterpiece *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot* and give you the basics of garage rock in 'Genre Theory'.



## Celebrations of Chinese New Year begin in Cambridge

Cambridge is set to host a number of events over the next week to celebrate Chinese New Year, the most widely celebrated festival in the Asian calendar. The Lunar New Year begins on February 14th, culminating on February 2nd next year; this will be the year of the Tiger, symbolising bravery and courage.

Cambridge University Chinese Culture Society (CUCCS) will be celebrating the New Year by enjoying a traditional Chinese with dishes such as roast duck, pig's trotters, steamed fish, and pipa tofu. Other events include Cambridge's annual Chinese New Year's Ball, which will be themed around 'Sweet Spring'. Bambooty, a Cambridge promoter specialising in Oriental club nights, will be hosting a Chinese New Year celebration at Revs.



## Cambridge University Ballet Club flash mob Lion Yard

Cambridge University Ballet Club has created the first ballet themed flash mob. Twenty five dancers took to Lion Yard centre on Saturday afternoon, entertaining a crowd of several hundred shoppers. The dance was done to contemporary pop music, and mixed traditional twirls and pirouettes with modern dance moves. Onlookers were "impressed at how professional" the dancers were. Flash mobs are a recent development in Cambridge. In the past they have typically been used for political protests over tuition fees and the environment. Plans for forthcoming flash mobs include a protest at the exclusivity of the Oxford-Cambridge boat race by racing inflatables, model boats and rubber ducks alongside the river.



## Da Vinci's CV deficient, according to director of CU Careers Service

Leonardo da Vinci's lack of extra-curricular activities and teamwork skills could have put him at a disadvantage in today's job market according to the director of the Cambridge University Careers Service. Leonardo was an architect, musician, scientist, mathematician, engineer, inventor and anatomist, and is today considered the archetypal Renaissance man.

However, according to Gordon Chesterman, director of the Cambridge Careers Service, his letter to Ludovico il Moro in 1482, early in his career, which reads like a modern CV, would not have secured him an interview in today's recruitment market. "He failed to list any extra-curricular activities – employers like to see a raft of these on CVs – it shows people take on new things, meet different people, develop new skills.

# Unprecedented offers require two A\*s

CLAIRE GATZEN

The University of Cambridge has made conditional offers requiring A-level applicants to achieve a minimum of two A\* grades and one A grade in their exams this summer.

The unprecedented move means that 76 A-level students must achieve an average of 90% across all A2 units in at least two subjects. This number represents 2.5% of all conditional offers made for October 2010 entry. The offers have been made across all Colleges and subjects.

However, the University Undergraduate Admissions website states that "the standard A-level conditional offer made by the Cambridge Colleges for 2010 entry will be A\*AA." None of the subjects' websites suggest that applicants may be expected to achieve two A\* grades.

Dr Geoff Parks, Director of Admissions, told *Varsity* that "the possibility of offers asking for more than one A\* being made was very clearly flagged

in our Prospectus".

The Admissions website states: "All Colleges modify offers to take account of individual circumstances. More challenging offers may be set to ensure that an applicant can cope with the demands of exams in cases where some doubt exists."

However Joe Farish, CUSU's Access Officer, was concerned that the higher grade requirements might deter able state-school students from applying to the University. Speaking to *Varsity*, he said, "The A\*AA has unfortunately deterred stronger applicants who lack confidence in their application."

"I know from my own experience that many strong applicants from state schools have the ability to get into Cambridge but lack the confidence to apply, and I worry that the introduction of the A\*A\*A will make this problem worse."

Lord Mandelson, Secretary of State, has warned universities that they will face fines of £3,700 for every extra place awarded. However, Dr

Parks denied that the higher entry-requirements indicated an attempt to restrict the increasing number of students applying to Cambridge.

"We were not fined in the last admissions round and it is not yet clear that there will even be any fines associated with over-recruitment in this admissions round – it will probably depend on which party is in power after the election."

"Because we are in the fortunate position that we are the first choice of the vast majority of our applicants, we are able to predict admissions numbers with much greater accuracy than most other universities. The risk of being fined is therefore very, very small and has not influenced admissions policy," he told *Varsity*.

"The real question is: Would these students rather have an A\*A\*A offer or no offer?" he concluded.

The news comes amidst reports that the Universities of York, Nottingham and Newcastle raised A-level entry requirements after students had applied.

# Jamie's Italian set to open

OSAMA SIDDIQUI

Jamie's Italian, the independent signature restaurant of celebrity chef Jamie Oliver, will open in Cambridge on February 22nd.

The 220-seat restaurant, which will be located at the back of the Guildhall, on Wheeler Street, promises to bring "what's best about casual dining to the high street."

The restaurant aims to offer simple and rustic Italian cuisine for affordable prices in a traditional "neighbourhood" setting.

The anticipation for the opening is already running high. "I can't wait to try it," said one first-year student. "I've been to their Oxford location and loved it."

Jamie's Italian has had considerable success in university towns, as students seem to be one of its key target markets.

The chain currently serves seven locations in England with high student populations including Oxford, Bath,

Kingston, Brighton, Canary Wharf, Guildford, and Cardiff.

In addition to Cambridge, a further three locations are planned in Reading, Leeds, and Liverpool.



Jamie's italian on Wheeler Street

## 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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# Appeals from Jewish students fail to prevent Islamic Society's controversial talk

JAMES WILSON

A controversial academic, infamous for his condemnation of Israel, spoke on Monday night at Clare College, Cambridge.

Dr Azzam Tamimi, director of the London-based Institute of Islamic Political Thought, had been invited to talk by the University's Islamic Society. He discussed the consequences of the Gaza conflict, changes in the region, and the possibility of an amicable resolution.

The talk went ahead despite protests from the University's Jewish Society and the CU Israel Society, who last week cancelled a talk by the historian Benny Morris following accusations of "Islamophobia".

"Cambridge University Jewish Society contacted the Islamic Society as soon as we heard that this event was going on," Rob Mindell, CU Jewish Society President, told *Varsity*. "We explained the upset that Azzam Tamimi would cause to many Jewish students, in his advocacy of suicide bombings, his praise of 'the jihad of Hamas and Hizbollah', and his belittlement of the Holocaust."

"The decision to invite Azzam Tamimi was the Islamic Society's decision to make, it's just a shame they chose to continue with the talk

despite being fully aware of how it would make Jewish students and others feel."

The Islamic Society defended its decision to invite Tamimi. Speaking to *Varsity*, Mirina Paananen, President of the Society, said, "We took into consideration the concerns that the CU Jewish Society had ahead of the talk."

"The points of concern were rigorously investigated and we found that the allegations were either unfounded or taken out of context of both."

When asked about the Israel Society's decision to cancel Benny Morris's talk, Paananen said, "it was in fact the CU Israel Society that took the decision to cancel the talk. Neither did we agree with the decision to cancel the talk, nor was there a call to do so."

Tamimi has been accused of anti-Semitism and support for suicide bombings in the past. In 2004, he claimed that "sacrificing myself for Palestine is a noble cause. It is the straight way to pleasing my God and I would do it if I had the opportunity."

He spent the majority of his Monday night speech focusing on Israel. Stating that the conflict in the Middle East is "purely political", he argued that the founders of Zionism were "all atheists and secular" who worked with

the Nazis to remove the Jews from Europe.

Disputing the right of the Israelis to settle in the Middle East, he argued that "it is a racist thing to claim that God has given any land to anybody. God is not a real estate agent."

"This project is about Europe wanting to prolong its influence in the world, using a community of people to promote this function at the expense of somebody else – as they did in Northern Ireland."

Nonetheless, Tamimi advocated a peaceful resolution to the conflict, stating that "it would be much better if we lived in a

world where nobody killed anybody." He believes that this could be achieved by acknowledgement of what has happened.

"Just like Europeans acknowledge what was done to the Jews in Europe, the world must acknowledge what was done to the Palestinians." He added later, "we must sit down and talk."

However, Tamimi also stated that one should "fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you." He



Dr Azzam Tamimi, director of the Institute of Islamic Political Thought

described Fatah, the Palestinian political party who seek a peaceful resolution, as "collaborators" with the Americans and the Israelis.

When asked whether suicide bombings and rocket attacks can ever be justified, Dr Tamimi argued that "a community under siege that is punished collectively is driven to desperation in trying to protect itself and restore its rights."

He added, "Don't blame the victims, blame the oppressors."

The talk was not well received either by the CU Jewish Society or the Israel Society. Alex Cohen, Co-President of CU Jewish Society, who was present at the event, said: "The talk confirmed many of our worst fears. The sole aim of the talk seemed to be a basic denial of Israel's right to exist using some rather spurious 'historical' references."

The CU Israel Society Committee stated that they believe in "direct, healthy, honest contact with other societies in promoting peaceful approaches to sensitive issues that connect us."

However, one student present at the talk described Dr Tamimi as "passionate". Another defended the right of the Islamic Society to invite him. "It's important that we recognise the right of free speech," she said. "As a University, we should be the principal forum for this kind of debate."

## Students vote 'Yes' in CUSU referenda

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

representation, officer training and legal and staffing guidance.

However, with a student population of almost 20,000, the total number of votes which were cast remains low at just under 3,500. Towse pointed out that, "The YES vote secured substantially less support than at most comparable referenda at other universities."

He added: "So, while Cambridge students have decided not to give up on the NUS yet, they have sent a clear message that there

are very serious issues that need addressing."

Yet Wes Streeter, NUS President and former President of CUSU, said: "NUS is a much more democratic and effective campaigning organisation today than it was when I was President of CUSU. Many of the arguments put across by the NO campaign were either factually inaccurate or driven by a factional agenda."

In a second referendum, students were asked to vote on whether the

CUSU Welfare Officer should be replaced with a joint CUSU and Graduate Union Support Officer and a full-time Student Advisor.

Nearly 2,900 votes were cast for the motion, with an overwhelming 91 per cent of students voting 'Yes'. The result was hailed as landmark by Amiya Bhatia, CUSU Welfare and Graduates Officer. Bhatia said, "YES for Student Support means every student in Cambridge will have access to a full time professional Student Advisor and a CUSU/GU Sabbatical Officer."

She added: "The University of Cambridge will no longer be the only University in the Russell Group without a Student Advisor in its Student Union. This is the most exciting opportunity for change CUSU has had and one which will allow CUSU and the GU to take unprecedented steps to improve welfare and student support for every student."

The result was also welcomed by the Graduate Union. Jennifer Harcourt, President of the Graduate Union, told *Varsity*, "The results allow us to dramatically improve Student Support to all Cambridge students, and the joint project brings benefits to both the Graduate Union and to CUSU."

## Minorities underrepresented at Oxbridge, report claims

MICHELLE GOMES

Students from ethnic minority backgrounds are underrepresented at the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, a recent report has claimed.

The report, published by Race for Opportunity, a branch of the outreach charity Business in the Community, claimed that only 10.5 per cent of Cambridge students and 11.1 per cent of Oxford students are from black or ethnic minority backgrounds. These figures are significantly below the national average.

Some Russell Group universities are, however, making notable progress in improving diversification: at both the London School of Economics and King's College London, over 40 per cent of students are from ethnic minorities.

The report asserts that there are seven times fewer black students than at other British universities.

However Jon Beard, Director of Cambridge's Undergraduate Recruitment, disputed the accuracy of the figures, stating that for the academic year 2008-9 fifteen per cent of those students who declared their ethnicity described themselves as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME), a figure substantially in excess of the

10.5 per cent alleged by the report.

Beard explained that "the local nature of part-time admissions naturally skews figures in favour of those institutions near large towns or cities where BAME populations exist."

"There is a real need to ensure that important and necessary research on this subject accurately captures all the issues, such as educational achievement and social and geographic factors, simply suggesting that certain institutions are in some way 'failing' without any discussion with those institutions is helpful to no-one."



Michael Atkins and Grayden Webb campaigned to disaffiliate from the NUS

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# Disabled Students Liberation Campaign takes off

CUSU Disabilities Officer scrapped as new campaign seeks to give disabled students “representation they deserve”

GEMMA OKE

The CUSU Disabilities Officer is to be replaced by a new disabled students' campaign in a move to end disability discrimination at the University.

The Disabled Students Liberation Campaign (DSLCL) will become an autonomous campaign affiliated to CUSU, alongside existing campaigns promoting access and combating discrimination. The DSLCL's remit will see the new body work to improve the experiences of disabled students at Cambridge, as well as campaigning to promote a positive image of disability in society.

The nine-member campaign will include officers representing a wide range of disabilities, ranging from physical disability to invisible impairments such as Asperger's Syndrome, and mental health issues. Representatives for Welfare, Access, Social and Equality and Diversity will also be included.

Speaking exclusively to *Varsity*, joint campaign leaders Beccy Talmy, Morgan Wild and Esther Leighton explained that as well as improving facilities for disabled students, the DSLCL is committed to changing perceptions of disability among disabled and non-disabled students alike.

“The social approach to disability hasn't moved forward in the way that attitudes to other issues, like race or gender, has,” said Leighton. “We're

working to promote positive self definition among disabled students.

“We want to get the idea across that disability isn't a pejorative term to describe you – it's society that has the problem with people who are different.”

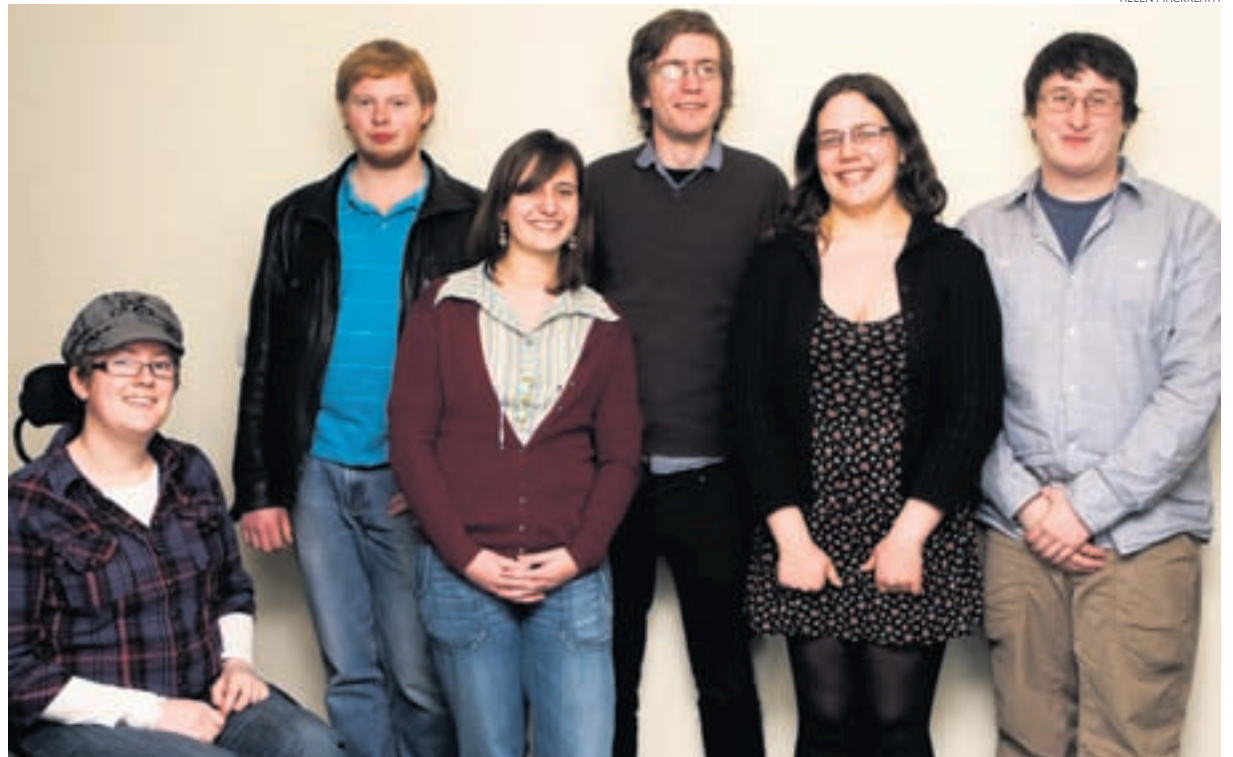
She added, “30 per cent of disabled students (at GCSE) don't make it to further education, let alone higher education.”

Beccy Talmy added, “We want to change the culture to one where disabled people can feel as though they are promoting their rights, not 'being a nuisance'.”

A distinguishing feature of the new campaign is that all of the representatives will self-define as having a disability. “We're very much open to support and interest from people who don't self-define as disabled”, said Talmy.

“Previous disability officers have come into the job having done 'work experience' with disabled people in the holidays, and think that they know how best to represent disabled students on the basis of that. We hope that as well as encouraging other disabled people by being 'present' and visible, having people who self-define as disabled will better understand and represent the issues faced by disabled students.”

Members of the DSLCL were keen to praise CUSU for their support of the new body. Talmy said, “To give the sabbatical officers their due, they've all really made an effort to



The founders of the Disabled Students Liberation Campaign

invest in this.

“They're now looking at things like disability audits, and policies like 'Dignity at Study' which will set out a clear process for dealing with discrimination and prejudice: these things will benefit everybody, students and staff.”

The current CUSU disability representative, Rob Mindell, whose post will be replaced by the DSLCL, was instrumental in getting the new

campaign established. He said, “This is a real example of how a student-led initiative can lead to significant change.

“I am personally thrilled with this change. The task this year of being the one student officer representing over 1,000 disabled students in this University, on a personal and policy level, has been a tall order. The Disabled Students Autonomous Campaign will give disabled

students the same representation as deserved, with regards to both right and needs. Change in this respect has been required for a long time and it will lead to better and more accurate representation for disabled students and, most importantly, by disabled students.”

The inaugural elections to the DSLCL are due to take place alongside the CUSU elections in March 2010.

## Cambridge election candidates go head to head at University-sponsored debate

ELIZABETH BATEMAN

Cambridge's general election candidates took part in a public debate earlier this week, the first of its kind.

The event was organised by the Cambridge Programme for Sustainability Leadership (CPSL) and was attended by over 100 members of the public.

Labour candidate Daniel Zeichner, Conservative Nick Hillman, Liberal Democrat Julian Huppert and the Green Party's Tony Juniper attended the University-sponsored debate on “the future of the city”.

Nick Hillman, Conservative, targeted issues of congestion and transport. Tony Juniper, Green Party, and Julian Huppert, Liberal Democrats, both believed that the solution lay with greener cars. They suggested the installation of charging points for electric cars and the restoration of railway links with Oxford.

When questioned about the £1.3 billion proposed 10-lane superhighway for the A14, Labour candidate Daniel Zeichner believed it would have been much cheaper if it had been done earlier. Julian Huppert felt it was a plan “we do not want and do not need”.

A 17-year-old spectator asked the candidates their views on tuition

fees. Juniper pledged to abolish the fees and deemed the replacement grants the “best investment the country could make”.

Huppert agreed with the plan to abolish fees and felt it was “unfair” that previous students hadn't had to pay them. When Conservative Hillman asked where the money for this scheme was coming from, Huppert replied, “savings and cuts from elsewhere”.

Other topics included housing, environment and sustainability. Both Huppert and Juniper sought after an increase in “green jobs” whilst Hillman intended to regain the “sense of belonging that communities had lost”.

This debate sees the four candidates battling for the Cambridge parliamentary seat previously held by Liberal Democrat David Howarth.



Tony Juniper of the Green Party speaking at the Election debate

## Comics and Disney studied at new research centre

IMOGEN GOODMAN

A new centre for Research and Teaching in Children's Literature has been formally launched this week in Cambridge as part of the Faculty of Education. The centre consists of 13 researchers.

Researchers will survey the impact of various cultural materials upon the ideological development of children, from an early age through to adolescence. Less traditional media platforms, such as video games and fan fiction, will be analysed alongside literary classics such as Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. Notably, the *Twilight* series will come under examination.

Experts in the fields of Education and Children's Literature attest the importance of such studies, arguing that films and books have a profound impact on children, shaping their sense of identity and perception of the world around them.

Morag Styles, a member of the steering group for the centre, said: “The texts we read in childhood can have lifelong significance to us. Many of these texts are rich and deep and worthy of detailed analysis.”

Professor Maria Nikolajeva, the director of the centre, indicated that

the centre's work will play an important role in influencing the messages and forms of children's popular culture, stating, “If what we regard as trash is popular with young people, we need to know why”. She also



The Twilight series

defended the study of unconventional sources such as Disney films, “If we just pretend these things do not exist, we could lose a very important dimension of children's competence at interpreting stories.”



# King's students vote on future of Soviet symbol

Following an open meeting last night students will vote to retain, replace or remove Hammer & Sickle

HUGO SCHMIDT

Voting is currently underway at King's College on a referendum seeking to remove the controversial Hammer & Sickle flag from the College Bar.

At an Open Meeting on Thursday evening, the King's College Student Union (KCSU) unveiled the online voting system that will allow students to vote on the future of the flag. Voting will remain open for 48 hours, from Thursday evening to Saturday evening.

The voting system is designed in such a way that, on the first page, students have the opportunity to vote for one of three proposals. These include keeping the flag as it is, removing it entirely, or replacing it with another symbol.

On a second page of voting, students may vote for a number of replacement alternatives. These options include turning the flag upside down, painting it purple and white, or replacing it with the gay pride flag or the Amnesty International flag.

The votes for these options will only be counted if a majority of students vote for the replacement option on the first page.

The controversial symbol, which was once the flag of the Soviet Union, sits inside a gilded frame and has been hung in the College bar since 2004. The decision to hang the flag was made after repeated cases of vandals painting the symbol on the bar walls.

In recent years, however, the flag has attracted fierce debate from many who find the image to be objectionable and offensive.

Arguing in favour of its removal, Stephen Downie said, "King's bar is a place where members of the College should feel comfortable. I know for a fact that some King's members and some visitors have people in their family who were persecuted or killed under the Soviet Union."

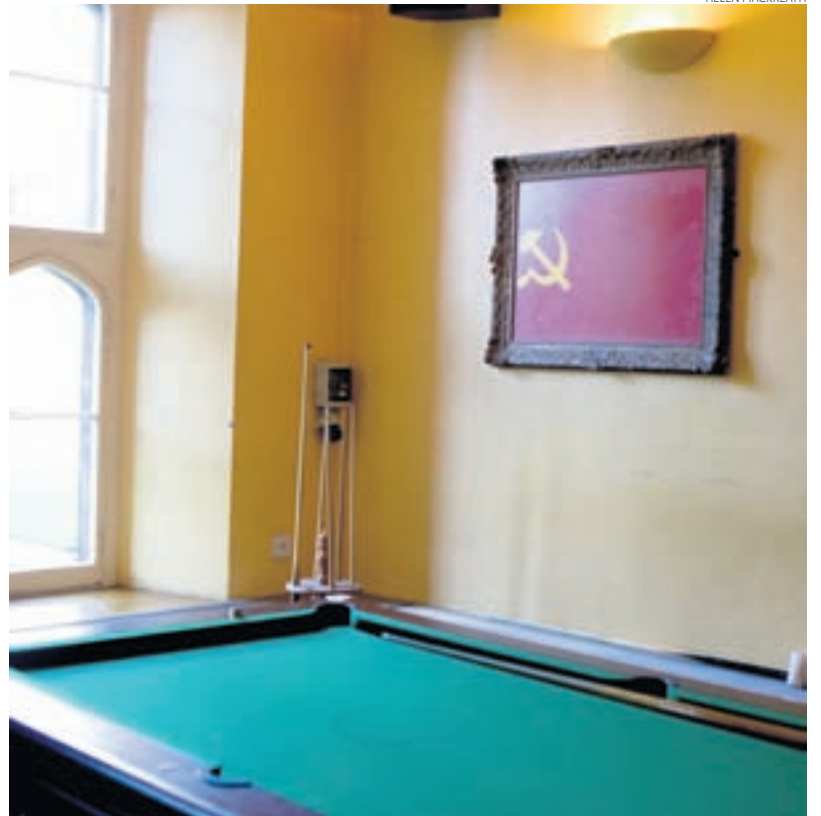
He added, "Although [the flag] may be a part of King's history, it is an embarrassing and anachronistic one which harms our College's reputation and alienates certain members of the College community."

Luke Hawksbee, arguing in opposition, said, "I have absolutely no desire for KCSU to seemingly endorse Stalinism so I proposed that we replace the flag with a more generic symbol of socialism to keep our radical traditions alive."

Despite the contentious nature of the issue, many felt that the debate has been positive and productive. Speaking to *Varsity*, Juan Zober de Francisco, President of KCSU, said: "I feel that the debate was constructive and interesting. As expected, the issue is one that's not only controversial, but one that many students feel personally involves their lives, and the massive turnouts at our two Open Meetings are a testament to this."

He was also keen to emphasise the historic nature of the referendum. The constitution of KCSU had to be suspended to allow the vote to take place. It is also the first time that King's graduates and undergraduates will be voting jointly.

KCSU expects the results of the final vote to be released by Sunday morning.



The framed Hammer & Sickle hanging in King's Bar

# Shell hits back against Amnesty protestors

Shell International Relations Manager says protests were based on "unsupported allegations" and "superficial conclusions"

CLAIRE GATZEN

Shell has hit back at the 'Shell Hell Day' organised by Cambridge University Amnesty International last Thursday. Students from across Cambridge donned white jump-suits for the day to campaign against the energy company's operations in the Niger Delta.

Alice Ajeh, International Relations Manager of Shell, who has lived most of her life in the Niger Delta, spoke exclusively to *Varsity* to address the concerns of the students who called for Shell to "clean up their act".

Ajeh denied that Shell was the main culprit for oil pollution, explaining, "The sad fact is that much of oil pollution in the Niger Delta is caused by sabotage. Most of that is caused by heavily-armed gangs who illegally tap into the pipelines to steal large quantities of crude oil. They spill oil, cause widespread environmental damage, impact the lives of affected

communities and leave us to clean up the mess.

"Some armed militant groups blow up pipelines and other facilities to stop oil production and draw attention to conditions in the Niger Delta," she added.

"Of course we are concerned about the environmental impact of oil spills and the impact on communities. The Shell Peace and Development Council (SPDC) is committed to stopping all leaks as fast as possible and cleaning up all spill sites."

Ajeh also sought to play down the reality of the social and environmental impacts of gas flaring. "To put it into perspective, there are fewer than 110 flares in an area the size of Portugal."

She also pointed out that the SPDC

has invested \$3 billion in gas-gathering projects since 2000, with Shell's total flaring falling by 60 per cent in that time.

Amnesty's claims that Shell has failed to address social impacts adequately were also attacked. "I don't accept this," said Ajeh. "SPDC takes the social impacts of its operations into account and looks for new ways for communities to benefit."

In 2008, \$158 million was given to the Niger Delta Development Commission and \$84 million was injected directly into community development projects. Ajeh notes that "this is the largest single investment in communities that Shell companies make anywhere in the world."



An AIDS programme initiated by Shell in partnership with the NGO Family Health International recently won an international award in New York.

However, Ajeh concedes that "there are many difficult challenges in trying to improve people's lives in the Niger Delta and it would be wrong to pretend otherwise. In order to address these many challenges, all

relevant parties will need to work together, and SPDC is supporting the Government and other parts of civil society."

CU Amnesty in turn have responded to Shell. Hannah Perry, head of CU Amnesty International, countered Shell's claim that sabotage contributed to most of the pollution, arguing that Shell has exacerbated the problem.



CU Amnesty protesters at last week's 'Shell Hell Day'

Set Menu For STUDENTS Only

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## Hi! Society



## Gog Magog Molly

Picture a group of people in eye-catching clothing that clashes – bright pink boots, fluorescent yellow and black striped tights, a blue and pink dotted dress, a face painted green and a red hat – all performing the centuries-old folk dance. Sounds unique, doesn't it?

It is. Gog Magog Molly offers the experience of traditional Morris dancing with a twist. The group is highly sought-after around the country. Last year, they attended, amongst other events, Wallingford Bunkfest – a music, dance, craft and beer festival all rolled into one. Highlights in the near future will include a trip to Oxford, where they will be parading the streets, and the Inter-Varsity Folk Dancing Festival in March, the longest-running folk festival in the UK.

Gog Magog Molly was formed in 1996 to celebrate the 80th birthday of Cecil Papworth, the man whose research enabled the revival of the Comberton Broom Dance and Cambridgeshire Molly and 'Feast' Dances. Part of its work involves touring local schools to preserve the heritage of its East Anglian tradition.

The group meets to practise every Tuesday, 8-10pm, in various locations around Cambridge. These sessions are attended by some of the founding members who have long left the University, as well as current students.

Meetings are geared toward preparing for the numerous public events that the society participates in. The standard is high, with many members drawn from the most talented dancers within other University folk dancing societies. Most are familiar with the routines, and this shared expertise allows for a democratic and informal structure, with members taking turns to lead. The group caters for beginners too, however, and welcomes those new to Molly dancing. A typical session will involve more experienced members practising for upcoming events and beginners being taught by experts. DUNCAN EVANS

To find out more about Gog Magog Molly take a look on their website at [www.societies.cam.ac.uk/molly/](http://www.societies.cam.ac.uk/molly/)

## NEWS INTERVIEW

## Eastern promise

**Merrow Golden and Ashleigh Lamming speak to Rahul Gandhi, scion of the most powerful family in Indian politics, about education East and West**

"What is the best place to eat in Cambridge these days?" Rahul Gandhi asks us when we meet for an interview. We are taken by surprise: it is not the question we expected to be asked by one of the leading politicians of the largest democracy in the world.

Gandhi, of course, knows all about Cambridge student life, having read for an MPhil in Development Studies at Trinity College in 1995. He remembers the experience fondly. "Cambridge was immensely influential in shaping the person I am today," he says.

Rahul Gandhi is the scion of the Nehru-Gandhi family, India's most prominent political dynasty. His mother, Sonia Gandhi, is currently the leader of the Indian National Congress, while his late father, Rajiv Gandhi, was Prime Minister of India from 1984 to 1989. His grandmother was Indira Gandhi, who served as Prime Minister for 15 years, and his great-grandfather was Jawaharlal Nehru, who was India's first Prime Minister in 1947.

Born into a family that is so used to occupying centre stage, it was a huge change for Gandhi to come to Cambridge as "just another student". As he recalls, "it was a very strange time – my father had just died, and I went from that to being in a place where no one knew who I was."

Gandhi stayed away from the political sphere for some time after graduating from Cambridge, but it seems that the desire to follow in his family's footsteps was too strong to ignore: he has now appeared on the political scene as a major voice.

**"The Indian system focuses too much on learning by rote. The American system is about questioning knowledge."**

He was recently re-elected to the Lok Sabha in 2009, representing the constituency of Amethi. Political observers think that he may be the man to lead the country one day.

The desire to interview Rahul Gandhi was a result of our stay in India last summer. We had spent the summer at a placement with the Latika Roy Foundation, which is a charity that supports children and young adults with special needs. We arrived a week after the Right to

Education Act (August 2009) had been passed, and were very interested in getting Gandhi's opinion on it.

The Act aimed to provide free and compulsory education to all children aged 6 to 14; a big step in Indian educational policy. However, from the viewpoint of children with special needs, there were still significant gaps. It brought to our attention the complexities of state-sponsored education and the need for such education to support all. As one of the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China), India's development is of crucial importance to the rest of the world.

Gandhi is intimately involved with education in India. In September 2007, he accepted the position to lead the Youth Congress as well as the National Students Union. As such, he feels very strongly about the importance of education and the need for expanding the education system.

He said, "If India is to move forward, we need to allow all of our citizens access to opportunity, and to do that, they need access to education. It is not okay for disabled people not to have access to education, or the opportunities that follow from it."

Gandhi has a particularly unique vantage point in tackling the education debate, having attended school not only in India and the UK, but also in the US (he graduated from Florida's Rollins College in 1994). With recent statements such as President Obama's on the importance of an education system that "will allow us to compete with China and India", it is clear that comparative studies may be of critical use.

Gandhi agreed that the Indian education system did differ from that of the UK and US. "The relationship of students with teachers is different in the US from India. In the US, students called their lecturers by their first name and I remember being pleasantly surprised by that."

"Asking questions is actively discouraged in the Indian education system. At university in India, students are actively discouraged from coming up with their own ideas and from disagreeing with the lecturer."

He recalls a time when he plucked up the courage to ask a question in physics, only to receive the reply of "because this is how it is". In contrast, Gandhi is impressed with the education he received at Cambridge.

He explains, "The Indian education system focuses too much on

learning by rote, and not enough on learning to think by yourself. The American system is about questioning knowledge. The British

**"Asking questions and coming up with their own ideas is actively discouraged amongst students in the Indian education system."**

education system is a balance between the two."

Despite the shortcomings of the Indian education system, Gandhi believes in the potential of Indian students. He says, "The discipline, diligence and motivation of Indian students is unparalleled."

Education remains arguably the most crucial foundation for the development of Indian society, and more crucial still for a functioning liberal democracy. India seems to be bursting at the seams demographically. How the educa-

tion system will accommodate this influx of students is a tough question.

Complicating matters further are such questions as the extent to which there should be preferential treatment in the education system for members of the lower castes and women. Gandhi supports such action, arguing that "for now it is absolutely necessary. Ideally, we'd create more places at good universities, and improve the standards of the remaining ones until everyone who wanted a good education could get one."

He adds, "But we have to be realistic. There are some groups in India that have been discriminated against historically and they need help to access higher education."

Gandhi has a clear vision of where he wants Indian education to go. "Education can't be about telling students what

to think anymore. The role of teachers should be about helping children to manage all the different sources of information, and to make decisions for themselves about what they believe based on critical evaluation of the competing sources of information."





VARSITY PROFILE

# Zoah Hedges-Stocks

## From the funfair to the world of academia for the “girl with the weird hair”

By most modern standards, Zoah's life is enviably exotic and intriguing. Born into a family of travelling showmen, her family have been working on the fairgrounds since the late 1800s.

She grew up in a caravan and spent her summers travelling with the fairground, often finding herself working at the Jesus May Ball fireworks.

Now she has achieved her childhood ambition to be “on the other side of the fence”, in her first year studying History at Murray Edwards.

Zoah's start was far removed from the selective world of Cambridge academia: she was the first member of her community to apply to university. “A lot of people didn't really get the gist of it.”

“Cambridge was the only university people had heard of, but a lot of people didn't understand that the application process was selective – they assumed that you could just walk in. But this wasn't to do with ignorance, it's just because it's not really part of our world. People were interested as it was something new and exciting.”

Despite this, Zoah believes that her background has helped her since she's been at Cambridge, “I think it's made me very bolshie and self-confident,” she laughs.

“You have to be when you're running a business. I think a lot of working class people can feel out of their depth coming to Cambridge,

but I didn't have that problem, I'll talk to anyone.”

She also believes that her background has helped to influence her choice to take a degree in History.

“Some of my favourite childhood memories are of sitting on my Granddad's knee, with him telling me stories. There's a lot of sense of heritage and tradition in our community and that's definitely influenced me.”

However, Zoah does not see herself staying in the family business after graduation. “I'd like to branch out. I mean, we've been doing this for 200 years!” she said. “I see myself doing something different, maybe journalism – yes that's a hint, *Varsity*!”

“But I know this will always be a part of me, and will always be there for me to go back to – it's not just a business, it's part of who I am.”

Since arriving at Cambridge, Zoah says she's been surprised by the amount of attention her story has attracted. On Wednesday she appeared on BBC Radio 4: “People have been very interested, and I find it a bit bizarre. Back at home everyone just knew me as that girl who vanished for six months every year with the weird hair.

“People come up to me and say: ‘Oh I hear you're that girl who's from the funfair.’ And it's weird because to me it's perfectly normal. I'm not a one-off; there's a lot more of us than you think.” ELLEN DAVIS-WALKER



MICHAEL DERRINGER

# UniversityWatch

## The University of Oxford

On Monday evening, Danny Ayalon, Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister, gave a speech to students at the Oxford Union during which protesters carrying Palestinian flags heckled him. One protester is alleged to have shouted the phrase, “Idbah al-yahud”, which in Arabic means “Kill the Jews”. Ayalon is considering whether to press charges and the Israeli Embassy in London is scrutinising CCTV footage of the outburst. Ayalon, a member of the right-wing nationalist party Yisrael Beiteinu, believes it is his moral duty to press charges against the offender, who is thought to be a member of the university's pro-Palestinian society. The British Government is suffering further embarrassment than it already did following the issuance of warrants for the arrest for war crimes of Israeli officials visiting London. Since former Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni cancelled her visit after a warrant for her arrest was issued by a British court, Ayalon is the first senior Israeli official to come to England.



## Bristol University

At its Annual General Meeting (AGM) last week, the Bristol University Students Union voted to rename its meeting the Students Hearing and Giving Factual Evidence and Structured Talk (SHAGFEST). From the time this vote was cast, all references to the Union's AGM must instead be references to SHAGFEST and the Union's 2011 AGM will be marketed and referred to as SHAGFEST 2011. This move has been made in order to rebrand the AGM and to reinvigorate students to support and take an interest in the Union's work and is “intended to save paper in line with the environmental aims of the Union”. It is argued that, since there was no reason why the meeting was called the AGM, the rebranding will not change anything but students' view of it, which it is hoped will be more positive.

According to Richard Jarvis' proposal, the new name should, “bring about a change in perception,” and, “reflect what happens at a rebranded AGM”.

## Burnley FC University

Burnley Football Club is set to launch the world's first university for the study of football at its Turf Moor Stadium. There already are institutions where the game of football can be studied but, unlike these, the new university will aim to teach a diverse range of students about the financial and commercial aspects of the sport, as well as how to play the game. Plans are in place to renovate the current stadium and this project will be carried out by StadiaArena, a firm that is responsible for designing some of the world's best known stadiums, and which fully supports the creation of the university. Part of the new design of the stadium will be its ability to be fully transformed into a concert hall or exhibition centre, in keeping with the two-in-one StadiaArena concept. ESMÉ NICHOLSON



## Cambridge Spies



### Easter come Early

Lounging in your room, minding your own business, taken aback by noises of exertion next door? A slow thump and a tired moan. Alas, but what could it be?

- a) The strenuous, the committed – the neighbour's doing press-ups gag.
- b) The traditional, the conventional – the homegirl's getting laid card.
- c) The unexpected, the unsettling, the sound of vibrations in the background...oh the Rabbit is a'hopping tonight.

### Confessions of a Teenage Drama-Keen

“Ok...Umm...I don't really want to *Varsity* Spies myself coz it's like quite attention seeking lol but I did snog 18 people on my birthday...”

Darling, we understand. And yes, it is totally hilarious. We ‘loll’ pretty hard too – so cringe! But what, dear reader, could this chaste maiden, this paragon of timidity, possibly have to complain about?

- a) “...anyway, the bf went a bit mental, total sense of humour failure lol.”
- b) “...who'd have thought that my supervisor was such a Cindies fan anyway.”
- c) “...bummed I didn't hit target though, too boozed to bag the last four and make it one for every year.”

### Three-Way Relay

We've all boasted of bedroom Olympics but one lucky lass, swapping with University gymnasts, decided to go for the gold, impressing a pair of local athletes who'd joined the team for an evening of Light Blue bacchanalia. Set for a heated competition next morn, how did the judges score these nubile, lustful jocks?

- a) 10.0 - Gold Medal.
- b) 0 – flopped on the floor exercise.
- c) No score - They were too busy having a threesome. In Huntingdon.



# Universities “heading for tough times”, says David Willetts

DONALD FUTERS

David Willetts has warned that universities are “heading for very tough times” regardless of the results of the coming general election, speaking at St John’s College this Monday.

At a talk organized by CUCA and the local Conservatives, Willetts cited the actions of the last government as the cause of the situation, blaming his gloomy prediction on the “mess Labour has made of public finances”.

The Shadow Secretary of State for Universities and Skills spoke for fifty minutes about his “vision for higher education under the Conservatives”, fielding questions from the audience for the final half hour.

He highlighted a “catastrophic failure” of careers advice in recent years, and added that students are “just not getting the careers advice and guidance they need”. He called for “transparency and better information,” particularly regarding which A-level courses

are considered worthwhile by universities.

In what could be construed as an attack on Lord Mandelson’s recent comments on tertiary education, Willetts made clear his intention to minimise government interference in higher education institutions, stating that the “freedom and autonomy to pursue lines of inquiry, however inconvenient they are for the government,” is “crucial”.

Regarding the pending higher education funding review, he was firm: “Fees would have to stay,” he said, and added that even the Liberal Democrats have “stopped pretending that you could afford to get rid of that.”

However, he denied the possibility that the government could grant financial aid to students if fees were to increase saying “the government cannot afford to lend students the extra money. It’s a model that requires more exchequer cash up front, and we don’t have it.”

But Willetts also used the speech to put forward Tory proposals on higher education funding. Under

the Conservatives, a 10% discount would be offered as an incentive to those who repay their student loan early.

If just 1% of students did so, claimed Willetts, it would bring £300 million of “extra cash” into the system; enough to support 10,000 additional places at universities in 2010.



David Willetts MP

## King’s College Easter Service to be televised by BBC

### Decision follows criticism of BBC’s religious content

OSAMA SIDDIQUI

The BBC is planning to air a special broadcast of Easter services from King’s College Chapel, marking the first time the service will be broadcast on television.

*Easter at King’s* services have typically been broadcast on BBC Radio. The decision to air a televised broadcast appears to have come in response to recent criticism that BBC’s religious programming has been lacking.

In the Church of England’s General Synod this week, a motion was passed expressing “deep concern about the overall reduction in religious broadcasting across British television in recent years”.

The BBC has defended its religious content. In a press release, Aaqil Ahmed, BBC’s Head of Religion and Ethics said, “Christian programming is the cornerstone of our output on television, radio and online, and I am very pleased to announce our eclectic array of programming to mark Easter this year, which I am sure viewers will find both thought-provoking and enjoyable.”

The televised broadcast of *Easter at King’s* seems to be the highlight of what promises to be a diverse slate of programming on BBC to commemorate Easter this year.

In addition to broadcasts of live worship and sacred music, the BBC is also planning to air a number

of documentaries, including ‘Are Christians Being Persecuted?’ The documentary will examine recent legal challenges faced by Christians.

Stephen Cleobury, Director of Music at King’s College, told *Varsity* that he welcomed BBC’s decision to televise the service posthaste. “We were very pleased to be asked to record music for Holy Week and Easter for BBC television. It will provide a great opportunity to bring some of the wonderful music for this season to a wider audience.”

*Easter at King’s* is currently in its fifth year, and has grown into a popular series of concerts and services from the College Chapel. This year’s programme includes such perennial favourites as a performance of Bach’s St Matthew Passion.

The programme also features

various pieces by renowned composer James MacMillan.

BBC has not yet announced an air date for its televised broadcast. The event will not be a live broadcast, and was already filmed in December. According to Cameron Foote, one of the choristers who took part in the filming, “it was a pleasure to participate in the Easter broadcast.”

He added, “The musical repertoire chosen for the occasion was particularly beautiful and well-blended with the liturgy.”

BBC Radio 3 will be carrying a live broadcast during Holy Week of a piece composed by Macmillan and sung by King’s College Choir.

The King’s Choir already commands a dedicated following on television. Carols from King’s is broadcast annually on Christmas Eve on BBC2 and is watched by over two million people.



The choir of King’s College

# Elite schools “tightening grip” on top universities

CHRISTOPHER STANTON

The Sutton Trust, a prominent educational charity, has alleged that the middle classes and elite schools are “tightening their grip” on top British universities, despite government policy.

In its submission to Sir Martin Harris, the former vice-chancellor of Manchester University, who is producing guidelines on how universities should increase the number of students from state schools and poorer backgrounds, the Trust alleged that there were “stark inequalities” between educational institutions.

The report claimed that the inequalities were responsible for the disproportionate share of places at elite universities claimed by students from a few top schools.

The Trust stated that in 2007, just 200 leading schools won nearly 38 per cent of the places in 13 of the UK’s leading universities, a figure that had hardly changed since 2002. At Oxford and Cambridge, this figure rose to 44.4 per cent.

Between 2007 and 2002, the proportion of independent school pupils admitted by those 13 universities, for example, rose from 32 per cent to 33 per cent, whilst those from the poorest socio-economic groups stayed at 16 per cent.

Controversially, the report concluded by recommending that “there should be a modest expansion of places at selective universities for non-privileged students who have participated on access and admissions schemes.”

Other recommendations made by the report include offering lower interest rates for lower income

students.

Sir Martin was ordered to draw up his recommendations by Lord Mandelson, the First Secretary of State. They are expected to be used as part of his “aspiration” agenda, which will play a key role in Labour’s election strategy.

This has raised fears amongst educators that the review has been politicised, and will be used to force a potentially unpopular “quota” system on universities. The recommendations made in the Sutton Trust’s report are expected to intensify this debate.

Early reactions from some prominent figures in higher education have not been positive. Many have taken issue with the idea that university admissions should be based on factors other than academic merit.

John Morgan, President of the Association of School and College Leaders, and Headteacher of Conyers Comprehensive in Stockton-on-Tees, said: “I don’t think any of us are happy with the idea that if you go to a particular school you are given modified points or a lower offer. It has to be about the individual.”

Tim Hands, Master of Magdalen College School, Oxford, who chairs the joint universities’ committee of two independent school groups — the HMC and the Girls’ Schools Association — said: “With funding cuts and the emphasis on strategic subjects such as science and engineering, of which we are the key providers, this situation will only become more pronounced.”

He added, “What is required is honest attention to problems in our education system which have been government-induced, not ineffectual social engineering.”



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

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# Comment

**“My novels are like fish pie: comforting nourishment that slips down easily.”**

SARAH DUNCAN



CHARLOTTE RUNCIE

## Can't buy me love?

**If your other half is demanding jewellery and mini-breaks this Valentine's Day, beware. Don't let them turn you into a peacock**

Last week I got an email from Apple. This is not unusual: pretty much everything I own has been sold to me by the Mac corporation, and they like to send me appreciative little notes from time to time in return. Well, appreciative notes and hard sells. This particular email was an example of the latter: “Sounds like love,” it whispered, seductively. “Give iPod this Valentine's Day.”

I raised an eyebrow at my inbox. Have you ever received an iPod as a Valentine's Day gift? I haven't, and it's not because nobody loves me. I know this because my mum sends me a card every year. No, iPods haven't formed a major part of my V-Day celebrations because an iPod just isn't a romantic gift. And in its sleek, metallic heart of hearts, Apple knows this too, because that email also included some desperate suggestions for increasing the romantic impact of your electronic gift. “Fill an iPod Touch with love songs! It'll be love at first Touch,” it gushed, and then, more boldly, “Love comes in all sizes. Let them shoot a love story using iPod nano, or give them a little love to take everywhere with

iPod shuffle.” Come on, Apple. You can do better than this. That email has no artistry; it's just a primal, capitalist cry of “there's an event approaching! Buy our products!”

But what should you get someone for Valentine's Day? I'm a sucker for greetings card holidays and sentimentality, but I can't be alone in thinking that an overpriced MP3 player is not the most appropriate of gifts. Whilst the glare from the screen might temporarily blind your beloved and give you an opportunity to move in for the kiss, it's hard to think of any other meaningful upside to exchanging computer hardware as a symbol of love. What does it say?

“Darling, you make my heart feel like it's on shuffle”? Hmm.

But if we can't ask multinational corporations for our romantic cues and gift ideas, then to whom can we turn? Surely, as in all things, we must look to celebrities. After all, they are the

masters of the overblown romantic gesture. In discussions about Valentine's with my friends, stories involving James Blunt have come up so many times that it would seem odd not to include him in the list of helpless celebrity romantics. His conquests have achieved near-mythical status. Apparently he once showered his girlfriend's house with thousands of roses dropped from a helicopter overhead, filled a bath with champagne to surprise her, and if that wasn't enough, he was also responsible for the cringe-a-long charm extravaganza ‘You're Beautiful’, written about a

real person. Googling has failed to confirm or deny the truth of those first two rumours, but Blunt's song has undeniably transformed romantic gestures the world over. It's the essential soundtrack to a declaration of love. Thanks, James.

In general, I'm suspicious of romantic gestures. Anything dramatic

or expensive is much more of a reflection on the arrogance of the gesturer than on the power of their love. It's just showing off: a multicoloured peacock tail for the

**“Romantic gestures are actually quite threatening.”**

metrosexual, with Valentine's Day as the epicentre of the modern mating ritual. If somebody flew a helicopter over my house and dropped thousands of roses from it, my first instinct would be terror. My second would be to call the police. It's the sort of thing you might expect to find in a Shakespearean sonnet if you'd never actually read one, or the kind of experience you might assume makes a relationship if you'd never progressed further than pulling in Cindies. The romantic gesture is a fantasy that becomes ridiculous and unsavoury as soon as you start to think about it properly. Dramatic

gestures are actually quite threatening, particularly when they're coupled with a marriage proposal; the implication is that if this person has spent so much money and time on proving their love to you, then you owe them something in return. And what could you possibly give? If you retaliate with an even bigger romantic gesture, then you'll be trading expensive surprises for the rest of your relationship. Which probably won't be long.

Usually, I think that trying hard is one of the greatest human virtues. I respect, for instance, an intricate fancy dress costume and a well-decorated birthday cake. A big romantic gesture should be right up my street. But when I imagine what it would be like if somebody actually bought me a necklace worth millions or took me on a surprise trip to Rome, I come over all English: embarrassed and cross. A nice phone call or a letter is much less awkward than a gesture that has taken months of planning and huge expense. And even a rose or a box of chocolates is just a crude caricature of emotion, rather than a deep symbol of affection. So please, keep it simple this Valentine's Day, and remind your chosen one that love can't be summarised in a trinket or a ‘Ta-da!’ And definitely not in an iPod.



JOHN WALLIS

## Through cutbacks to the stars

**NASA is right to fly us beyond the moon**

Obama's recent decision to cancel manned missions to the moon has reopened the perennial “is space exploration worthwhile?” debate. But the event was widely misreported: Obama cancelled the moon missions but increased NASA spending in other areas, including the development of refuelling and robotic technologies that will increase possibilities of missions deeper into space. It's Valentine's Day soon, so it's right that we take a moment to consider how much we really care about that big romantic moon.

Space exploration has long been a focus for conservative critics of ‘big government’ spending in America. Their argument is an easy one to

make. With a shattered economy, major problems in public services as fundamental as education or healthcare, and a deficit mounting into the trillions, what are we doing sending billions of dollars quite literally out of the stratosphere? Since 1969, advances in the grand conquest of ‘the final frontier’ have been negligible, at least in terms of media attention and foreign policy objectives.

The fact that arguments against NASA funding focus almost exclusively on economics mean that they are easy to knock down. Space exploration as a drain on resources is one of the most widely held false beliefs in politics. The reality is that, far from being a burden, NASA's activities are a massive economic boon for the US economy.

For every \$1 that is spent on space, the US treasury makes \$8

back. The enormous revenue from NASA's huge array of patents goes straight back to the Government, not the Space Agency. Then there's the considerable boost to the economy that comes firstly from new technologies (ever used SatNav? Sky TV?) and secondly from providing jobs to thousands of people in the science and technology sector. Even if we did resent any spending at all on NASA, we can at least put things in perspective: in 2007, NASA's total spending was \$7bn. This is peanuts in the context of the US's \$13 trillion economy; the Iraq war costs more per year.

But arguments in favour of space exploration go far beyond tangible economics. We know from

history that exploration and innovation in all its forms have always been major catalysts for progress and advancement of civilisation. When this comes to something as mind-blowing as space, the effect is multiplied infinitely. It is



hard for we who were not alive to realise the full extent of the 1969 moon landing's impact on the world's imagination. Space exploration inspired and inspires generations of children to enter vital spheres of academia and the work force: spheres that cure diseases, preserve the environment, and pull humanity ever forwards into a more exciting future. Socially, space exploration is hugely instrumental in allowing humans to think of each

other – for the first time in history – as a united race, inhabiting one planet among millions. The unprecedented extent of international co-operation in space in the last 20 years (especially the groundbreaking International Space Station) is a testimony to that. We need not even consider potential discoveries as important as extra-terrestrial life, usable resource supplies, or a means of survival if anything disastrous happens to the Earth to see the importance of space exploration.

I applaud Obama's overall recognition of space technology's incalculable importance. So this Valentine's Day, as you and your lover gaze hand in hand moonwards, think of the creative, progressive and inquisitive spirit of humanity, and all that it has done for the species.



# VARSITY

Established in 1947

Issue No 713

Old Examination Hall, Free School Lane, Cambridge, CB2 3RF  
Telephone: 01223 337575 Fax: 01223 760949

## Twilight Zone

The new Research and Training Centre in Children's Literature down at Homerton and the Faculty of Education is promising to create "a favourable scholarly community" based around the impressive-sounding study of the impact of "cultural materials on the ideological development of children". An ambitious ideal indeed, which means that you could finally live out your dreams of gaining a degree by, in some cases, watching Disney films and playing video games.

However, why don't we take it a step further and make Children's Literature a full-blown degree? Whilst your friends are fretting about quantum physics and vector calculus, you could be racking your brains about parent/child relations in *Spot the Dog* or the semiotics of Dr. Seuss. The course could include lectures on a post-structuralist breakdown of *Twilight* and a gender studies seminar series on *The Famous Five*. Or perhaps you'd like to take up approaches to the representation of violence in *Crash Bandicoot* and Marxist readings of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*? Whatever the outcome of Homerton and the Education Faculty's venture, it looks as though *Harry Potter* may be on Cambridge reading lists a few years earlier than expected. So, get to the UL and reserve your copy of *Rupert the Bear* now, before it's too late.

## Yes we said yes we will yes

The results of both of this week's CUSU referenda are highly encouraging. The most exciting thing by far, however, is not the passing of either motion itself, but the record turnout with which these motions were passed. For the first time in the memory of most students here, over 2,000 votes were cast in the NUS affiliation referendum. And although the number of students voting is still a vast minority – 17.5 per cent of the over 20,000 students eligible to cast an online ballot – it is still a good sign, and a tribute to the activism of the campaigns on both sides of the referenda, that the numbers are up this year.

We are convinced that continued NUS affiliation is a positive thing. Membership of the NUS links us to a wider body of student involvement on the national scene, and could even allow the most resourceful among us to participate actively in the continual formation a body which – if the 'NO' campaigners are to be believed – still needs quite a bit of reform. And there is no question that the newly-passed welfare measures will be a boon to the entire student population. As our mental health investigation in the first issue of term showed, there is a pressing need for constructive welfare workers in Cambridge; we hope that this week's welfare referendum has helped to draw attention to the resources available to students now, and those which will be made available, thanks to student support, in the future.



OLLY WATSON

## Letters to the Editor

Benny Morris gets it wrong: no-one called for him to be banned. Hosting someone on campus who espouses such vile opinions will



naturally invite an expression of opposition. That Morris rather tellingly feels the need to blame "Muslim-Arab pressures" is a misrepresentation of a small, principled protest by students and staff of diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, Rob Mindell's claim that the Israel Society showed "an unprecedented amount of compassion and consideration" in cancelling the talk sounds like damage limitation. Mindell says there have been "countless" 'anti-Jewish' talks in the past year – though fails to give one example – and thus suggests that it is the Israel Society that has "now" ushered in an "atmosphere of cooperation". It might be worth

pointing out then, that the Israel Society were the ones who actually invited Morris, and had no problem hosting an anti-Arab racist until objections were voiced.

**Ben White**  
Churchill alumnus

It's always a shame when prejudice rears its ugly head so close to home. Especially when home is King's, which I like to believe has a reputation for tolerance. I certainly think that with the incipient threat of the BNP and even Cambridge's recent outbreaks of homophobia we can't afford to let our guard down. My own keen sense of injustice was set off recently to such an extent that I couldn't think of anything to do other than write a very stiff letter. In my experience, prejudice like this should be met with exposure. It all began when one particular artist decided to create a 'girls only' life drawing class in which the artists would take it in turns to be models. Well, never have I come across more blatant sexism in my life! It's just like primary school all over again! I find it hard to believe that in such an age of equality, I should be banned from watching naked women if I want to. What's more, all the girls

seem quite smug that they've got their little 'no boys allowed' club, expressing what seems to verge on glee in telling me that I can't come. Well, I haven't met such immature exclusion since primary school; it's as if they think they'll get boy germs. I ought to start a campaign really. Maybe I will. If I should like to see girls at my College naked then I should be perfectly at liberty to do so.

**Angus MacDonald**  
King's

I just read *Varsity's* cover story regarding Benny Morris having his talk cancelled under a charge of "Islamophobia". This ludicrous neologism is long overdue for critical dissection and destruction. All religions make huge unsupported claims for themselves, and Islam more than most. That's their right, but they cannot then demand that they be free from criticism.

**Hugo Schmidt**  
Department of Biochemistry

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

## Overrated

### Week 5: Cupid



It is commonly and complacently said that we live in a secular society. Our society has never attempted such an experiment. What we have really

achieved is a heavily deregulated polytheism. Democracy, Stephen Fry, Youth, Charles Darwin, Diversity, Mammon, the Free Market, Thom Yorke, Bacchus, the Subconscious and a chastened Barack Obama wander around the modern Mount Olympus in great confusion. This week, inevitably, our thoughts turn to Cupid, one of the oldest members of the group.

The early details of his biography do not inspire confidence. The Greeks alleged that Cupid (whom they called Eros) had emerged fully-formed out of the Chaos which originally swirled before everything that is, but the harder-headed historians have recognised that this story is a myth. He was in fact born several centuries BC, the

son of Venus and Mercury. His role in the fiasco of Troy has never been fully explained, but his disreputable part in the Dido-Aeneas scandal is well known. One might conclude from those incidents that Cupid inherited his mother's impulsiveness and his father's alarming lust for power. Like both his parents, he became something of a cult figure.

The cult survives. It has been pointed out that when a man says, "I did it because I was in love," he has quite a different tone to if he had said, "I did it because I was afraid" or "I did it because I was angry". Being caught between the eyes by one of Cupid's arrows is spoken of as if it were an achievement to be proud of, rather than a normal result of taking a stroll in

the forest.

The poet Lady Mary Wroth claimed to have met Cupid among woodland scenery in the early seventeenth century – a rare and comparatively recent sighting. We know from Wroth's account that by this stage of his life a bedraggled Cupid had taken to wandering around underdressed and in tears, bumping into trees thanks to his blindness. And we would do well to remember how pathetic Cupid can be. He is the boy who never grew up or got past the excitement of bows and arrows. As long as Cupid has our sympathy and our respect, he is relatively harmless. It is when we make him into a god that his arrows become poisonous.

But Cupid is a master of public

relations, and his favourite medium is music. He knows how easy it is to get people to treat him as a god, and that musicians, sharing his egotism, will help his campaign. The Beatles claimed that Cupid was all you need. Joy Division announced that Cupid would tear them apart. Imagine how much less impressively tragic "Irritation will tear us apart" or "Selfishness will tear us apart" would have sounded. What both bands forgot is that Cupid, for all his charms, cannot fend for himself. Somebody has to change his nappy. Cupid may have supernatural power, but if he refuses to submit to a higher one, the smell will get worse and worse and it will be harder and harder to look him in the eye. **TASH DENNICH**



THE VALENTINE ESSAY

# In praise of romantic fiction

I'm going to a friend's house for dinner next Saturday, and she's just sent me an email to check she's remembered correctly that I don't like mushrooms. I don't. I don't like blue cheese either. Or red wine – the very thought of it makes my mouth pucker with the remembered taste. I don't feel ashamed about these likes and dislikes. I have no guilt that I prefer a chilled Pinot Grigio to a gutsy Merlot. It's just my taste. My personal quirks are part of what make me myself and I see no reason to apologise for them.

So why is reading different? There can be no doubt that there is an underlying feeling that what you read is not simply a matter of taste, as if you might judge someone's intelligence or moral probity by their choice of reading material. As a novelist I'm sometimes told by a reader how much they enjoyed one of my books, before slipping in a guilty let out clause that they "don't usually read that sort of thing."

Yes. I write "that sort of thing." I write contemporary women's

**"My novels, and others like them, aren't going to stretch your brain – but why should they?"**

fiction. It's a wide field, and could include Anne Tyler or Carol Shields. It could also include straightforward romances, such as those published by Mills and Boon, or what's variously known in the business as chick-lit, hen-lit, saga, rom-com or relationship novels. I like to place my books vaguely in the relationship category and hope they're well written, but the absolute certainty is that I am writing commercial fiction, not literary. I write to entertain. I write popular fiction, and I don't think writing unpopular fiction would be in any way better for me, or you, for that matter.

I write - I hope - the sort of book you can pick up after a hard day's work and be transported to a place that's fun to be in. For a short time you can forget about the essay that needs writing, the bad supervision, your overdraft and student loan, and instead become part of a world where characters may struggle and make bad choices but it will all come good in the end. Some of my novels are more romantic than others but they've all got happy endings, whether that comes with a kiss or not.

My novels, and others like them, aren't going to stretch your brain – but why should they? That's



Contemporary women's fiction deserves our respect, writes **Sarah Duncan**. It's the biggest-selling genre in the UK – and it's delicious with a glass of wine

not what they're designed to do, although I have to admit I hope my readers enjoy learning a bit about a range of subjects such as eighteenth-century symbolic landscape gardens, Shakespearean cue-scripts or the properties of Roman concrete, all of which have formed the backgrounds to my novels.

You could say they're the equivalent of fish pie: comforting to eat at the end of a tiring day, neither empty calories nor exquisite haute cuisine, but good, solid nourishment that slips down easily.

Perhaps that's part of the problem. We confuse the ease of reading with the ease of writing and therefore value the novel less, but it takes skill and hard work to write something that reads effortlessly.

When I went to my first meeting of the Romantic Novelists Association I was surprised by the authors I met. It became clear that the

**"We confuse the ease of reading with the ease of writing and therefore value the novel less, but it takes hard work to write something that reads effortlessly."**

more light - and, dare I say, fluffy - a book was, the more formidable

the author. At that first meeting I met an economic adviser to the World Bank, a consultant radiologist and a member of the Civil Service selection board, all of whom wrote romantic novels for Mills & Boon as the antidote to their high-powered careers. I myself run an academic career alongside my novel writing, teaching at Bristol University and The University of Oxford.

Maybe it's a hangover from the Protestant work ethic that means reading cannot be viewed simply as entertainment, but has to be educational or improving in some way. The more difficult it is, the more educational or improving it must be. Weetabix without sugar comes to mind.

All genre writing comes in for a similar range of sneery comments, but women's fiction seems singled out for particular disdain, hardly mentioned on the review pages despite being the single largest selling genre in both the UK and the USA. Crime fiction, the next biggest genre, has achieved respectability and gets review coverage that reflects this. Historical fiction, long in the literary doldrums, has suddenly shot ahead with the majority of the 2009 Booker Prize short list being classed as historical fiction.

Yet still women's fiction languishes, propping up the publishing industry yet ignored by the media and a guilty secret for many readers. Could there be a clue in the title?

Pick up any broadsheet and count the number of male reviewers and male authors whose books are reviewed, then compare that with the number of female reviewers and female authors if you don't believe that sexism is rife in the worlds of literature and media. The arguments for the Orange Prize

for Fiction, which is only open to women writers, have been well rehearsed and still stand, fifteen years after the award was set up.

The feminist in me is appalled, but the writer... well, this writer

**"Women's fiction is singled out for particular disdain, hardly mentioned in the review pages."**

shrugs her shoulders. To be honest, I prefer to read books about subjects that appeal to me, and because I'm interested in relationships and how people work together in situations that reflect my own experience, I tend to read books by women with female characters placed centre stage. That's not to say I can't, won't or don't read books by men or women about other subjects, or books that challenge or stretch me. Of course I do. But when I want to read for relaxation or sheer entertainment, I prefer women's fiction.

There's no guilt or shame attached to that choice. Choosing fish pie at home tonight doesn't mean I won't appreciate a gourmet meal at a five star restaurant tomorrow. It's about preference, about personal taste.

So, pass me that glass of Pinot Grigio, and happy reading.

Sarah Duncan's novel, *A Single to Rome*, has been longlisted for Romantic Novel of the Year. For more information on her work, visit [www.sarahduncan.co.uk](http://www.sarahduncan.co.uk)

## Hot-Sci



### The smell of love

'I don't know the question, but sex is definitely the answer,' Woody Allen famously said. The fact that there is a huge and booming industry revolving entirely around sex, or, more specifically, how to increase your likelihood of having more of it, testifies that we as a society are... well, slightly sex-obsessed.

There is a huge perfume industry that claims to manufacture "powerful aphrodisiac" scents laced with pheromones that guarantee "more dates, more sex, more fun". The implication is that adding a specific chemical or chemicals to a perfume or cologne that you spray onto your skin will result in an avalanche of interest from the opposite sex.

The idea to sell this perfume came from the general assumption that pheromones are somehow involved in the pulling process, but this assumption is reinforced by no peer-reviewed research whatsoever. In 2002, a research group at San Francisco State University published a paper called 'Pheromonal influences on sociosexual behavior in young women', which supposedly concluded that pheromones had an effect on the sexual lives of the women involved when their experiences were compared with a placebo group.

The fact that so many inconsistencies were involved – the number of placebo and pheromone subjects, plus the height, physical appearance, sexual habits, sexual history, ethnicity of the subjects, and even the small sample size, a mere 36 – means that this research has not been labelled conclusive. So far, similar papers are inconclusive for similar reasons.

Some scientifically credible work investigating mice at Harvard University in 2002, and flies at the University of Toronto in 2009, has shown that knocking out either the ability to detect pheromones or the ability to produce them actually encourages sexual attraction from the same sex. In other words, pheromones were shown to repulse animals of the same sex, rather than attracting animals of the opposite sex. But, in short, there is no evidence that pheromone perfume will help you get laid this Valentine's Day.

SITA DINANAUTH



# The Varsity Trust

Take your passion for journalism **further...**

A major scholarship and/or bursary may be awarded to students graduating from the University of Cambridge or Anglia Ruskin University who are about to undertake an approved course in journalism in the coming academic year.

For further details on the Trust and to check eligibility, visit [www.varsitytrust.org.uk](http://www.varsitytrust.org.uk), or email [trust@varsity.co.uk](mailto:trust@varsity.co.uk) for an information pack.

**Deadline for Applications:**  
**April 26th 2010**

VARSITY

The Varsity Trust offers funding to students planning to undertake journalism courses in 2010-2011.  
Registered Charity No. 1012847



# lyrics

xviii jesus lane, the shop  
8pm, friday 12th february 2010

The *mays xviii* presents *mayslyrics*, a new literary/acoustic experiment: writers read their work, then musicians reinterpret those words into songs created especially for the project. A week and a half before the date of the event, composers were handed an anonymous piece of writing. Mission: transform this into music.

Come and watch the results, and the writers' own readings, whilst reclining on a cushion and drinking tea. Bring rugs! Bring cushions! Bring your friends! Bring your ears! Whatever you do, just don't miss this exciting night – **tonight** at The Shop.

**Musicians:** Zygmunt Day, Ellie Kendrick, Guy Kiddey, Aki Laakso, Peter Leggatt, Edie Lobo, Andrew MacFarlane, Sophie Sawicka & John Wallis

**Writers:** James Coghill, Donald Futers, Ellie Kendrick, Matt Lewandowski, Amber Medland, Decca Muldowney, Harriet Moore, Jen Rouse, Kevin Sexton & Colin McSwiggen

**the  
mays**

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



FRIDAY FEBRUARY 12<sup>TH</sup> 2010

# V2

## The Varsity Magazine

FEATURES, ARTS, FASHION & REVIEWS



# Will 2K

SHAKESPEARE AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN HIM BEFORE

Plus Victoria Beale p14, Fashion p16-17 and Arts Comment p22



# Victoria Beale: Self-Help

## Week 5: The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

The kind of person forward-thinking enough to buy a book telling them how to organise their life successfully will probably already be doing a pretty good job. This is the reason why mother owns all the self-help books whose titles I use for my columns. Every turn of the page is for her another affirmation; “But I already rise at five thirty to greet the dawn”; “Well, I’ve never eaten anything other than brown rice and kelp”; “I think you’ll find psychiatry counts as sending you to an after school activity.” The trouble with all of these books is that they presume a shared vision of the ideal human; their apex of perfection is someone repeating their mantra as they scrub down with grit and run through the fens. A person who tends bonsai trees, collects inspirational fridge magnets and tells you they cherish you. But the people I admire the most all have

train wrecks of lives – boozed, sluttified, dizzy existences where their greatest work was incidental to their larger business of royally fucking up. Relationships are an excellent example of when I know it makes sense to follow the plodding wisdom of Stephen Covey, author of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, but I’d rather think WWETD (what would Elizabeth Taylor do?). So Covey’s advice in a vicious argument would be “Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood” (Habit 5). Liz Taylor’s approach would be less about empathy and more about calmly raising a bottle of gin above her head, pitching it to smash millimetres from her lover’s skull, before walking out of the room, diamonds tinkling, purring “fix me a drink, darling.” Why get married once to someone you might have a reasonable shot with, when you can spend

the better part of three decades toying with the affections of Oscar winners, senators and, latterly, a construction worker. Your husband dies? Elizabeth says don’t waste time mourning, put on a low cut frock and marry his best friend. Don’t choose Prince Charming, you end up like Grace Kelly. Instead, marry every time there’s a pause in conversation and you’ll live to be a hundred years old, a distinguished prune dripping with rubies, telling jokes that make your grandkids faint. I feel much the same about the world of work. What’s the point of signing up to pen pushing for the Man, or trying to (He won’t return my calls) when you could be a professional drop out. One of my friends has won a place to study at Berkeley in California next academic year. Has her story inspired me to graduate learning, to follow my dreams, to marry someone for a green card? Well, no, I’m just going to sleep on



KATHERINE SPENCE

her floor for nine months, occasionally going out in my PJs to forage for drugs and Twinkies, which I understand to be the American College Experience. Then I’ll travel to New York on a Greyhound Bus, blasting Simon & Garfunkel out of my headphones, to find work as a performance artist. I’ll fashion a hut from marshmallows and hypodermic needles and move it into the Metropolitan Museum, titling it *My Nest* and wait for the plaudits to roll

in. Once I’ve made my mark on the Manhattan art scene I’ll move back to London, staying in a commune to write my memoirs. I’ll publish to great acclaim and live out the rest of my ethanol-y days in a stately home, swimming in the fountain and campaigning to bring back the fax machine. Why be ‘Effective’ when you can live the dream.

**W** ‘Self-Help’ and ‘Zeitgeist Tape’ archives online now.

**HOT**

**VAMPIRE WEEKEND** First independently-managed band to top the Billboard charts. Played triumphant show in Cambridge (see Reviews). We’re in love.

**VALENTINE’S DAY** You’re either desperate and single or

**ANDRE LEON TALLEY** The Aretha Franklin of fat male Vogue fashionistas will be the next guest judge on reality show America’s Next Top Model. Time to sashay...

**SARAH PALIN** Returned to speak at the Tea Party convention, complete with Cliff Notes on her palm. At least she spelled everything right.

**SHORT HAILSTORM** Lasted for about fifteen minutes on Tuesday. We want our freak weather to last for at least twenty.

**SOFT DRINKS** New study out shows that drinking two or more a week carries 87% increased risk of developing cancer. Drink beer instead.

**MY WAY** At least half a dozen karaoke warblers in the Philippines have been killed in fights over the past decade after singing the Sinatra classic. All together now...

**ALASTAIR CAMPBELL** Cried on the Andrew Marr show...while defending Blair. Give this man an Oscar.

**DOUBLE PARKING BIKES** In a rush for lectures? No other spots? Don’t do it, people of Cambridge!

**NOT**

Street Profile

**TERRY G**  
50, PURVEYOR OF SAUSAGES

**Which words do you most overuse?**  
Marvellous.

**If you weren’t in Cambridge, where would you like to be?**  
South Africa.

**What is Cambridge to you?**  
Just a town.

**What’s hot?**  
Sausages.

**What’s not?**  
Rude People.

**What is your guiltiest pleasure?**  
Smoking.

**Tell us a secret about yourself**  
Then it wouldn’t be a secret.

**What do you dream of?**  
I don’t generally dream a lot.

**And finally, dogs or cats?**  
Cats.

Week 5: All the Single Lads

**Fever Ray - ‘If I Had A Heart’**  
Valentine’s Day. Horrible, horrible day. Last year you promised yourself you’d have a girlfriend by now. Cursing Cupid, you go back to bed.

**Haddaway - ‘What Is Love?’**  
You weren’t always so cynical. RAG Blind Date went well: your partner said she’d see you again, before she dropped out to join the circus.

**The Smiths - ‘Heaven Knows I’m Miserable Now’**  
Walking through King’s has never been so nauseating. Couples everywhere. Holding hands. Smiling. Cuddling. Kissing. Walking dogs. Vom.

**Bon Iver - ‘Flume’**  
Back at College you check your pigeon hole. A Card? For you?! Oh, that handwriting’s your mother’s. She always does that.

**Joy Division - ‘Love Will Tear Us Apart’**  
Registering for russianbrides.com to the rhythmic accompaniment of your neighbours banging next door, by 14th February 2011 you WILL be engaged. DEFINITELY.

**Our Tube**

SEARCH:  
wes+anderson+spiderman

Now that Columbia Pictures have scrapped plans for Spiderman 4 and ditched the cast and director of the first trilogy, there’s a new gap in the market. Step forward, Wes Anderson.

Overheard

**“I’ve got your drugs. But I have to go to Sam Smiley’s first.”**  
(12pm, on the phone, Sidgwick Site)



# Dream Date or Big Hate?



**Name:**  
Charlie Gilmour  
**College:**  
Girton  
**Subject and Year:**  
History, first year  
**First Impressions?**  
Beautiful, like a porcelain doll.  
**What did you talk about?**  
Fate, destiny, curses, evil gypsies, LSD.  
**Any awkward moments?**  
When I told her a gypsy fortune teller cursed me.  
**Fancy a second date?**  
Yes.  
**Marks out of 10:**  
8

**Name:**  
Chloe  
(Queen of Swords)  
**College:**  
Fitzwilliam  
**Subject and Year:**  
Medicine, third year  
**First Impressions?**  
Finally.  
**What did you talk about?**  
Acid and gypsies.  
**Any awkward moments?**  
When he said a gypsy predicted he'd meet me.  
**Fancy a second date?**  
Why not?  
**Marks out of 10**  
8

"Roses are red  
Tomatoes are too  
I'll bribe you £10  
For a Cambridge Blue"

And so was the story of another successful RAG Blind Date. On Tuesday evening hundreds of undergrads flocked to the bars, restaurants and clubs of Cambridge, seeking romance, life-long companionship or simply a story to tell. All for charity, of course. *Varsity* crashed the festivities to discover a lot of love in this town.



**Name:**  
Izzi Savill  
**College:**  
Fitzwilliam  
**Subject and Year:**  
Classics, second year  
**First Impressions?**  
Better than everyone else's.  
**What did you talk about?**  
Embarrassing stories.  
**Any awkward moments?**  
Filling in these forms.  
**Fancy a second date?**  
I'm sure I'll see him around.  
**Marks out of 10:**  
11

**Name:**  
Max Smithwick  
**College:**  
Magdalene  
**Subject and Year:**  
History, second year  
**First Impressions?**  
Albino (but one of the pretty ones).  
**What did you talk about?**  
Not sure. It was so inane I can't remember.  
**Awkward moments?**  
Filling this form in.  
**Fancy a second date?**  
You'd have to ask her boyfriend.  
**Marks out of 10:**  
10



**Name:**  
Cathy Bueker  
**College:**  
King's  
**Subject and Year:**  
English, second year  
**First Impressions?**  
A good-humoured, jovial fellow.  
**What did you talk about?**  
Politics, food, families, studying. A wide range of topics.  
**Any awkward moments?**  
Not really.  
**Fancy a second date?**  
Sure.  
**Marks out of 10:**  
7

**Name:**  
James Craif  
**College:**  
St Catharine's  
**Subject and Year:**  
NatSci, third year  
**First Impressions?**  
Far more normal than her Facebook profile suggested.  
**What did you talk about?**  
Troubled childhoods, politics, curries.  
**Any awkward moments?**  
No.  
**Fancy a second date?**  
As a friend.  
**Marks out of 10:**  
8 (She was very interesting!)



**Name:**  
Neeraj Patel  
**College:**  
Fitzwilliam  
**Subject and Year:**  
Economics, fourth year  
**First Impressions?**  
Great.  
**What did you talk about?**  
Korean pop.  
**Any awkward moments?**  
Maybe at the bar.  
**Fancy a second date?**  
Sure.  
**Marks out of 10**  
7

**Name:**  
James Kemp  
**College:**  
Robinson  
**Subject and Year:**  
Law, second year  
**First Impressions?**  
Great to talk to - lots in common.  
**What did you talk about?**  
Korean pop music and ugly people at the bar.  
**Any awkward moments?**  
Surprisingly not.  
**Fancy a second date?**  
Yeah!  
**Marks out of 10**  
7



Nina wears jacket from Reiss, leotard and sequin shorts from Topshop, tights from M&S, shoes from Prada. Will wears jeans from Urban Outfitters, waistcoat from Brick Lane market. Photographer: Zing Tseng. Assistant: Michael Derringer. Illustration: Argyro Nicolaou







Charlie wears jacket from Tatty Devine, scarf model's own, jeans from All Saints, boots from All Saints, Rose wears great coat from Angel's Costumiers, shirt from YSL, leggings from H&M, earring from Urban Outfitters, boots from All Saints



# The fastest painter in the West

Birmingham's **Ian Cook** has brought an artistic edge to the world of motorsport. He talks to **Matthew Symington** about painting with tyres and how brushes are overrated

For GCSE Art & Design I once had to paint a canvas full of things representing rock and roll. To add life to the piece I managed to glue a vinyl and some drumsticks to the page, firm in the belief that this exhibition of devil-may-care insurrectionism would turn the art establishment on its head. This might help to indicate why when I heard about an artist who made his living by driving toy cars across a canvas I was more surprised than most.

Presumably at GCSE level Ian Cook was expounding the virtues of Rothko and making sculptures out of cigarettes. Now twenty-six, the Brummie's inventive, perhaps facetious, qualities haven't been eroded: "I came up with the idea of using radio-controlled cars to paint when my girlfriend bought me a radio-controlled car for Christmas and told me not get any paint on it." Ex-girlfriend that is.

Cook, who studied at the Winchester School of Art, has been developing his craft for two years. "I started off just dipping the tyres in paint and doing circles, then shapes, and it grew from that. The first real image I did was Pudsey Bear for the BBC; from there I went into portraits, logos and eventually cars."

Ian calls this style PopBang Colour, and for the last eighteen months it has found a welcoming home in the world of motorsport. When

I met Ian he was painting cars at the Rally Great Britain in Cardiff; within a week he was in Abu Dhabi for the city's first Grand Prix.

When asked why the sport has been so forthcoming with commissions: "Mostly I think people like watching the paintings being made. It's like a kind of street art where you see the image being produced before you; I guess it's essentially a performance!"

Ian's greatest performance came last October when he was commissioned by Reebok to paint a portrait of Lewis Hamilton to be hung on the Tower Bridge in London. "I was approached by them to do a project so I went to London to discuss it and we came up with the idea of using my style of painting to create a 12m high portrait of Lewis Hamilton in the run-up to the Brazilian Grand Prix."

"The whole thing was very surreal. I was given a week to create it, I worked fourteen hours a day for seven days and at no point was a brush used." The media interest in the painting surprised even Ian's sponsors, as TV crews from Poland, Germany, Italy and the U.S. descended on Tower Bridge to cover the unravelling, which appeared in CNN's bulletin just after the Superbowl.

"It certainly opened up doors for me," Ian admits, "When I first started this artwork



I was teaching. It meant I could go full time. Had you said to me back then that I'd be flown out to Abu Dhabi to create paintings for their first Grand Prix I'd have laughed at you. But my proudest achievement was being able to afford my new van!"

Cook is now thinking on a more human-sized scale for his art. "When I paint I generally get paint all over my clothes, and

its crazy just how many people want a T-shirt with paint splattered across it, so that's an area I'm looking into. I'm already helping to design footwear with a company and Reebok have been in touch about clothing."

Cook's success is well-deserved, with his paintings representing motion and energy better than anything I've seen. But who knows - I got a C in art.

# Human rights and the preventionist myth

Ruth Graham and Catherine Lough talk to human rights activist and lawyer **Clive Stafford Smith** about the myths surrounding the war on terror

"Out of the seven times I've been held up at gun point, I've only been hurt once. That's because I wasn't speaking the right language. After the first time, I knew how to handle it. 'Look, I'm a defence lawyer. Shoot a fucking prosecutor - you may need me later,' I said, and the other six times they let me off. Once they even gave me my wallet back."

I don't know what I was expecting from human rights lawyer Clive Stafford Smith,



but this certainly wasn't it. He was going to talk about the death penalty, but casually let drop (two minutes before the debate) that he would instead be discussing "what's pissed me off this week." He threatened to heckle Union President Jon Laurence if he introduced him with the usual "serious stuff," and got Hannah Perry (Cambridge Amnesty Chair) singing 'Come Little Rabbit'.

This may sound ridiculous, but there was a purpose to it all. The gun story illustrated that language matters. "What's pissed me off" was a whole range of human rights issues, while 'Come Little Rabbit' was the song mentally ill Akmal Shaikh thought would be a worldwide number one hit. He was executed in China on December 29th 2009. All of this was characteristic of Clive's speech - humorous, warm-hearted, but ultimately with a crucial point to be made.

The most surprising thing that Clive demonstrated was the sheer stupidity of the CIA in the 'war on terror'. In one case they put a Saudi fourteen-year-old in Guantanamo, based on a misinterpretation of the Arabic word for tomatoes. (It is the same as the Yemeni-Arabic word for money, so they became convinced he was a budding al-Qaeda financier). Nor did they bother to retrieve his birth certificate, telling Clive that he just 'looked young' for their supposed 26. Another fearsome terror suspect was Amanatullah Ali, a Shia rice merchant and father of five, kidnapped (euphemistically described as rendition) by the British and sent to Bagram in 2004,

while on a pilgrimage during the holy month of Muharram. The UK Government later claimed he had been involved in Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, incidentally a Sunni militant group. Ali, who has never seen his youngest child, remains at Bagram, the base Clive describes as "Guantanamo's evil twin." Guantanamo has 195 prisoners; Bagram has over 700, none of whom has ever seen a lawyer.

Clive acknowledges that not all terror suspects will be innocent. However, of the 42 cases Reprieve has got to court, 83% have been acquitted of all charges. That's a lot of innocent people locked away - and in some cases tortured - for no reason. Disturbingly, the UK Government is hugely complicit in illegal rendition, covering up their actions on the grounds of 'security' because they will embarrass them. The highlight for me was when Juan De Francisco (dead nice bloke, Union Ents Officer next term) asked the 'ticking time-bomb' question. You know the one, where a hypothetical terrorist has the answer to the whereabouts of a hypothetical bomb. And you, the hypothetical investigator, have the choice of torturing said terrorist, in order to save hundreds of lives. Article three of the UNDHR (no one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment) vs. the lives of a community, if you will. For this reason many people say torture is okay. Water boarding in Guantanamo is okay. Putting a razor blade to someone's genitals is okay, as happened to Binyam Mohamed, one of Clive's clients. But whilst I

was faffing about trying to find an abstract rebuttal about the importance of maintaining human rights in all circumstances, Clive had a much better answer, namely that this situation has never occurred, and nor will it ever. At some point, the Bush administration, and many governments aside, decided that it was okay to abuse human rights, the excuse being that it will make us safer. But realistically, when has torture ever, and I mean ever, resulted in discovering that ticking bomb? Email Clive (see the Reprieve website) if you think of a case; he'd be delighted to hear from you.

As for the hypocrisy of invading Iraq to protect human rights, whilst trampling on those at home (28 days, anyone?), as Clive said, "hypocrisy is the yeast of terrorism." A CIA agent once told Clive he was sure that "for every person taken to Guantanamo, at least ten terrorists are created on the outside." I don't know about you but I'm certainly left asking, what the hell was the point of it all? Through compromising on civil liberties and adopting aggressive foreign policy tactics, we simply make the situation more dangerous. The idea that abusing human rights will bring us closer to safety is "the myth that justifies the nightmare." All I can say is that for those entrapped in the 'legal' system, still incarcerated in Guantanamo, or its "evil twin," Bagram; there is at least one man fighting their corner.

Join Amnesty and Reprieve to campaign against human rights abuses worldwide.



ISABEL PERRY

## St John's

TUESDAY 15TH

**Theme:** Launching late on March 6th.

**Expect:** The usual rivalry

with Trinity ensures John's go all out – last year's fireworks were pretty awesome and the food was almost worth the wait. However, given that next year is a big anniversary and the budget is rumoured to be big, it might be a slightly quieter year.

**Rumours:** John Major working behind one of the bars – we're not sure it'll be that funny.

## Sidney Sussex

WEDNESDAY 16TH

**Theme:** La Serenissima... we couldn't really pronounce it either, but it means Venice (probably minus the canals).

**Expect:** Sidney's biennial ball might be the best small ball in May Week – 2008's ball got high marks all round. Just imagine Sidney Bar has won *The Weakest Link*, copped off with Anne

Robinson and is having a party to celebrate.

**Rumours:** Some UK garage; fingers crossed for Craig David.

## Robinson

FRIDAY 11TH

**Theme:** Folie d'une Nuit. Yes, another Parisian theme; this time it's Paris by night. Though we suspect that even in the dark, Robinson won't pass for Paris.

**Expect:** Robinson are pushing food as their major selling point. That said, it's a snip at £70 and is not a bad warm-up to a more lavish week.

**Rumours:** Tony Robinson of *Blackadder* fame and Paul Robinson, former England goalie, go head-to-head in a bout of chess-boxing.

## Clare

MONDAY 14TH

**Theme:** Scheherazade. She's a Persian queen. Consequently you can expect a sort of upmarket Fez kind of thing.

**Expect:** Clare is one of the University's most beautiful Colleges, so no doubt the whole thing will look lovely. What's more, Clare's done a good line in Ents in the past and the trend looks set to continue.

**Rumours:** Former Union President and BBC sports reporter Clare Balding reports on the ball whilst galloping on a handsome steed.

## Jesus

MONDAY 14TH

**Theme:** A Night at the Circus, gaudy novelties, assorted splendid freaks and a lot of talk about a 'Big Top'. The 'greatest show on earth', apparently.

**Expect:** A good range of live music and DJ sets, plus a lot of roving performers. Generally, Jesus is a safe pair of hands when it comes to having a good time.

**Rumours:** The Messiah himself returns to play ringmaster in the Big Top.

## St Catharine's

WEDNESDAY 16TH

**Theme:** Make Believe. Not that you can tell from the publicity, which is basically illegible.

**Expect:** Banging DJ sets and a pretty intimate atmosphere. On the same night as Sidney and offers a similar deal for two pounds more. The words 'unusual' and 'imaginative' feature heavily.

**Rumours:** Old boys Jeremy Paxman and Sir Ian McKellen put together a two-man cabaret act called NewsKnight.

## Christ's

TUESDAY 15TH

**Theme:** L'Esprit Nouveau, the splendour of 1920s Paris.

**Expect:** A number of 'fantastic bands' and more inflatables and entertainments than ever before.

**Rumours:** Shirley Bassey, and Sneezing Panda.

# May Ball, Maybe?

We round up the post-exam summer festivities and see what's worth splashing the cash





# All the World's a Web Page

Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter... **Emma Finn and Jack Jeffries** discover that even Shakespeare can't escape the internet generation

How ironic. Coming to discover more about literature's next step into the World Wide Web, we found ourselves descending not into a buzzy computer filled office but into a dimly lit kitchen, complete with the offer of cookies. Declining this, for fear of spraying the team with their own baked goods during questioning, we got down to the ins, outs and implications of a new Wikipedia-type website offering: *www.openshakespeare.org*

Huddled round the table were the brains behind the Open Shakespeare project, a website developed under the auspices of the Open Knowledge Foundation. The OKF is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to promoting the use, reuse and redistribution of information, aiming to provide the public with open access to valuable resources. Rufus Pollock, Fellow of Emmanuel College, has been working with current university undergraduates to develop the Open Shakespeare website, an initiative dedicated to, "bringing together technology and the text in interesting ways". Shakespeare's works in their entirety have been uploaded to the website along with tools allowing users to explore the texts and home in on specific interests. Viewing different editions side-by-side or the capacity to search for particular terms, words or characters aims to shed new light on works that have, let's face it, been exhaustively analysed.

One of the principal innovations of this particular project is the opening up of an interactive online community where Shakespeare buffs of all kinds can engage in the collaborative exchange of ideas on the works of our most revered cultural hero. To this end, the website provides the means to annotate the Bard's plays, offering a plethora of individual interpretations and criticisms. But what are the virtues of a democratic Shakespeare? Variety, perhaps, seems the most obvious answer: "In a community like this, contributors may have read a lot of different critical editions, meaning a Medievalist, for example, could comment alongside an early modern specialist", explains Colette Sensier, a third year English student. This

creates a melting pot for different readings and helps to add a depth of appreciation to such a fertile body of work.

Variety does not mean, however, that works which are commonly considered a national heritage will be inundated with vapid 'spam'. There is in the madness. A peer review system is intended, allowing people to disagree and edit each other's comments; "though we want anyone to be able to edit, that does not mean we want a cacophony". Aware of a generation raised on Facebook, the team are making filtering and tagging tools readily available in order to refine users'

searches based on author and content. This type of innovation epitomises the efforts of the team to tap in to the contemporary mindset and overcome the phenomenal restrictions of printed texts.

So, is the arrival of new editing tools such as Open Shakespeare another nail in the coffin of the traditional publication? Pollock admits that there can be "an antagonistic relationship" between the printed word and high-tech tools such as his, but suggests, "at the same time they complement one another." Adam Green, a NatSci physicist, adds that few people can abide reading a large amount of text on screen and that he doubts he'll ever stop buying books, claiming he would be "horried at the prospect of the entire English faculty sat doing statistical analysis". Creativity is certainly not absent from the functions of the website however. A device, which Pollock terms "an anthologisation engine", will enable browsers to draw together selected passages or entire plays for printing, so generating a personalised compilation. This may be of

particular interest to the thespians amongst us, as the specification tools will be an indispensable asset in finding audition speeches.

Such personalisation harks back to the printing industry of Shakespeare's day, when a "nominal fee" could be paid for the replication of a desired document, without fear of contract or copyright laws. The future of projects like Open Shakespeare rely upon this kind of freedom to edit and redistribute material, and one of the team's primary motivations is to circumvent the inaccessibility of the majority of literary criticism. As copyright protection on older critical essays expires however, there is nothing to stop their inclusion in the website's collection. Modern licensing laws are, after all, being forced to change in light of the ever-increasing freedom which technology affords. Comparisons with the music industry are hard to avoid: the proliferation of file-sharing and the evident shift away from traditional sources of revenue may well emerge in the literary sphere, as authors and publishers adapt to changing circumstance. In any case, Pollock explains that the current system of publication is "fundamentally not working," perhaps because audiences have had a taste of a much greater level of freedom in other areas of cultural consumption. User-defined payment surfaced in the music business with pioneering bands such as Radiohead. This system of interactive financial remuneration encourages an artistic meritocracy.

The Open Shakespeare team is optimistic that contemporary authors will become increasingly happy to engage with these new developments. Perhaps Open Rushdie next? The innovative ideas of the group are slowly being realised as a

result of the dedication of the volunteers, but the scale of their ambition means that their goals will only be fulfilled with the help and involvement of others, in everything from programming to critical commentary. Volunteers wanted please.

To get involved, contact  
open-shakespeare@okfn.org



MARTHA RAWLINSON





# The Fraudulent Footlight

Alex Owen and Alex Lass talk to Tim Key, self-styled writer, performer, drinker, ball-winning midfield-player and unsightly beast, about his comedy, poetry and 'time' at Cambridge

Tim Key – poet, savant, imposter and sometime slut is Cambridge's most recent comedy success story. But for all that, you might still not of heard of him, probably because you're a blundering ignoramus whose idea of a good laugh starts in *The Mahal* and ends up in Addenbrooke's.

Most recently, Key won the 2009 Edinburgh Comedy Award (formerly the Perrier award) for his one-man show *The Slutcracker* – a blend of poetry and film that took Edinburgh by storm as the follow up to 2008's *The Slut in the Hut*, a moniker that Key initially despised but has since taken to.

"The first Edinburgh show was called *The Slut In The Hut*. Because Slut rhymed with Hut and I was performing in the Pleasance Hut. I instantly regretted it. I phoned up the Pleasance and tried to change it right before they went to print. Then I spent the next three months railing against it in all the publicity. And then I talked about it in the show. It worked out pretty well – I'd accidentally called my show that and now I was backtracking. The vibe for the second show was that I'd accidentally branded the whole thing with the 'slut' thing. I kind of like it now. It's kind of uncompromising. Next show I'm looking at 'Eyes Wide Slut'".

He started his comedy career with the Footlights despite not actually being a student at Cambridge, a fact he "didn't volunteer" when he auditioned for the pantomime. Instead he "volunteered some information about being

a PhD student at Sidney Sussex College" which was not at all true. Key's fraudulence was discovered when he got into the tour show but it was agreed he may as well keep up the charade "right through to Edinburgh".

It was a bumper year for the Footlights at Edinburgh 2001 with Mark Watson and Sophie Winkleman featuring alongside Key in a tour show that was nominated for the Perrier Best Newcomer Award. Key remembers it fondly: "I loved that time. Not meaning to sound like a dick but it was life-changing."

When asked, he freely admits that he had his sights set high: "When I first sat around in the producer's flat with the cast, having auditioned with these people for two weeks I was genuinely eyeing them up and thinking 'yup, you'll probably be famous' and 'yup, you'll definitely be famous' and

'mm, you'll actually become a national treasure, I imagine'. They were talented guys, even the ones who decided not to pursue it. By the end I definitely thought I'd give it a whirl. I got an agent in Edinburgh and got weaving. By 'got weaving' I mean I worked in Hamley's for six months and then moved back to Cambridge to have a rethink."

There were a few more shows in Edinburgh and another nomination for the Perrier in 2002 but it wasn't until 2005 that Key's career really started to take off when Cowards was born, a four man troop including Key, Stefan Golaszewski, Tom Basden and Lloyd Woolf, all of whom Key and Watson directed in the 2003 Footlights tour show.

It was also around this time that Key started developing the idiosyncratic style and distinctive poetry that has earned him such acclaim. "The poetry started in a notepad whilst on public transport. I wrote down a four line poem. Then I wrote another one. Then I filled the book. That totalled 228 poems. It wasn't until a year later that I read them out. Not a great deal of thought went into it. But I had Soviet lounge music underscoring it and I wore a suit and drank beer from a can so the building blocks were in place. It's undergone some changes – longer poems are now mixed in and I sometimes try and 'be slick'. But that was a pretty fair marker. I'd tried stand-up already and hadn't found anything remotely idiosyncratic or original – these foundations meant that whether it was sublime or utter dogshit it would at least be original. I guess I don't like it when people are derivative. I prefer it when people are doing their own thing. Even if it's not my scene – try and do something new."

You may have seen Key's poems on *Charlie Brooker's Newsnight*.

It's certainly poetry that has been at the heart of Key's solo success though he's written two genre-shattering books as well. "I might write a straight, flat-out poetry book. I've got over a thousand poems now so it'd be nice to crack them out. As for a novel, I think maybe another five years and then I'll do one. Novels seem a bit difficult. You have to have the right-sized/shaped brain. Mine is quite small and round so currently suited to more minor bursts of writing".

It's clear that with a film in the pipe-line (co-written with long-time collaborator Tom Basden), a world tour of *The Slutcracker* as well as the beginnings of a new live show Key look set to capitalise on his growing profile and exponential success. And does he see himself as a stand up comic? "Not quite."

## Quickfire Round

### Two-minute interview

**Favourite sport?**  
Cricket.

**Favourite novel?**  
*Ham on Rye* by Bukowski.

**Favourite drink?**  
Lager.

**Favourite actor?**  
Walken, I suppose.

**Favourite film?**  
Varies. Liked that one about Cantona recently. 'Nuts in May' is always up there. 'Safety Last' – Harold Lloyd – is a real piece of work.

**Favourite play?**  
Quite like 'The Birthday Party', if I'm honest.

**Favourite song/band?**  
'Like a Rainbow' by The Rolling Stones.

**Life motto?**  
Nope.

**Favourite city?**  
Kiev.

**Favourite trainers?**  
Hi-Tec Squash.

**Favourite jeans?**  
Wranglers.

**Optimum tie/shirt combo?**  
White shirt with black embroidery. Pink tie.

**Favourite Poet?**  
The one with Carlos in his name who does the poem about the plums. Bukowski is obviously splendid.

**Favourite of your own poems?**  
368.  
"An ox!"  
I couldn't conceal my incredulity. Why had she bought an ox?

**Advice to budding comics?**  
Trust your instincts. Be original. Do things for no money for longer than seems healthy.

Tim Key will be headlining the Wolfson Howler on March 8th



Tim Key: an eclectic mix of comedic poet and vintage trainer fan.





ZING TSJENG

## Arts Comment

### Despite what the Oscars say, Hollywood is still an old boys' club

The Oscar nominations are out, and Kathryn Bigelow is in the running for Best Director for war film *The Hurt Locker*. Her win at the Directors' Guild of America has put her as the front-runner of the Oscar race and into the centre of a media frenzy, above and beyond the normal racket of the usual Oscar hype. Why all the added attention? Because the DGAs have never, in a 62-year history, recognised a female director. Only three women have been nominated for an Oscar for Best Director. None have won. A Bigelow win would make history.

It's about time. The film industry has historically shut women out, except in the editing suite (the process was thought to be akin to the feminine pursuit of knitting). You could conclude that all is now hunky-dory in Hollywood: a woman wins, sexism smashed, that's entertainment!

But Bigelow is the exception in Hollywood. Of the 600 new films

reviewed in *The New York Times* in 2009, only ten percent were directed by women – and many of these were foreign films that received limited releases. The numbers only get worse when you look at the six or so major studios: last year, Paramount and Warner Brothers did not release a single film by a woman. It's not even the case that those bankrolling movies are men: women have run studios

### “Women almost never front a major studio film”

since the 80s.

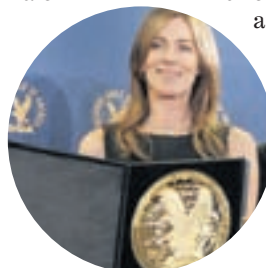
The excitement over Bigelow's nomination disguises a much deeper problem in Hollywood: the lack of representation of women, both at a directorial level and in film itself. Scroll down the list of top ten highest-grossing films: with the

exception of *Titanic* and *Avatar*, women are either on the sidelines of a story centred on male protagonists or are part of an ensemble cast (think Arwen in *Lord of the Rings* or Hermione in *Harry Potter*). Women almost never front a major studio film. When they do, it's in paint-by-numbers romantic comedies. No wonder films like *The Devil Wears Prada* do well with women: at least it's not Sandra Bullock playing another career-minded shrew. You have to wonder if some part of Hollywood's dire lack of imagination is due to the absence of female directorial voices.

Why does the industry continue to turn their backs on female directors and female audiences? Part of it is because women aren't seen as loyal moviegoers. Received wisdom holds that outside of romcoms,

women don't go to movies and they can't open them. By extension, women who want to make films about women are consigned to romcoms, and those who want to make films about anything else are seen as risky propositions. Bigelow, for example, struggled to find any Hollywood funding for her film. Female directors, the argument goes, just don't create profitable films. That's patently untrue, though: a study in 2008 showed that the budget of the film has more to do with its box office than the gender of its director.

You'd think that Hollywood would realise that women, making up half of the population, are a pretty profitable target demographic. Yet every time women flock to movies like *Mamma Mia!*, the industry reacts with shock. These films might not be *Schindler's List II*, but they've forced Hollywood to begin re-evaluating the way they look at female audiences. Hopefully, a Bigelow win at the Oscars will finally change the way they look at female directors.



### Classics Revisited



#### D.H. Lawrence *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928)

Upon its publication, D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* aroused controversy due to an overtly sexualised plotline in which the characters' chief prerogative is the fulfilment of personal desire. Lady Chatterley's adulterous pursuit of her husband's gamekeeper, Mellors, originates from her need to embrace life – a sensation with which we can all associate – although her disdain towards Lord Chatterley denies her the contentment which she ultimately seeks. Her extreme actions should inspire us to chase even the smallest source of excitement in our own lives, whilst being mindful of the happiness of others. FI VICKERSTAFF

### FOOD & DRINK

## The Food Of Love

This week, love is in the air. **Rosie Corner** anticipates Valentine's Day

When I think of food and love my thoughts always return to *The Kitchen Child*, a favourite satirical and class-aware fairy tale, retold with exquisite gothic detail by Angela Carter. In the tale a child is born onto the kitchen table in a country house where his mother is head cook; she cuts the umbilical herself with a carving knife and uses a fish-kettle for his cradle and pots and pans for toys. The child's provenance is even more disturbing: he doesn't know his father, nor does his mother, but, in the kitchen legend he is told by the other servants, a handsome stranger visiting the household for the first time came upon a buxom young cook toiling over a bowl of soufflé batter. Charmed by her wavering posterior, he makes his move and while he no-nonsensely impregnates her, he knocks her hand which is holding the paprika, and slightly too much is added to the mixture. Upstairs however, the family are delighted with the resulting dish: “throwing open the door, she brings forth the veritable queen of all the soufflés, that spreads its archangelic wings over the entire kitchen as it leaps upwards from the dish in which the force of gravity alone confines

it.” Much as I adore this story and implore you all to read it immediately, I do find it just a little rapey. If anyone tried to do the same thing to me while I was working on something as difficult to pull off as a savoury soufflé I'd probably punch them in the mouth. But it set me thinking, can one find love, or at least lust, in the kitchen?

In Alfonso Arau's *Like Water for Chocolate* (1993) the heroine Tita, prevented from marrying her beloved Pedro and forced to watch him take her own sister as his bride, pours all her pent-up emotion into divine dishes; most



Ask nicely, and she'll cook anything.

movingly the quail in rose-petal sauce, made from the bouquet Pedro smuggles to her after the birth of her niece. The same old story of replacing sex with cooking occurs in Lily Prior's 'novel of rapture' *La Cucina*. Here, following the murder of her lover by the Mafiosi. Rosa Fiore goes on what can only be described as a killing-and-eating rampage. Wracked by sorrow she slaughters every cow, sheep and chicken on her family farm, uproots every vegetable and strips every tree, while her family grow increasingly worried and rotund. Blood-lust sated she glumly retires to a life of cooking and librarian work, but Rosa eventually rediscovers the joy of sex in her forties with a very pervy Englishman who wears salmon suits – here the magic of the writing comes to an abrupt, buttery, halt.

So, in honour of the most romantic day of the year, I decided to renounce my Bridget Jones-inspired menu of blue soup, and conjure something suitably romantic for my lady friends. My task was aided by the fact that my mother had just sent me a heart-shaped fried-egg mold in the post. – now that's love.

### Valentine's Menu



### A truly ravishing breakfast

Heart-shaped fried eggs (free-range from Cambridge market)

Heart-shaped pancakes (made with 1 cup of plain flour, a-third-of-a-cup of milk, a-third-of-a-cup of water and 2 eggs)

Maple Syrup (Rowse is wonderful, if pricey – I suggest growing a maple tree and making your own)

Crispy bacon (Butcher's choice only £2 a pack at Sainsbury's!)

Pain au Chocolat and croissants (Oh Italian bread stall, you floury friend o' mine)

Rivetingly red fruit board featuring lychees, passion fruit, pomegranate, pink grapefruit and blood oranges (all bought at the newly-refurbished fruit and veg stall in the SECOND row of stalls in Cambridge market, as you approach from M&S)

Tropicana juices (currently two for £3 at Sainsbury's, drunk from champagne flutes, naturally)

Lace tablecloth (£1 from Poundland – also doubles as spinster's cap)



Varsity

Listings

Pick of the Week

Evensong: The Choirs of Clare College and Sidney Sussex College

SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE CHAPEL, FRI 18.45-19.30 (£5/6/16)

Combat is truly the basis of all music. The mighty choristers of Clare take on the titanic vocals of Sidney at an Evensong so apocalyptically gladiatorial that it is untold even in Ancient Mayan prophecy. They with the best lyrics, delivery and attitude shall triumph. For the loser, there is only the ignominy of defeat. Let the battle commence!



Film

The Wolfman

VUE CINEMAS DAILY 13:00 15:30 18:00 20:30 (FRI, SAT,SUN & WED ALSO 23:00)  
Benecio Del Toro receives a makeover. Unfortunately for him this isn't so much about highlights and designer shirts as curses and back-hair like you've never seen.



Invictus

VUE CINEMAS, DAILY 15:20, 18:20, 21:20

Pick of the week Film

Morgan Freeman as the most humble of prisoners never pipes down with his sage advice, what will happen when he's given Mandela? If that gets old, there's always Hollywood actors attempting a South African accent.

Youth In Revolt

VUE CINEMAS, DAILY 14.30, 16.50, 19.00, 21.10 (FRI, SAT, SUN & WED ALSO 23.30)  
A sweet indie romantic tale documenting the extremes teenage lads will go to in order to get a leg over. Michael Cera promises his usual adorable persona but with a moustache upgrade.

Ponyo

ARTS PICTUREHOUSE, SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS  
Boy meets fish, boy promises to always take care of fish. Then fish turns into girl. Boy loves girl. Just your standard Japanese fairytale.

Valentine's Day

VUE CINEMAS, DAILY 11:30,14:20,17:15,20:15 (FRI, SAT AND WED 23:15)  
Features high-powered cast whose lives overlap on holiday. This is *Love Actually* but cashing in on the mushy sentiments of Valentine's rather than Christmas.

Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief

VUE CINEMAS, DAILY 09:40, 12:20,15:10, 17:50, 20: 40  
Discovering you are half human, half Greek God? More of an ego-boost than any teenage boy needs. Pens turn into swords, destinies are unravelled but you'll spend most of the movie staring at Aaron Johnson's doppelgänger.

Music & Nightlife

Friday February 12th Imogen Heap

THE JUNCTION, 19:00. (£17.50 ADV)

Pick of the week Music  
Now touring her third album and still engineering the soulful ambience which defined that formative phase spent watching (and listening to) the *O.C.* Batty-haired crazyness guaranteed.

maysLYRICS

THE SHOP, JESUS LANE, 20:00. (FREE)

Writing goes aural. Writers read their work before musicians play their reinterpretations. Bring a rug.

Saturday February 13th Czech National Symphony Orchestra

CORN EXCHANGE, 19:30. (£17/23/27/31)

Billed as an evening of "19th-century classics brimming over with ravishing melodies". Petr Altrichter conducts Schubert and Dvorák featuring violinist and recent Cambridge graduate Charlie Siem.

Monday February 15th Lostprophets

CORN EXCHANGE, 19:30. (£22.99)

The surprisingly Welsh rockers hit the Corn Exchange, with inevitable crowdpleasers 'Last Train Home' and 'Rooftops'. Support from Kids in Glass Houses.



Tuesday February 16th Moishe's Bagel

THE JUNCTION, 20:00. (£13 ADV)

Invigorating and uplifting, the Bagel play jazz-infused folkish delights with a Balkan twist. Expect to feel the urge to shout "HEY!" at random intervals.

Wednesday February 17th Ledger's "A Thanksgiving for Life"

CHRIST'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, 18:30. (FREE)

An Ash Wednesday performance of Sir Philip's requiem.

Theatre

The Heartbreaks You Embrace

MICHAELHOUSE CAFÉ, FRI 20:00 (£5)

Pick of the week Theatre  
Theatre cabaret from a past winner of the Marlowe Society/RSC Other Prize, held in the little café opposite Caius. That title is inspired by what is unquestionably the best break-up song of all time, ever. Weep into the V-Day spirit.

The Crucible

ADC THEATRE, FRI-SAT 19.45 (£7/9)

Fear and loathing in Salem, Massachusetts.

Woyzeck

JUDITH E. WILSON STUDIO, FRI 16.00 & SAT 15.00 (£3)

The power of Buechner's play apparently lies in its simplicity. Since this production will be performed in its original German, that might be a good thing.

Pygmalion

FRIENDS OF PETERHOUSE THEATRE, FRI-SAT 19.30 (£4/6)

Eliza Doolittle! My Fair Lady! It all started in Shaw's romance, plucked for the Heywood Society's Fresher show.

Macbeth

CORPUS PLAYROOM, FRI-SAT 19.00 (£5/6)

Little-known and supposedly cursed Scottish Play, featuring Mr and Mrs. M. You wouldn't invite them to your dinner party.

Cadenza: One Night Only

ADC THEATRE, TUE 23.00 (£5/6)

They were on *Last Choir Standing*. They were beaten by Only Men Aloud. Still, tickets are like grooving, pop-infused fairy dust, and you're promised the Spice Girls. Stellar a capella.

The Occasional Students

CHRIST'S YUSEF HAMIED THEATRE, TUE 20.00 (£3)

Aren't we all? Cambridge's latest comedy sketch show comes with rebellious and reassuring title: they'd rather be treading the boards than festering in a library.

Twelfth Night

CAMBRIDGE ARTS THEATRE, TUE-SAT 19.45 (£10/15)

Second Shakespeare of the week: he's good for your bones. The Marlowe Society hits the Arts Theatre for one of the term's big 'uns, where dukes and drunkards struggle amidst Will's Illyrian wasteland.

Arts

Ongoing Exhibitions Mixed Print Exhibition

30TH JANUARY - 28TH FEBRUARY, CAMBRIDGE CONTEMPORARY ART, 6 TRINITY ST. 09:00 - 17:30 (FREE)

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

Clouds and Myths: Monotypes by Lino Mannocci

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

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.

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. Coins, medals and other miscellanea on display.



Talks & Events

Friday February 12th Risk and Humanities

LADY MITCHELL HALL, 17:30-18:30

The Risk lecture series continues as Times blogger and lovable classicist Mary Beard explores ancient ideas of risk and avoidance. The lecture will include the first consultation of the Oracles of Astrampsychus for many centuries.



Tuesday February 16th Imaging Cancer

WOLFSON LECTURE THEATRE, CHURCHILL COLLEGE, 19:30-21:00

Dr Kevin Brindle of the Cancer Research Institute presents his research into non-invasive magnetic resonance-based testing for tumour response to therapy, and discusses the impact this could bear on the future of cancer treatment and research.

SCA and Teach First: Learning to Lead

BENSON HALL, MAGDALENE COLLEGE, 16:15-17:30

A workshop delivered in partnership to give volunteers the confidence to pretend to altruism for one CV-enhancing year.

Wednesday February 17th You Must Be Joking: Cities as a Force for Good in the Environment

LR0, ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, 18:00-19:30 (£5/7)

Professor Bruce Beck of the University of Georgia discusses how re-engineering urban infrastructure could make cities net contributors to the ecosystems they inhabit.

Thursday February 18th Annual High Commissioner's Dinner

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, 19:00 (£39/45)

Canadian High Commissioner to the UK, His Excellency James Wright, is guest of honour at the annual Cambridge Canadian Club dinner. Tickets are first-come, first-served; those with no affiliation with Canada are welcome, albeit begrudgingly...



**Boxed In****Week 5: Take Me Out**

ITV's new dating show *Take Me Out* launches Saturday night TV to places of joyful cheesiness and innuendo of which our parents would never have dreamt. Presenter Paddy McGuinness, off of Phoenix Nights and, yes that's right, Gregg's the 'Bakers' ads, plays cupid for 30 girls by introducing one man at a time down the 'love lift'.

The girls then have three chances to turn their light off if the guy fails to impress them with his weight-lifting skills, Irish accent or overly-protective mum. (It was probably "Jonathan's astounding table wrestling skills" that set the, ahem, benchmark for the rest of the series.) Any suitor who does make it to the other side of the girls' scrutiny then gets to turn off the remaining lights until he finds a companion with just the right amount of make-up and that particularly alluring vacant expression.

Beautifully, all 26 girls who don't get a date are back on the show next week, and the familiarity can be hilarious. There is, of course, the "bubbly" Rian from Sheffield whose light is never off, until the men get a chance, and six-foot-something Jo is a constant intimidation. Roz is "the busty one", and Emma from Leicester has a smile which could slice onions.

Paddy definitely makes the show work. He can barely deliver an innuendo without giggling, and makes the show as transparent (sorry, clear) for the girls as he can with his favourite catchphrase, "no likey, no lighty". He's at his funniest when introducing the suitor to the hen-pen with increasingly risqué double-entendre. It's a short step from "let the baker see the buns" to "let the pork see the scratchings" and, well, we can see where it's heading.

Bearing in mind that even the show's host calls *Take Me Out* a "guilty pleasure", you could be mistaken for underestimating its quality, but there is genuine comedy in Paddy's witty rapport with the contestants, and a hint of tragedy in those lonely faces. Most heartbreaking is the totally rejected man who skulks offstage to 'All By Myself'. *Take Me Out* is a brutal and hilarious dip into the most tongue in the most cheek dating game there'll ever be. You only have to see it, that's all. JONNY ALDRIDGE

**MUSIC****Ready for the Weekend****Vampire Weekend**

CORN EXCHANGE

★★★★★

"You're in a pretty good mood," Vampire Weekend frontman Ezra Koenig notes dryly during this sold-out gig. Three songs in, the crowd of middle-aged punters, boys in Topman and underage teens are hurling themselves in a huge moshpit. School-night parents look terrified; their kids, thrilled. By the time 'Campus' transitions perfectly into 'Oxford Comma', burlier fans in the audience are piledriving each other into the floor. Who knew a song about punctuation could turn this violent?

Clad in immaculate shirts, VW know how to get a crowd going. While their albums fundamentally recreate the laid-back tropical vibe of their African and West Indian influences, the band is electrifying live. The setlist, which includes almost all of their material, is given

a hypodermic injection of pure adrenalin by frenetic tempos and muscular drumming. Drummer Chris Tomson has mastered the ska/reggae beat that makes a virtue out of jerky start-stop rhythms and the pregnant pause that launches you headfirst into a glorious chorus. On 'Run', one of the gig's standout tracks, Tomson pauses right before Koenig's vocals and Rostam Batmanglij's shimmering keyboards sweep you into the line "it strikes me that the two of us could run" – just as the eyes of the girl on the giant Contra poster behind them light up. Literally.

That's one of the many highlights in the gig, where light, sound and rhythm come together into a perfect blast of summer heat. Vampire Weekend is a band that has to manage the difficult balancing act of being (mostly) white, middle-class boys from a prestigious university, drawing from (mostly) black music and writing lyrics about (probably) white,

middle-class youths. It's musical imperialism in preppy cricket jumpers, critics warn – ethno-pick-n'-mix that misses the point. The musical equivalent of the gap year tragedy with the Masai bracelet and Nepalese hat.

If only it wasn't this good. The band pull off tracks that should be unplayable, like 'The Diplomat's Son', which samples M.I.A.'s 'Hussel' and segues effortlessly between the instrumental, syncopated chatter of drum loops and Koenig's crooned vocals. But Vampire Weekend are used to doing the impossible. They made singing about Darjeeling tea and Louis Vuitton acceptable; if anybody else in Britain tried to rhyme 'balaclava' with an obscure Mexican drink, they would probably get glassed for being overly precious. As the crowd roar for 'Cousins' and a girl is hoisted up onto somebody's shoulders, hands in the air, it's hard to dismiss VW as cultural tourists stealing a bit of Caribbean sunshine. ZING TSJENG

**Teen Dream**

BEACH HOUSE

★★★★★



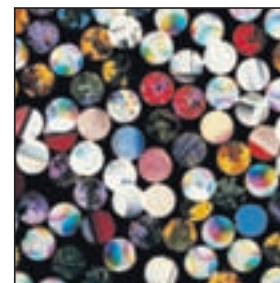
Baltimore-based Beach House are well-established in the tradition of boy-girl duo making lovesick rock. Their previous two albums have shown just how good they are at their particular brand of American dream pop. *Teen Dream* could quite contentedly have followed

in the predictable wake of two such forerunners, but, as you listen to the album unfold, each song warms through into a new openness without losing the duo's characteristic blurry resonance. The opening track 'Zebra' begins with a repetitive guitar figure: as Legrand's voice melts into the texture, the sound deepens into a churning, complicated nostalgia that maintains its more pop-informed sound. The album makes this gesture from incipient movement to dramatic sweeps, and handles this progression with dexterity. Pensive ballads ('Better Times', 'Silver Soul') gain in weight alongside more spacious numbers. Front to back, the arrangements and sequencing are superb, the depth and sweep belying the ephemerality of this album's title. ELEANOR CARELESS

**Four Tet**

THERE IS LOVE IN YOU

★★★★★



Too long since the last full-length, and after stints with Steve Reid and Burial, a crate of remixes and a year's residency at Plastic People, Mr. Hebden returns as Four Tet. WITH VOCALS! But then you've probably known that since November...

**Valentine's Ball**

CAMBRIDGE UNION

★★★★★

Upon arrival at the Union we were welcomed by a mime. I say 'a mime' – he might have simply been a mute yet hilarious sex offender merrily roaming outside the Union without the consent of the organisers. It's surprisingly easy to praise an entertainer whose opening gambit is pretending to molest your date.

'An American in Paris' was the theme of the night, reflected only in the film silently playing on a telly in the corner, but the Valentine's schmaltz, with a saccharine shade of pink soaking into everything in the damn building, was perfect. Ents Officer Anna Harper and her team had clearly invested a huge amount of effort into the whole production, and the atmosphere they created was ideal for the opening ball of the year.

Entertainments were generally good; the apparently telekinetic illusionist who flipped playing cards along the floor without touching them was a highlight, as were the ever-superb Footlights James Moran and Lucien Young. Ballerina Nina Ellis, taking to the Union floor was a unique and especially enjoyable act which will no doubt stand out throughout the Ball memories of May Week. For the most part, however, the best acts were inexplicably relegated to the small room adjacent to the bar, whilst the main chamber was occupied by less compelling performances, culminating in the eminently uninteresting three-hour Ragged Army marathon.

Food and drink was disappointing – the promo material kept schtum about the four-drink limit (and they still ran out of champagne), and food choices were limited to the hog roast and meat/cheese table, but on a positive note there was plenty to go around.

Altogether a success, and all for a modest £45. Not an event so memorable as to set the standard, but a strong start to the season nonetheless. DAVID PEGG

The title-track unfolds with a peculiar timelessness: a female vocal is cut-up with all the noughties wizardry of Prefuse 73, but ends up sounding just as swirling as Orbital's 1992 classic 'Halecyon'. Similarly paradoxical: single 'Love Cry' loops a half-bar vocal sample over the thickest of Mylo basslines, and yet both sound as gorily organic as any of Hebden's early works.

Speaking of which – the allusion to *Rounds* in the electric guitar of closing track 'She Just Likes to Fight' is not for the emotionally fragile. If you've also been listening to Four Tet for the best part of a decade, and not slept enough in the last seven days, the harmonic that pings out at 2:18 will make you cry, too.

We waited five years for this. A star for every year. JOE SNAPE



FILM

# Rock 'n' rolla

## Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll

ARTS PICTUREHOUSE

★★★★★

Music biopics are sometimes noteworthy for what they don't do. *Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll*, an exuberant look at the life of legendary punk rocker Ian Dury, avoids many of the abused tropes of musician biographies. There's no moment where we see our protagonist strutting down a London street, overhearing the phrase 'Rhythm Stick' and then gazing off into the middle distance. Equally the film avoids being simply a lurid peek into a man's private life by telling Dury's story in the manner of his music. Dury frequently narrates his life from onstage in an abandoned auditorium, in full ghoulish make-up. His music hall style suits the gothic Victoriana element of his troubled childhood. Infected by a polio epidemic at the age of seven, he was sent to an institution for disabled children as unwelcoming as a workhouse, with a cackling orderly who made his life hell. We see little of Dury's adolescence and young adulthood, cutting directly to the anarchic beginnings of his music career, being booed off stage, plagued by in-fighting and a comatose drummer.

Andy Serkis' performance as Dury is excellent, capturing his energy, anger, and wit. In the stage

performances Serkis perfectly masters the shifts from nonchalant raconteur to frenzied entertainer, performing gleeful covers of hits like 'Reasons to be Cheerful, Pt.3.' Father and son relationships are the emotional core of the film, beginning with Dury's relationship with his caring but distant father (Winstone). Dury often neglects his own son in his pursuit of success, but Baxter Dury later comes to stay with Ian and his groupie girlfriend, receiving well-meaning but patchy parenting. The women in Dury's life are very much playing supporting roles, in both senses. Though Dury is portrayed as an extremely caring and tender person, there is no concealing his selfishness. His ex-wife and girlfriend are both

veterans of dealing with his moods and lifestyle.

If there are criticisms to be made of the film, they are also comments on the arc of a celebrity's lifespan. The film slows down significantly after the middle point, the peak of Dury's success, and begins to lose some of its grip once you realise the hits are already done. However this decline is tempered by the brilliant sequence covering Dury's scornful anthem for the UN Year of the Disabled 'Spasticus Autisticus' where he viciously derides the sentimentalizing of his condition. The film could have done with a few more cuts. However it makes for a fun, rude and entertaining night at the cinema with a marvellous central performance and a killer soundtrack. VICTORIA BEALE



Serkis: nonchalant raconteur

## Youth In Revolt

VUE

★★★★★

This is an offbeat *American Pie* with more hints of psychological disturbance and less masturbation. Ridiculously overblown, the film takes ever more bizarre turns that mimic the nature of the adolescent lurve that sparks it off.

It all begins with the standard 'I'm your kooky narrator' spiel which inevitably includes niche interests (Sinatra) and the

revelation that our protagonist, Nick Twisp, is, on some level, a wee bit miserable (sixteen-year-old virgin). That is, until he meets the delightful Sheeni who lets him rub suntan lotion onto her legs and doesn't even bat an eyelid when he has the obvious teenage response to such personal administrations. All too soon the sweet romantics are separated and Nick is left with nothing more than a bad boy French alter-ego, Francois, to ensure him and his lass get back to together.

Not liking Michael Cera as Nick would be akin to kicking a puppy: only a scoundrel of the darkest order

could oblige. He plays the slightly geeky but adorable protagonist down to a tee so, despite its other faults, you at least want to play along until its conclusion. The addition of Francois is where things start to go wrong as the alter-ego gives the impression you've stumbled into *Fight Club* for dummies – even if he does have some killer chat-up lines, "I want to wrap your legs around my head and wear you like the crown that you are."

The acts of teenage rebellion that Francois makes Nick pursue in order to reclaim Sheeni do provide some colourful distraction. We alternate from scenes of explosive destruction to parental drug-taking (unintentional). I watched with delight as Sheeni's mushroom-addled parents made finger food of their dinner.

However, I can't help feeling *Juno* also did what *Youth in Revolt* tries to – quirky, indie comedy with a heart – but it just did it better. The humour here is packaged as a witty spin on slapstick but this doesn't always live up to the intelligent tag-line. One particularly shoddy attempt was a move from a "mindfuck" to a more "literal fuck". Ha ha indeed. Sweet and amusing but ultimately only half of the alternative movie it tries to be.

KATIE ANDERSON

Cera: your kooky narrator for this evening



# Art & Literature

## Clouds and Myths: Monotypes by Lino Mannocci

FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

★★★★★

Tucked away in a tiny room at the back of the Fitzwilliam Museum, past the gaggles of schoolchildren being marched around ancient statues and paintings, Mannocci shows how simple monotypes can be eerily enchanting. Yes, most of the titles of his prints sound like GCSE works by angsty emo teenagers- 'I change but I cannot die' - and yes, he falls into the trap of using 'inkjet collages' in an attempt to make the work more 'down with the kids,' but there is an amazing simplicity to the exhibition.

Each print is a snapshot in time, enhanced by the fact that monotypes can only be used once as the stencil is usually destroyed in the process. Classical images are modernised by Mannocci as he transports figures of angels and horses into his own black and white world. Scenes like the one in 'There were clouds in the sky,' of three silhouetted figures walking into the distance allow you to create a picture of the entire scene in your mind, the prints acting as a prompt for your rarely-used imagination (we are at Cambridge, after all).

I could go into the links with Veneziano's Annunciation engravings or the intricacies of the monotype printing process (which is helpfully detailed as part of the exhibition) but most of the monotypes stand on their own as interesting, engaging, and sometimes disturbing images, often ripped from their original context. Though the exhibition is just one room, it means that you don't have an opportunity to get bored of Mannocci's method and it becomes a bite-size transportation to a world of Clouds and Myths, albeit with a load of yawning ten-year-olds who, for some reason, don't appear to feel the same way. OLLY REES



Mannocci: Then Susanna Screamed

## For Esmé with Love and Squalor

J.D. SALINGER

★★★★★

"See more glass...Did you see more glass?" asks the little girl in 'A Perfect day for a Bananafish' before she meets Seymour Glass and goes swimming with the neurotic soldier, who afterwards returns to his room, takes out an Ortgies calibre 7.65 automatic and shoots himself in the head. J.D. Salinger's collection of short stories, *For Esmé- with Love and Squalor* is funny like this. The brilliance of Salinger's American skaz-slang dialect traces the quiet hysteria of the 1950s through tender exchanges between emotionally frenzied adults and children, who possess an amusing mix of vulnerability and bold inquisitiveness.

It's Salinger's sensitive ear for dialogue which makes these stories exceptional, especially when most often its children's voices he chooses to impersonate. Penetrating the world around them with intelligence and deadpan wit, its hard to resist such characters. A child's close inspection of detail also infuses through the narrative voice, tracking tiny movements like the eating of a chicken sandwich with cinematic precision. You realise where Wes Anderson has been getting his inspiration from for all these years.

It seems if you haven't read *The Catcher in the Rye* by the time you are sixteen, the Salinger moment passes you by and all that's left is to sniff at such American teen histrionics and forget that Salinger wrote anything else. But his short stories, nine in total here (and who knows how many more will be discovered posthumously-Salinger's daughter has hinted there are 15 unpublished manuscripts) are concentrated instances of Salinger's delicate craft and should now be read and re-read, if only for interactions as fantastically endearing as this (a little girl is ordered to describe her imaginary friend): "He has green eyes and black hair." "What else?" "No mommy and no daddy" "What else?" "No freckles" "What else?" "A sword" "What else?" "I don't know." ZELJKA MAROSEVIC



# View from the Groundlings



## Cambridge Theatre

Nonchalance comes easily. One term down and the freshers are jaded; the OMFG moments are beginning to deplete. There are still a few, of course: walking over Orgasm Bridge with the punts below and the Cam stretching down to King's, or drinking sherry mid-supervision with some Dumbledoresque professor. File next week's ADC late show, *Three Tales*, in the OMFG bracket, because few theatres in the world have been treated to Steve Reich's 'video opera'. There will be musicians, documentary footage, and pre-performance talks, combined for a theatrical response to the last century of technology.

What are you doing tonight? Something you've never done before. Like a *Black Tie Smoker*. You might have to sleep with a Pembroke Player to get a ticket, but hell, it's Valentine's weekend, and it might well be worth it. Tonight's the night to giggle into your champagne and snort canapés all over the tux of the guy in front of you. Tonight's the night to tuck into some cabaret at the Michaelmas Cafe. *The Heartbreaks You Embrace* is on its final evening; it will "disturb and delight". Tonight's the night.

If ticketing prostitution isn't your thing, get all over *The Invention of Love* next week, Stoppard's witty and bitty tale of unrequited adoration. It's all rather *Brideshead*, and it features an Oxford punt. OMFG.

Big fat pair of Shakespeare coming up: maybe we'll knock the shock of this paragraph down to OMG. They're the rarer, more problematic productions, the snow leopards of the canon. *Timon of Athens* is picking up the Corpus Playroom slot left all macabre and bloodied by *Macbeth*, and *Twelfth Night* arrives at Cambridge Arts Theatre, booting out musicals and psychics. The cast themselves were kicked out of their rehearsal space last week for being too damn noisy, which, as Newnham have recently discovered, can only be a marvelous thing.

Apologies for all of the optimism. Next week: back to flippant belittlement. ABIGAIL DEAN

# The Crucible

ADC MAINSHOW  
★★★★★

To love a play puts a critic in an awkward position. The script is favoured, but the stakes are raised: one wrong move and the production crushes precious expectations. But this was a beautifully staged, brilliantly-realised production of an admittedly wonderful script. *The Crucible* centres around the Salem witch trials, and the way hysteria and fear can spread, driven solely by paranoia and common human weaknesses. Arthur Miller's rejection of the supernatural only makes the whole thing all the more terrifying. It's a great premise, and I was terrified that it would all go horribly wrong. It didn't.

The production team must be congratulated for their roles. There were none of those 'technical difficulties' which so often distract from the action of opening night. The set was interesting, and used the full depth of the ADC stage, incorporating the decision to seat the actors at the side of the central platform. It was a good one, for not only did it save the play from late cues, but also added a profundity to the proceedings – the characters seem to be witnesses to the calamity unfolding before them, and yet do nothing. They do nothing frustratingly, and fantastically; it was a slice of direction simultaneously subtle and gut-wrenchingly obvious. This brings me to the best production element of the play – the lack of pretensions. Whilst there was intensity to be found in Josh

Seymour's directorial decisions, there was no conflicting 'vision' clunking along, trying to meld with the story. You noticed the superb staging – I cannot imagine that such visually striking arrangements happened by accident – but it did not feel contrived.

The actors were terrific, and obviously comfortable in their roles. Sophie Crawford was heartbreaking as Elizabeth Proctor; her portrayal tender and soft, but by no means weak. James Walker as her husband, John, was equally well played: measured and powerful. Their relationship was simply depicted and therefore completely believable. Comedy was present in the form of Tom Ovens as the well-meaning but misguided Giles Corey: hilarious, but by no means trite. We all hated Abigail (Phoebe Haines) and became

exasperated with Mary (Eve Hedderwick Turner), just as Miller demanded. Brilliant.

Fleeting, I felt that the direction mistook shouting for dramatic intensity at points of heightened tension, and perhaps some of the more chilling prophetic lines could have had greater effect at a lower volume. Overheard snippets in the bar afterwards espoused the same opinion; not all were convinced, let

“The characters upon stage do nothing, frustratingly and fantastically.”



JESSICA LAMBERT

alone driven to tears, by the play's horrifying conclusion.

But this is a production that cannot be missed. You'll enjoy it, and you'll feel for its characters, misguided as they are. You'll appreciate how it lets the script speak for itself, and that it does not act

as a vehicle for a director, nor any aspiring actor's ego. What we have here is an affectionately directed, excellently acted production, *sans* pretence. It's a rare treat on the Cambridge stage: do you really want to miss it?

KIRAN MILLWOOD-HARGRAVE

If a person dislikes a piece of theatre that tries to be avant-garde, there's a common tendency to label them as too thick to understand it. *Presto* is deliberately shambolic, with an intentional absence of structure or plot, but this does not render it immune to criticism. A nonsensical play like this has to be written, directed and performed impeccably in order to interest and relate to its audience, but this script went wrong before rehearsals even began. The idea of an anarchic lack of structure could have created an innovative world of excitement and intrigue where anything was possible; sadly, this promising premise staggered alive in a saggy, lacklustre effort that left the audience bemused and bored. While *Presto* imagines itself to be cutting-edge fringe theatre, it is simply a nonsensical meander through joke after uninspiring joke – and I quote: "I love fucking. There's no bullshit. You



FIONA BROHAMER

# Presto

CORPUS PLAYROOM  
★★★★★

just need a big old cock." Not quite the ground-breaking comedy I'd first expected.

The production did have some potentially interesting ideas – multimedia interplay between film and theatre could have cleverly augmented the humour of the experience, but this was unfortunately wasted upon meaningless 'comic' parodies of film plots (think *Avatar* with shoddy blue face paint). In terms of acting, only Susie Chrystal delivered the kind of sparky energy required to sustain audience interest through a play with an almost entirely absent plot, but her efforts alone weren't enough to raise *Presto* out of the doldrums. And, yes, Adam Lawrence successfully pulled off a card trick or two. But this is the kind of show that glories in its own cleverness and experimentalism, and that always leaves a bitter taste in the mouth. The person opposite me, with the inordinately loud laugh, seemed to have fun. Maybe he was smart enough to understand it; maybe he was delirious.

LYDIA ONYETT

Given that there is so much serious theatre in Cambridge, I really wanted to like *The Final Countdown*. And, as a matter of fact, I really *did* like its first scene. It was deliciously cheesy, and wonderfully lowbrow, and I happen to rather enjoy that sort of thing. Ultimately, however, this potentially brilliant alternative to the classic Cambridge theatre scene was let down by a truly terrible script. Flitting between the stories of three main characters in their final year of uni, sketch show style, made it very difficult for the audience to get a sense of what was going on. Broadly speaking, nothing. And an absence of any real character development made it a struggle to care. Considering Zander, Bonnie and Rachel are preparing for tumultuous life transition, emotional engagement was scarce. There were a few entertaining scenes – one about Carol Vorderman, which I wouldn't want to spoil, and another regarding a love letter – but for the most part, the script felt as though it was something of an afterthought, existing only to provide Stef Porter with

# The Final Countdown

FITZPATRICK HALL, QUEENS'  
★★★★★

an excuse to play us all his favourite songs. Even for a play which, thankfully, doesn't take itself too seriously, that's a dangerous premise to work from.

I really feel for everyone involved on stage, because, against all odds, they made a fantastic rescue attempt. Not a terribly capable writer, Porter's direction was slick, and displayed bravery in occupying the stage with a large cast, on many occasions when such bustle could have been avoided. The introduction of silly voices and physical quirks went part of the way towards compensating for the huge inadequacies of the script, and it was this that made that first scene so damn memorable. The choreography was extremely well done, and the cast threw themselves into every number with admirable enthusiasm; even the sound and lighting were well selected, if lacking a little in variety. Sadly, the play just didn't merit the dedication of this extremely talented team of individuals, who, despite valiant efforts, could do nothing to save it.

EMMA VIOLET



## Alcock Improv

ADC LATESHOW

★★★★★

How can a review advise upon improvised comedy? By definition, the five comedians of *Alcock Improv* should give a completely different performance every night. Their website blurb promises a “completely unprepared” performance, but a few viewings reveal signature set pieces which the group slot into their sketches as often as they can. It’s a wise precaution: raw comic talent shouldn’t be jeopardised entirely by the chance of a dull audience. Alcock’s signature Cantabrian blend of absurd and awkward wit was raring to go, and enough to save them from an ADC theatre which was nowhere near capacity.

Throughout the night we were presented with a series of ‘games’, the first of which required the audience to call out random story titles for Josh Higgott to run with. Understandably, he waited for the most bizarre suggestion – “The wizard that never was” – to

commence a hilarious and utterly insane dialogue discussing the many ways in which a wizard’s long beard might cover his testicles. Whimsically, of course, that didn’t matter: the wizard was invisible, and had never existed anyway.

Five is the perfect number for the *Alcock Improv* team. Most of the sketches involved only two or three or them at any one time, allowing the audience to focus on each comedian’s particular brand of humour. Personal favorites were Patrick Walshe McBride and James Walker, the latter of whom gave a sterling improvised song in Azerbaijani (rather reminiscent of German) about the loss of his dead brother – in the questionably suitable medium of hip-hop.

Another brilliant sketch involved three of the cast being interviewed to train seals. Each of the three could say only one word each in order to create a sentence, and the scene descended from the odd to the absurd; from a bona fide interview to bona fide madness. Asked why they were interested in looking after seals, the reply went something as follows: “but” “I” “read” “my” “father’s” “porn” “all” “the” “time” “and” “want” “to”

“beat” “seals” “to” “death”. The sparse audience’s hysterics sufficiently amplified the atmosphere. Even when this cast were lost for words, their awkwardness remained comical: a signifier of true comic talent.

Their crowning glory was an extended play called *The Moonshine Timewarp* (again, a title chosen by the audience).



Predictably, it was set on the moon; less predictably, it wandered into the dark territory of infidelity and abandonment. Dressing up as sexually frustrated and mentally unstable transvestites shouldn’t be funny, but it really was. Awkward, dark, and successful against all odds: the audience might vary, but the talent here will not.

NICK CHAPMAN

## Incoming



### Twelfth Night

I’ve never really had much luck with *Twelfth Night*. Most of the productions that I’ve seen have left me feeling a little flat. Everyone talks about the play’s darkness and black humour, or its brilliant complexity, or its Chekhovian observation, but I don’t think that I’ve ever really seen any of that dragged out upon the stage. Mostly, it’s been perfectly good productions of romance, tarnished by a wacky fool and a knotty, overlong subplot. With none of it quite slotting together.

I’m sure most directors start off attempting to dig a little deeper, and push a little harder, into the play selected as the latest life-engulfer. In the case of *Twelfth Night*, this involves a dissection of the sickness within the play. The majority of the characters are damaged in some way, and desperately seek solace. Such severity of sickness led to a modernisation which transports the production worlds away from the perils of comic dress and unintentional humour. Our actors perform in modern dress, and all are playing characters of their own ages. With no older generation looking over them, we see these young people lost, alone, in their individual ailments. A 21-year-old alcoholic; a 20-year-old girl mourning the death of her twin by dressing in his clothes; a young woman petrified by grief a full year after her father and brother have died. The humour of such characters needs to be elicited carefully, in a sharper, more dangerous place.

The set had to reflect such sickness: a large, white, roofless Victorian building, rotting and rusting and wrecked by the wind and the rain. Discoloured furniture littered the space, along with the remnants of an old Christmas tree and some rain-bleached decorations; even past symbols of celebration are rotten. The costumes won’t have escaped the elements: the rain raineth every day. I hope, by raising sorrow’s stakes, to find the edges of a play that have been eroded by decades of rosy-cheeked drunks and baffling fools – and, perhaps, to allow Shakespeare’s extraordinary insight into the damaged human condition to infect the audience a little deeper.

MARTIN HUTSON

Martin Hutson directs *Twelfth Night* at Cambridge Arts Theatre, 15-20 Feb.

It was always going to be a difficult feat to pull off. *Macbeth*, in the Corpus Playroom, in an hour and a half: not an ideal combination. And yet it started so well, with eerie sounds creeping from all three corners of this notoriously difficult space, producing a disorientating effect that provided an excellent introduction for the weird sisters.

So, what happened? Were their incantations really so foul, so fiendish, so damned ungodly that they couldn’t be spoken in clear English? It would seem so, their voices lost in the hurly-burly. This was a seemingly insurmountable problem, with sloppy delivery conspiring against the production’s players, who are clearly not without talent.

Lawrence Dunn played an extremely agitated Macbeth, but one that lacked any sense of development, leaving the effect of his downfall somewhat unconvincing. Both he and Mattin Biglari, playing Banquo, suffered from being rather too trumpet-tongued, and the overall effect tended all too often towards bathos; Macbeth’s dagger soliloquy was intoned with all the gravity of a Noel Coward cabaret.

In fact, few of the actors seemed to be particularly adept at sustaining the emotional intensity that this piece requires. Malcolm (Ben Woodford) and Macduff (John Haidar) did manage to create an interesting dynamic, providing the only truly successful relationship in the production. Lady Macbeth (Hannah Kennedy) was also excellent, however, presenting a convincing study in ambition and madness, and supplying a sense of impending calamity that was conspicuously absent elsewhere.

## Macbeth

CORPUS PLAYROOM

★★★★★

It was undoubtedly an ambitious project, and aspects of the production were well conceived, with

minimal lighting used to impressive effect during the culminating fight scene. On the whole, however, it proved to be only partially realised, an admirable interpretation let down by confused delivery and a puzzling take on the play’s central character. “The attempt... confounds us,” cries Lady Macbeth, reminding the audience of the dangers of ambition. Director Verity Jane Clements might have done well to pay her more attention. DAVID SHONE



The premise for *Silent Canonfire*, a “COMPLETELY SILENT swashbuckling PIRATICAL ADVENTURE”, is at first thoroughly perplexing. To devise a noiseless pirate comedy and then wad it into the cell-sized Larkum Studio strikes one as maniacally daft. Yet the boggling zaniness of this concept only extends as far as its rampantly punctuated description; the piece itself is quite reserved in its mute techniques. Its use of card messages as speech marks, jaunty music and slapstick humour are mechanisms found in silent film. But Chaplin this is not, mostly due to a problematic set of theatrical obstructions.

The music was a pleasing rattle of fiddle-ridden sea shanties; a score which would playfully oscillate between piping laments and string-scraping lulls. Its scene-colouring worked best in ‘The Admiralty Headquarters’ skit, transposing ‘God Save the Queen’ into a villainous minor key. Yet in habitually striking up mid-scene, the physical tumults became semi-awkward.

The swathes of action void of musical accompaniment highlighted one of the show’s key problems: it wasn’t all that silent. Shuffles, floor creaks, exhaling, inhaling; the methods of a silent film failed to translate suitably onto the stage. Buster Keaton can funnily avoid having a house fall on him because the audience don’t hear the clunky thump of timber; they are detached from the reality of such a set-piece as they are from the fantastical violence of a cartoon. In this, however, were audible traces of wheezing and foot scrapes, which made you conscious you were watching a play. It tried to

## Silent Canonfire

ADC LARKUM STUDIO

★★★★★

be silent, but never was.

Certain physical tricks could be quirk-

ily ingenious: a mutual striptease, with each layer of clothing revealing another comic quip, culminated in a kiss in which ‘Nom nom nom nom’ was printed on the male partner’s back. This was the best of some witty and inventive pieces of staging, but the all-too-snug studio space compressed what could have been full-breathing farce into a suffocated *danse macabre*.

A dumbshow requires facial over-expression to compensate for the absence of linguistic communication. James Swanton’s plethora of gurns and disfigurements enlivened his bearded clown as much as George Potts moulded his prim Navy-pervert with effete distortions, straight from the Kenneth Williams School of comedy. Yet Max Levine – misplaced in a play dependent upon caricature – was too reserved a hero to vault above the mannequin-status such a predictable narrative was bound to have him act out.

Even the successful characterizations were portraits of dated goon figures, fervently used to distract from the lack of comic verve. The moments of theatrical brio were fleeting and the promised idiosyncrasies of “never before seen theatre” were lost in favour of half-baked whimsy. The director is fêted in *Metro* as a ‘genius’ for his *Bouncy Castle Hamlet*, yet William Seaward’s application of originally conceived comedy is nothing short of spurious. *Silent Canonfire* was essentially a theatrically botched silent film creaking its way through a succession of foreseeable jokes. Any craziness was superficial; the rest was silence. EDWARD HERRING



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# Games & puzzles

## Varsity Crossword

NO. 521

18 Animals' appendages heard stories (5)  
20 A miniscule part of a tomato, for instance (4)  
21 Took out and ceded oddly to make web jargon (3,2,3,2)  
23 Apes gifts, holding a banana at first (7)  
24 Cautious mode of transport with recycled fuel (7)  
25 Show rest have come short (6)  
26 Animal with painting equipment (6)

### Down

1 Deserve distinction, almost (5)  
2 Come back about blanket (7)  
3 A great man redesigning our sphere (9)  
5 Thicken hot material (5)  
6 Blemish disrupting a thousand points (7)  
7 Those who make up records, or so it seems (9)  
10 Divided a mouthful to include one section (9)  
13 Painter's accepting cash regularly from some people from Polynesia (9)  
15 Financial support not distributed with a grape (9)  
17 Early work by 11, instructing those repressed perhaps (4,3)  
19 Relaxes idiots around two points (7)  
21 Wolf doing badly (5)  
22 Nun spun able alternative to standard (5)

### Across

1 Sad, and more so back inside (6)  
4 Cut back on seafood, with starter of cod not halibut (6)  
8 Awkwardly erect and very quiet in principle (7)  
9 Show disapproval; be aware how to avoid disappointment at the theatre? (4,3)

11 Service the alternative for composer (5,5)  
12 "13 18 by 11: 16 13 18 21. 9!", for example, and stuff (4)  
13 Number concerning the outside (5)  
14 Look back after morning place for those disarmed, perhaps (8)  
16 Where you buy things to evaluate physically (8)

Crossword set by Hisashi.

Answers to last issue's crossword (no. 520):  
Across: 2 Pallindrones, 8 Nagasaki, 11 Hide, 12 Frame, 13 She, 14 Loci, 15 Mart, 16 Evade, 18 Unlisted, 21 Rage, 22 Isn't, 23 Tearless, 26 Erato, 27 Swag, 28 Peed, 29 OXO, 30 Rooks, 32 Anna, 33 Pot Roast, 36 Cement Mixer. Down: 1 Nun, 3 Aha, 4 Deified, 5 Orea, 6 Ephemeral, 7 Greatness, 9 Ashen, 10 Solos, 17 Area, 18 Uninstall, 19 Integrate, 20 Tata, 23 Top Spot, 24 Radar, 25 Sexes, 31 Wants, 34 Owe, 35 Tit.

## Sudoku

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

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

### The Varsity Scribblepad

### Last issue's solutions

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

## Kakuro

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

				13	8			
			12				15	
	17		27					
21								18
						4		
7					17			
17				24				
			4					
	31							
			3					

## Hitori

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



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



FOOTBALL

# Pembroke's weekend of two halves

Relegation looms after league defeat, but the Plate still offers hope

 EMMANUEL	6
 PEMBROKE	0

MATT LEGGETT

There were only 3 points between Emma and Pembroke going into this PWC Division 1 game, and it was vital for both teams. An under-strength Pembroke side needed a win to escape the relegation zone whilst Emma hoped to cement their place in next season's top flight.

Pembroke aimed to build on their good performance at Downing last week by playing a physical game and trying to restrict the more creative attacking play of the Emma front players. This tactic, however, never really got going as the boys in Blue started the game slowly and without any real drive. Emma bossed the midfield from the first whistle and within minutes Emma had found the net when a slick through-ball dissected the Pembroke defence and left their striker free to slot the ball between the keeper's legs.

More Emma dominance followed and their build-up play created space down the wings, where time and time again the Pembroke defence lacked the pace to prevent the Emma wingers getting in behind. Inevitably, this stylish attacking play led to a goal from Brown.

Pembroke weren't without opportunities, however. After the second goal they rallied and started to string passes together. Their hard-work paid off on the half-hour mark with a good chance which was fired over from 8 yards out. From that point on, though, the first half was all Emma's. Just before halftime a defensive lapse gave the Emma winger time and

space on the right to make a pin-point cross which was duly tucked away.

As the teams emerged for the second half Pembroke's prospects were bleak, as was the weather. The second half started in much the same vein as the first had ended – Emma having the majority of possession and the ability to capitalise on it. Pembroke's spirit was broken in the 50th minute when the ball fell to Parsons on the edge of the box and his scuffed shot bobbed through to nestle just inside the back post. At 4-0, Emma were coasting and were encouraged even more with the arrival of their Master, who had come to support from the sideline.

A corner kick gave them their next goal. Left-back Declan Clancy, who despite being described by his captain as "little" and "ratty", rose well in the box to head home. He finished the game with two goals, not quite managing the "perfect hat-trick" (right foot, left foot, head), but will be pleased with his well-deserved brace.

Emma thoroughly deserved their win, outclassing Pembroke all over the pitch. Captain Tom Perez was

delighted with the performance and will be happy that they are not only out of trouble at the bottom of the table but are now in a position from which they can aim to finish in the top half of the table. Pembroke are going to need a lot more if they hope to be playing PWC 1st division football next season.

The full-time whistle was welcomed when it came. Captain Moji Neshat said it was not possible to "dissect the defeat", and was

focusing instead on the upcoming crucial league matches against Fitz and Catz, as well as mounting a defence of the Plate trophy which they won last year.

A day later Pembroke would face Kings in a repeat of last year's Plate final, a game that Pembroke hoped would give them to opportunity to retain their title and salvage an increasingly dismal season. Tired legs didn't hinder Pembroke, running out 2-1 victors over King's.

Emma College AFC (4-4-2)  
Goals: Clancy (2), Brown, Douglas (2), Parsons  
Subs: Dickson, Gower, Rostom



Pembroke College AFC (4-4-2)  
Goals:  
Subs: Paya, Cain



TIM SHERRINGTON

RUGBY

# Clare cause upset in rugby Cuppers

Division 3 CCK knock out Division I Downing in shock fixture

 CCK	18
 DOWNING	5

VARSITY SPORT

CCK, a third division team made up of players from King's, Clare and Corpus, have beaten first division Downing causing the first major upset of Cuppers 2010. CCK have now won two matches in Cuppers, first defeating Fitz, whilst Downing, as a seeded team, were given a bye into the first round. On the day the underdogs deserved their win, playing with aggression and team spirit

that was lacking in the complacent favourites.

What is most amazing about this result is that it did not come from a single, wild break-away try, but from consistent and measured rugby. Both CCK and Downing are proud of their packs and unlike many college teams they both put out an eligible front row week in week out, allowing contested scrums. On this occasion the less experienced pack were the stronger and drove Downing back several times. Downing still took first blood, with a breakaway try, but in true professional form CCK slowly worked their way out of the deficit using intelligent kicking and a blitz defence to keep Downing out of the game. By half time CCK had managed to score a try on

the wing from Tom Donovan as well proving they know when to take the points by successfully opting to take three points from a kickable penalty. The mentality of keeping your opponents boxed in whilst making sure the scoreboard is ticking over is a mature one for a third division College team but CCK proved they were up to the challenge.

As the game progressed the comeback that Downing fans expected never arrived. CCK now had the wind on their backs and kept Downing pinned in their corners with a mixture of long kicks, diligent chasing, and strong rucking.

The CCK forwards didn't tire either and their scrums and lineouts were dominant all the way until the final whistle. With a second half

penalty and another try from winger Donovan, CCK were home and dry. Downing will be frustrated at the unexpected result but it was a fair one; regardless of their division the favourites were not the best team on the day and if they couldn't stop CCK they deserve to go out.

The next round will bring further challenges for CCK who will most likely take on Hughes Hall in the quarter finals. However, if this result has taught us anything about Cuppers rugby it is that it's unpredictable. Who knows, perhaps CCK can do the unthinkable and win their side of the draw, knocking out Hughes Hall and John's, to reach the final. With less than four weeks to go CCK are going to be worth watching.

## Sport in Brief

### Table Tennis

The table tennis club won five titles at the CDTTL League Invitation Tournament last weekend. In a display of pure class the University team took on teams from around Cambridge and showed that they have both top quality players and depth in all fields. Sasha Tsai was the number one seed in the women's singles and proved her worth winning the singles as well as the doubles with help from her teammate Vanda Ho. In the Men's singles and doubles draw, the top five University players and top two pairings were placed in the same half. Assier, Drake, Kittipassorn and Speed fell victim to the unlucky draw but Hall still managed to take the singles and the doubles titles with his teammate Yeung.

### Rugby

The women's rugby team have continued their winning streak by putting 70 points past Nottingham. In a game that saw twelve tries Laura Britton was the stand out player. What makes this match interesting is not the final score but the fact that the Blues were fielding most of their reserves. With this show of talent many of the starting team will be worrying about their places as we get closer and closer to the Varsity match on March 6th.

### Local Sport

Histon's teenage defender Callum Stewart has asked his coach, Alan Lewer, to drop him from the team following a difficult match. In a 3-3 draw against Hayes & Yeading, Stewart was to blame for at least one of the opposition's goals and was taken off at half time; no wonder his confidence was shaken. He has asked to play for the reserves in an attempt to help him regain his confidence. Lewer has praised the youngster's openness saying "He doesn't have to apologise. He's young and these mistakes are part of the learning process." The world of professional football could learn something from Stewart's honesty, but of course, they won't.



# Modern Pentathlon

Ever heard of it? **Tom Woolford** meets the Cambridge team to find out how this modern twist on an ancient classic works

The pentathlon was first contested over 2,700 years ago. It consisted of the five areas in which Spartan soldiers ought to excel: running, jumping, javelin, discus, and wrestling.

Introduced to the 5th modern Olympiad in Stockholm's 1912 games, the epithet 'modern' was added to denote that the sport now reflected the skills and abilities of the nineteenth-century soldier. Running was the only retained discipline: swimming was the additional athletic pursuit, jumping was now performed on the back of a horse, throwing was replaced with shooting, and the combative element was now represented by fencing.

The founder of the modern Olympic movement, Pierre de Coubertin, was delighted to both devise and introduce a competition of "great importance" that tested "a man's moral qualities as much as his physical resources and skills, producing thereby the ideal, complete athlete."

The sport has been included in the Olympics ever since, with a women's discipline introduced in the 2000 Sydney games.

Setting the Scene: You, a nineteenth-century cavalryman, are lost without horse and comrades behind enemy lines. Your only means of escape is, within just a few intense hours, to fight valiantly with your sword; swim across a raging torrent;

commandeer an unfamiliar horse, riding it quickly through treacherous terrain; and finally run for your life, neutralising enemy soldiers with your trusty rifle en-route. Now codify...

## 1. FIGHT: Fencing

Reach for your épée sword and engage in mortal combat by sparring with all the other competitors in a round-robin format. One hit decides each round so every time it's a tense and skilled encounter.

Each duel gets more frenzied towards the end of its one-minute duration as a no-hit draw registers a defeat for both combatants. Win at least 70% of these fights to register a 1000-point maximum, with every defeat costing you precious points.

## 2. SWIM: 200m Freestyle

Desperate to escape you shed your armour and launch yourself across the river (swimming pool). No particular stroke required; you go as quickly as you can freestyle over 200m. For a maximum 1000 points, you make it across in 150 seconds. Michael Phelps may have had over 45 seconds to towel himself dry by then, but it is still a huge ask. Every second over 2:30 costs you 12 points from that maximum.

## 3. RIDE: Horse Jump

Entering an enemy stable, you commandeer an unfamiliar but fine-looking steed (horses provided by the organisers and lots drawn before the event). Twelve obstacles (up to 120cm in height) stand between you and your destination spread over a singularly foreign c.400m stretch. And time is not on your side: a clock (set by the tournament organisers) counts down the valuable seconds that determine your fate.

Make it unscathed and in the time allowed for 1200 points, but each knock-down, refusal, fall and delay saps away expensively at your haul.

## 4. & 5. RUN & SHOOT: Staggered 10m Pistol shooting

In 2008 the sport's governing body, UIPM, combined these two disciplines to create a single spectacle like the winter games' biathlon equivalent.

Your points from the first three events are now calibrated into different starting times (think John Anderson in the nineties' show *Gladiators*: "You will go on my first whistle..." etc).

Once you're off, it's a race to the end. No more points. No more prizes. No more breathers. It all culminates in this one, final event of the day: Death or glory.

First, you take your 4.5mm calibre single shot air pistol and, with unlimited ammunition, have to hit five targets at a 10m distance.

Then, abandoning gun, you traverse a kilometre before negotiating a fresh set of five targets. Another kilometre follows. Five more targets. Finally, with your brain and body fully spent in your desperate counter-attacking escape, you sprint one more kilometre to be hailed as a hero behind the lines of your own army. A gold medal immortalises your achievements on that fateful day.

## The Sport in Cambridge

In line with the distinction that the father of the modern Olympic movement attached to the sport, Modern Pentathlon is honoured with a full Blue status in both a men's and women's team event. The annual Varsity match will be contested for the 53rd time next month in Tunbridge Wells. But over the last decade, a

BUCS individual and team competition has also been developed, now including venerable institutions such as Durham, Leeds, Liverpool, last year's ladies' champions Bath, and men's champions Manchester. There are various training sessions for all of the sport's five disciplines and interested persons are invited

to contact pentathlon@cusu.cam.ac.uk to try out Modern Pentathlon without even paying an annual subscription.

To see Modern Pentathlon stars Brad Dixon and Hannah Darcy in action in Varsity's SuperSports competition check out varsiTV.co.uk



JON ANDERSON



SAM GAGE

# VARSITY

Think you could do better? We're looking for sport writers and photographers. If you'd like to work for us, get in contact with our Sport Editors at **sport@varsity.co.uk**



RUGBY

# Hawks Club are helped to victory over Kew

With some help from their friends the Hawks defeated the oldies in a tight fixture

	HAWKS	38
	KEW	34

ED THORNTON

In a match littered with big names and exciting tries the Hawks beat some of their former members despite a complete lack of organisation. It was obvious from the start that this was not the most serious fixture, the new Hawks shirts had a blazer and tie printed on them and only a handful of them were filled with Hawks; most of the team consisted of players rounded up on the day by captain Jamie Gilbert. Kew Occasionals, who had brought a host of ex-Blues to Oxford Road including thrice winning Cambridge Blue Richard Bartholomew and the infamous Oxford U21 captain Phil Boon, were similarly disorganised and seemed to be concentrating on the night ahead rather than the game at hand.

Despite all of this, both sides managed to score some spectacular tries and provide the small crowd with an entertaining afternoon in the fog. Set plays were generally messy, with the exception of the Hawks five

man lineout which completely baffled the Kew forwards. Well built, phase-by-phase rugby was scarce but the poor defensive discipline on both sides meant that gaps opened up all over the park, allowing some flair attacking to shine through. The lack of structure that provided the gaps also offered the possibility of one-off big hits and these were seen scattered unexpectedly throughout the match.

In the first half, before fatigue set in, the tries were normally fast and came from depth. The Kew full back even took the ball from inside his own half and managed to use his somewhat over exaggerated side-step to beat a host of players to score a fifty metre try. As the game went on, the pace slowed and whenever the whistle was blown everyone was happy to take the minute breather. There were injuries on both sides too; this forced the teams to play with fewer than the traditional fifteen men making the disjointed match even more open and the players even more out of breath. This doesn't mean that the points stopped coming, only that they were more sporadic.

Blue Ed White managed to dance through the Kew backline, even with the injury he had picked up and his give-away giggle as he threw the dummy. Captain Jamie Gilbert

helped his team to victory too with four tries, each similar to the last; following up a teammate's break Gilbert would take a short pass running at full tilt and crash over the line before anyone could get near him.

The close score line was not down to a hard fought match but due to neither team really keeping score and eventually ending up around the

same mark.

The tipping point on the day might have been Stewart 'Bus' Eru, Blues captain in 2003, who arrived with Kew but ended up playing for the Hawks. His sheer size and power were hard to defend against and every time he had the ball it took at least two defenders to bring him down. In a match where the

defending team often relied on last ditch tackles rather than an impenetrable line of tacklers big ball carriers can make all the difference. The match ended 38-34 in favour of the home side but this was swiftly forgotten as both teams headed to the post-match celebrations at the Hawks Club.

PAT CROSSLEY



Jamie Hood breaks through as fellow Blue Jamie Gilbert struggles to run his trademark supporting line

## Varsity Bio



Name: Brad Dixon

Sport: Modern Pentathlon

College: Trinity

Height/Weight: 185cm/76kg

### RESULTS:

Standing Jump: 188cm

Limbo: 100cm

Bag Throw: 289.5cm

100m: 13.59 secs

Bleep Test: Level 12.10

SuperSports Score: 25.59

## 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
Pentathlon	24.15
Football	22.998

### Week 4: Modern Pentathlon

This is Week 4, Sport 4, of *Varsity* Sport's newest competition. Each week we're taking a male and a female competitor representing a Blues sport and putting them to the test. Five events assess specific sporting attributes: speed, strength, stamina and flexibility will all be measured.

One of the more unconventional sports willing to accept our challenge was the Modern Pentathlon. For those of you unfamiliar with the sport check out what it involves on page 30. Unlike the other sports we have featured in this competition, the Modern Pentathlon is the only one which is actually multi-disciplinary, meaning

that these 'super' athletes should be well suited to our diverse tests.

Representing the men is Brad Dixon, whilst stepping forward on the women's behalf is Hannah Darcy. Darcy explained why she feels her sport is the most demanding, informing us that: "In the ancient Olympic games, the winner of the pentathlon was crowned the Victor Ludorum – the overall winner of the games. In the words of Aristotle: 'the most perfect sportsmen, therefore, are the pentathletes because in their bodies strength and speed are combined in beautiful harmony.'"

Deep, but is it true? Apparently

not in terms of strength, both athletes posting disappointing scores in the standing jump and bag throw. However, recovery came thanks to very respectable scores for both in the 100m and Bleep Test, ensuring the Modern Pentathlon scored reasonably well.

Darcy in particular showed that she is an all-round athlete, jumping into first place amongst the women competitors. Overall the Modern Pentathlon narrowly missed out on climbing into second position, finishing just behind Hockey.

Next week it's the turn of Boxing's Chris Webb and Heley Matthews.

## Varsity Bio



Name: Hannah Darcy

Sport: Modern Pentathlon

College: St Catz

Height/Weight: 160cm/55kg

### RESULTS:

Standing Jump: 167.6cm

Limbo: 100cm

Bag Throw: 167.5cm

100m: 14.84 secs

Bleep Test: Level 12.8

SuperSports Score: 22.71



You can watch videos of this week's competitors by checking out: <http://www.varsity.co.uk/episode/bhyzb5>



The Modern Pentathlon, what's it all about?

Featurep30



# SPORT



The Hawks take on Kew and CCK defeat Downing in the Cup

Rugbyp29,31

FOOTBALL

## Fitz fuming, Jesus jubilant in Cuppers

A controversial penalty deep into stoppage time allows Jesus to go on and win in extra-time

	JESUS	4
	FITZWILLIAM	2

OLLY WEST

All bets were off. With Fitzwilliam 2-1 up and looking comfortable and the time on the clock approaching three figures, the numerous members of the student press assembled at Fitz's Oxford Road sports ground had already penned their final paragraphs when Billy centre-back Marc Stettler was controversially adjudged to have handled inside his own area.

This gave Jesus forward Michael Johnson, one of nine of the University team squad in action yesterday at Oxford Road, the chance to take the game into extra time. The Blues' captain made no mistake from the spot, and Jesus took a foothold in a game which had been all but lost.

They didn't let it go and only 8 minutes before penalties would have been required, the away side's Aki Laakso bundled through a mesh of defenders and the ball somehow found itself at his feet with only Fitz goalkeeper and Captain James Gillingham to beat. Laakso didn't falter and put his team ahead for the first time in an hour. Jesus midfielder Avery later swept a clinical strike into the top corner in the dying seconds, and Fitz were left demoralised.

By this time, the home side were playing with 10 men, after centre-half and human battering-ram Tom Johnson had limped off following one crunching tackle too many as Fitz piled forward. It could have been so different. Billed as "The most important match in the history of football in Cambridge. Ever", the contest lived up to its name. The finest footballers of Fitzwilliam and Jesus Colleges gave everything in a match that had it all: goals and cards, passion and controversy, and no shortage of quality. This was everything you could want in a cup-tie and more – appropriate, as it was not only a second round



The moment Jesus forward and Blue Michael Johnson slotted his penalty past Fitz keeper and captain James Gillingham

cuppers match but also counted as a league game following the tie's postponement for a frozen pitch last week.

With four University players on Fitz' side and five representing Jesus adding extra spice to the rich footballing histories of each College, no inch was given from the off as personal rivalries spilled into the College arena. The match unsurprisingly developed into an intriguing contest. Blues Laakso and Johnson led the Jesus line but received little change out of the commanding Fitz centre-halves, while Fitz's own Blues' striker, Danny Kerrigan, could rarely disturb the composure of Gwyther and Canavan at the other end. In miserable conditions, the central midfield battle was fierce enough that the vocal crowd resisted hiding inside the pavilion as the flying tackles of Fitz's star pairing of Burrows and Hartley were matched by those of Avery and Taylor for Jesus.

It was Jesus who drew first blood, Laakso breaking on the left and slotting a low pass across the box to Blues captain Michael Johnson, who knocked the ball home with aplomb on 12 minutes. Fitz came back with a vengeance, but the referee took

centre stage as he would go on to do at the end of the ninety minutes. The home side's Mike Shiel, in his first game since before Christmas, firstly had a goal disallowed for offside with two full-backs seemingly playing him on, and then won a free-kick on the edge of the penalty area when most were convinced he had been felled inside.

Yet the official incurred the ire of both teams and sets of supporters, waving his cards around like it was going out of fashion. Avery's yellow card for diving, surely a first in College football, left the Jesus team livid and the Fitz fans in stitches. As his captain commented later, "oddly as a direct result of that foul and dive, the alleged 'diver' has lost two toe-nails".

Fitz quickly regained focus after half-time, and the deserved equaliser came off the head of winger Harry Gamsu, who sneaked in at the far post from a Wolke free-kick. All of a sudden, Kerrigan was finding space, Hartley had stamped his authority, and another goal lay in wait. A poor clearance could only reach Fitz's retreating right-back Rich Bulmore just outside the Jesus box. Finding himself one-on-one with the opposition keeper, Bulmore went for

power over finesse and was right to do so, Falcons' captain Chris Ellis in goal diverting the ball into the net as Fitz took a 2-1 lead. Thus it stayed until the much-debated penalty.

Fitz's grievances appeared genuine: the referee's claim that Stettler had made a 'voluntary' movement toward the ball with his arm was contentious to say the least, and six minutes of injury-time had been played before it was given. In such a hard-fought game of high-quality, however, luck was perhaps always going to be the decisive factor. Jesus made the most of theirs and it would have been hard to deny either side victory. The victors' captain Canavan comments summed it up: "It was a great game of football; big tackles, quality football, six goals, extra-time, and some controversy thrown in. You can't ask for much more than that."

In terms of the league, both teams receive a point a piece. Yet neither Jesus nor Fitz will care about the dropped points. The winner was always going to become hot favourites for the cuppers title, and Jesus will be convinced that they can make up for last year's penalty shoot-out heart-break come March.

Jesus College AFC (4-4-2)  
Goals: Johnson (2), Laakso, Avery  
Subs: Knight (Gerret), Farrell (Sanders)



Fitzwilliam College AFC (4-4-2)  
Goals: Gamsu, Bulmore  
Subs: Georgiou (Cox), Ayres (Shiel), Shalabi (Gamsu)

