

## Building work disturbs students

Authorities claim to have “minimised” noise levels but students complain their revision has been affected

NATASHA PESARAN

Students around Cambridge have faced disruption during a stressful revision period due to a number of building works carried out during Easter Term by colleges and faculties.

Re-roofing of the Friars Building, Queens’ College, accommodation housing mostly third year students, began on March 15th and continued into Easter Term.

In an email to students, the college stated that this ‘essential’ roof work, which could not be carried out during winter months, was expected to be ‘noisy’ but no more disruptive to surrounding buildings than the re-roofing of Chapel two years ago. The Chapel, however, does not house any students.

As a gesture of goodwill, the College offered those students affected the opportunity to reserve a desk in the College library on a day by day basis. However, the number of ‘reservable’ desks was limited to four and even then these desks were only made available to the eight students living on the top floor of the building.

No special arrangements were made for students living on the lower floors of the Friars Building or for those in the two student accommodation blocks, Dokett and Erasmus, situated nearby.

A similar situation was faced

by residents of Pembroke College accommodation on Fitzwilliam Street and Trumpington Street.

Work being undertaken by the College to provide more accommodation for students involved the conversion of a newly acquired property situated next to existing Pembroke student hostels. Due to tight deadlines to ensure the accommodation was made available for the start of the next academic year, work took place throughout Easter term causing serious disruption to students.

A spokesperson from Pembroke College commented, “We did take the potential question of noise very seriously and chose contractors with a record of working sympathetically in College environments. They have been very reactive to our needs and we have successfully rescheduled the noisiest work away from the examination period.

“We have also written to our students to keep them informed throughout and have offered alternative study arrangements to any who have raised concerns.”

However, *Varsity* has learned that despite repeated complaints from residents and reassurance that ‘noisy work’ would be completed in April, it continued well into the exam period.

Hammering of slates onto the roof began on June 1st, when some residents were still taking exams.

Pembroke student Emily



### Ellie Goulding at St John’s May Ball: “fantastic”

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Andrews commented: “The builders arrive at 7.30am six days a week and have been drilling and hammering most of the time.

“I was woken up most mornings by the sound of drilling on the other side of my bedroom wall. It felt like they were going to drill right through to my skull.

“I was driven out to the library every day because of the noise, when I normally prefer to work in my room.”

However, building work this term has not only affected student residential areas, but college and faculty

libraries as well, making it very difficult for some students to find a quiet area to work in.

The construction of new building for Humanities and Social Sciences on 7 West Road has also carried out during the revision and examination periods, in close proximity to a number of faculties on the Sidgwick Site, including the English and History Faculties.

The Estate Management Project Manager told *Varsity*: “In general, construction operations produce noise and can be disruptive to the work of the University and can be

particularly difficult to deal with by students facing examinations.

“The project team are wholly sympathetic to these concerns and special measures have been included within the project and within the construction contract to limit noise to acceptable levels.”

One second-year History student commented, “I could hear banging from the building work when I was trying to work in the Seeley Library.

“It could be very distracting and quite frustrating when the noise broke my concentration.”

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Kate Mason on holidays squandered



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Check out the surreal side of May Week



Got a good picture? Email it to [editor@varsity.co.uk](mailto:editor@varsity.co.uk)



John's headline act: Ellie Goulding



Guests drink Pimm's at a Queens' garden party



The Hon. Thomas Buckland leaves Trinity May Ball with friends



May Ball revellers carry home their flowers and dancing shoes



Punters under Clare bridge



Trombones have been something of a theme this week

# Varsity

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### Miscellanea Cantabrigia

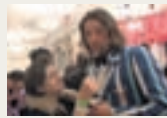
Hugo Gye says the future's bright. The future's Cambridge.



### Secret Diary of a Ballcrasher

What's the best way to crash a ball? Tonight's mission: free canapés

## onTV



### May Balls

Throw Lauren Cooney inside a May Ball and what do you get? Mayhem.



### Printing Varsity

Ever wondered how this copy of Varsity came to be in your hands? Find out how the magic happens.



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# Arts research “deserves more respect”

New Cambridge report claims that arts and humanities greatly benefit society

FIONA VICKERSTAFF

Research within the spheres of the arts and humanities merits greater acknowledgment, suggests a recent report commissioned by the University of Cambridge.

The research organisation RAND Europe conducted a recent study at the request of the University of Cambridge and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The aim of the investigation was to examine the ways in which university research into the arts and humanities is contributing to society.

Using the University of Cambridge as an example, evidence was taken from a survey of almost 300 researchers. In addition, exhaustive interviews and case studies were conducted both within and outside the University. Each stage of the project was linked to the ensuing outcomes, giving a sense of the breadth and scale of impact across the project as a whole.

“This survey is unusual in its depth and breadth,” said Professor Simon Franklin, Head of the School of Arts and Humanities at the University of Cambridge.

“RAND Europe have not taken the common route of focusing only on the obvious types of immediate impact this research has. Their report also confronts the more



Access to the Fitzwilliam Museum is a much-valued part of a Cambridge education

difficult and fundamental questions of the longer-term impact of in-depth, curiosity-driven research. It should play a significant role in taking forward this debate, which has become so important both to the funding bodies and to the universities themselves.”

The study reflects the significance which arts and humanities research currently exhibits and demonstrates that such research is able to generate a variety of “vital public benefits.” It argues that the research of academics is

habitually “seeping into intellectual life” in order to elevate and develop public understanding. 64%

## 64%

Percentage of academics participating in arts survey who say their work has influenced policy-making

of academics who participated in the survey said that their work had influenced policy-making, while an “overwhelming majority” reported that their industry had spread to a

national or international level.

Some of the ways in which research has impacted the public include arts festivals, exhibitions and translations. Researchers in the Faculty of English, for example, were able to make copies of a fragile medieval manuscript available online internationally.

It is hoped that these results will provide a model which other institutions can use in order to pursue and analyze the benefits of research in their own faculties of arts and humanities.

## MP Huppert does not vote on Trident

Varsity News

Cambridge MP Julian Huppert has missed a vote concerning Trident in the House of Commons, despite his anti-nuclear manifesto.

The vote was over a SNP proposal to add a section to the note of thanks to the Queen in which a review of the Trident nuclear missile system is included as part of the governments Strategic Defence and Security Review. The proposal called for a “full examination” of Trident, or “any possible replacement.”

Richard Taylor, Cambridge resident who blogs about local issues, highlighted Huppert’s absence from the vote, which seems to contradict his anti-nuclear stance in his election manifesto.

But Huppert has dismissed any claims that his absence signals a change of stance.

Speaking to *Varsity* he clarified that he was “absolutely committed to getting rid of Trident” and said: “I did not attend the vote intentionally because we were being whipped to vote against the amendment and I refused to do that.”

“I felt this would jeopardise the talks to end Trident.”

## World’s biggest tapestry goes online

Project developed by Girton artist depicts several Cambridge Colleges and their alumni over the centuries

Duncan Evans

The New World Tapestry, which is the world’s largest stitched embroidery, has been made available online in its entirety.

The tapestry, which is over eighty metres long and consists of twenty four panels, is the work of 256 tapisiers over a twenty-year period.

The first stitch was sewn in 1980 by US Ambassador Kingman Brewster, and the project was completed with a stitch by Prince Charles, in 2000, at Highgrove. Stitches were also made by HM the Queen, HM the Queen Mother, HRH Prince Philip, HRH the Princess Royal and HRH the Duchess of Gloucester.

The tapestry depicts the beginnings of English colonisation in Newfoundland, Guiana, Bermuda and North America from 1583 until 1642 – when the first English Civil War began with the raising of King Charles I’s standard at Nottingham. A number of Cambridge alumni and colleges feature on the panels.

Colleges featured on the tapestry include Pembroke, Trinity, Emmanuel and Jesus.

The tapestry was gifted to the British Empire and Commonwealth

Museum in Bristol, but will not be on display until the museum is re-located to London in 2012. At present, it is only accessible via the website.

The designer, Tom Mor, is a humorous illustrator from Girton. He emphasised the value of the tapestry as an educational tool, and the importance of its easy availability.

“It is available for schools, colleges or anyone interested in education,” he said.

“They have a unique tool here. It is a huge source of information. We want to get over the importance

of Cambridge in Anglo-American history. A lot of people who have been forgotten have been highlighted in the tapestry.”

“So many came from Cambridge colleges, and so many risked their lives or paid with their lives to set up America.”

Putting the tapestry on to the website was an arduous process, which has taken two years and is still not yet fully complete. It is anticipated that every panel will be online by the end of summer this year.

The tapestry can be viewed at [newworldtapestry.co.uk](http://newworldtapestry.co.uk).



The tapestry shows Cambridge’s role in the colonisation of America

## News in Brief

### Union Election results

Lauren Davidson has been elected as President of the Cambridge Union. The new committee consists of five women and one man. The other successful candidates are Alexandra Treacy as Social Events Officer, Anna Harper as Treasurer, Calum McDonald as Senior Officer, and Rebecca Bailey as Speakers Officer.

### Maternity hospital extension planned

The Rosie maternity hospital in Cambridge will double in size thanks to a £30m redevelopment to meet “increasing demands” on its services.

The intensive care and special care baby units will increase in size from 33 to 58 cots, and the proposals also include a birthing unit with 10 ensuite rooms which the hospital said would offer a relaxed environment for women.

Building work is set to be completed by the end of 2012.

### Cambridge graduate accused of theft

A Cambridge graduate has been accused of stealing £40,000 of rare books from the Royal Horticultural Society’s library in Pimlico.

The jury were told that William Jacques, 41, was caught with “a thief’s shopping list” of 70 rare titles, their shelf reference in the library, their condition and their value on the American market. He is accused of stealing 13 volumes of a 19th century botanical encyclopaedia.

A court has heard that library staff had come to recognise Jacques by his distinctive tweed jacket and glasses.

Jacques denies theft and going equipped for theft between June 2004 and March 2007. The trial continues.

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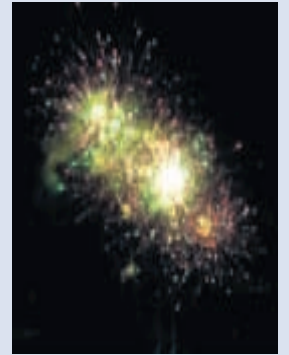
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# Ball Reviews



## Balls in Brief



### Caius May Ball ★★★★★

If the devil's in the detail, then orchestrating Caius May Ball must have been little short of hellish. The Four Seasons theme was represented superbly, with frankly amazing decor; it was clear that a huge amount of attention had been lavished upon the crucial little details, such as the Pick 'n' Mix in the pigeon holes. The winter area was bedecked with frosty lighting, vodka luges, and ice sculptures. The food was incredible, with a huge amount of variety (ginger-bread houses, anyone?), and the drink was no different – one could enjoy the provisions for hours without having to worry. The sole letdown was the lack of variety in entertainment: Caius is a small college, with a dearth of space for large attractions, and its labyrinthine layout made the programme a little incomprehensible to outsiders like myself. However, Hot Chip and Toploader were more than adequate compensation.

LAURA SOLOMONS

### Christ's May Ball ★★★★★

Following the theme of 'L'Esprit Nouveau' down to the finest detail, Christ's May Ball was everything a May Ball should be. Nothing was overlooked: an accordion-player entertained those queuing, a champagne truffle was given on entry, signs directed us to the Café Parisien or invited us to sample bonbons. Guests were able to sit on golden chairs around classically Parisian-style tables, in front of the Arc de Triomphe, sampling strawberries drizzled in chocolate or pastries from the pâtisserie. When we could bear to drag ourselves away from the buttery goodness of French cuisine, we were able to indulge our inner five-year-old in style on a steam-powered carousel or swing boats. The atmosphere exuded effortless 1920s Paris glamour, and yet only with total dedication and boundless imagination could this have been achieved. VICTORIA MASON

## Oh, everybody's starry-eyed

# 1888

Year of the first St John's May Ball

# 5

Number of years of May Ball experience of the longest-serving member of the Committee

# 90

Hours of entertainment scheduled

# 400

Number of performers booked

# 81,040

Number of individual Pick'n' Mix sweets

### Animo Luxuriari ST JOHN'S MAY BALL ★★★★★

Animo Luxuriari. Hmm. To some, a Latin tag might ring warning bells of the direst pretention, especially when accompanied with a blurb promising transcendental experiences and untold rapture, uncontrollable frenzy, and climactic euphoria. This being my third Johns Ball, I feel I'm qualified enough to accept that the college has earned the right to a typically arrogant Cantabridgian motto. But did the 2010 Ball live up to its predecessors?

Within the first thirty minutes, my girlfriend felt it her duty to inform me repeatedly about the 'temperature issue' – the Ball did not provide enclosed and heated tents, and most of the seating areas were outside. This entire layout was undermined further by the particularly cold summer's evening, which was unfortunate, to be fair (but admittedly, the committee should have provided for the eventuality – they're lucky it didn't rain).

As ever, queueing was smooth, and the strawberries, cream and

Champers provided upon entry were a nice touch. As the guests walked in, however, they were confronted with an assortment of the cliched fairground tropes (hoopla, coconut shy, etc), which in my opinion do more for grandstanding than for ball-goers enjoyment. This was made pretty obvious by the general scramble for the hogroast, and the typically Johnian beer-filled punts in New Court.

In general, the food and drink were of exceptional quality, not to mention quantity. Tent after tent of drinks, ranging from exotic G&Ts to martinis, milkshakes, and Pimms, and food, ranging from crepes (filled with maltesers, honey and bananas) to delicious burgers handcrafted meticulously by d'Arry's, made the ball a culinary triumph (ventro luxuriari?).

The aesthetics were good, but not entirely up to past standards; in 2008, Second Court boasted a miniature Eiffel tower. Its only prominent feature last night was a small arch, rainbow-lit and verging on the tacky. But many ball-goers endured the cupcake chairs and antler heads lining their hall, and the wooden taxicab in the First Court.

The headliners were a fantastic success, my personal favourite being the indie band 'The Cheek' (whose name was recently changed from 'Cheeky Cheeky and the Nosebleeds', as I recently found out on their Wikipedia page) – an odd but amusing scrap of trivia.

In light of Trinity Ball's fireworks success last night (with their surprising flamethrower effect), Johns had a lot to live up to last night, and the fireworks at Johns more than matched their arch-rivals. My personal favourite was the Hall of the Mountain King piece from the Peer Gynt suite (or, as is probably better known, that music from the Alton Towers entranceway) which was a fantastic success with hundreds of different types of fireworks going off at once, from twizzlers to cartwheels. Sadly, Johns fireworks seemed to lack a truly effective finale, and ended with the slight sense of not having... ended.

As a final verdict, I can honestly state that whilst enjoyable (as Johns May Ball never fails to be), the 2010 Ball didn't quite live up to the stratospherically high standards set by previous years.

NICK CHAPMAN



## Overrated



Barack Obama

How can you overrate the President whose key triumph, fifteen months in office, is nothing less than a milestone Act securing health insurance for 32 million previously uncovered Americans?

Sadly, Obama spoils the victory with that soppy rhetorical frenzy of the campaign days. Would it really be so ego-compromising to finally abandon the status of an iconic history-maker? Obama's guilt is he understands his mission too epically, stuffing his sensible Democratic agenda with grand-narrative themes so repulsive to everyone uncomfortable with the record of the last century's great demagogues.

As a candidate for office, he stood above the rest not with his programme, (his most emphasised fiscal agenda and Iraq promises were a benchmark of any Left Democrat manifesto), but with his almost idiomatic tale of an African-American dreaming his (and everyone else's) middle-class dream. His pre-electoral agenda was less the pragmatic "tax breaks to billionaires have to be eliminated" and more the prophetic "in the words of Scripture, the time has come to set aside childish things". He framed the challenge as a collective one, yet likened the American story so relentlessly to that of his own life that he brought into the campaign the kind of messianism more worthy of a revolutionary leader than a future White House policy-maker.

A year and half in office, he still fashions himself as a Mandela of the American workers and with no less vigour conceitedly uses that most shapeless mantra "change" to mark so bluntly the spark of the moments of the White House's triumphs.

President Obama may be a great reformer, but please let's not follow him in his own myth-driven overestimation of his moment-defining significance. His actual historical significance can hardly be overestimated; my problem is the mission-like sentiments he uses.

SONA URBANCIKOVA

## Comment

**"Unfortunately, it's just too difficult to get drunk on cocktails watered down to the strength of Tropicana"**

KATE MASON

## Mr. Clegg, enter stage left

Politicians don't learn their trade in the debating chamber. They treat Parliament as a stage and conduct government as if it were a drama. Politics, it seems, is all about theatre



JAMES SHARPE

Politicians are born. That aphrodisiac of power tends to manifest itself at university when one leaps head first into debating and student politics. Clarke, Gove, Hague have all been there. Then there are the chaps who stand on the sidelines, nurturing their ambition and brooding in silence, learning as they watch. Think Cameron and Osborne. But what about dear old Nick Clegg? He is one of those rarest of politicians – a man who demonstrably had little interest in politics. He was a thesp.

Clegg is, therefore, in good company (depending on your perspective) with Tony Blair. Yet there is a big difference between brandishing a guitar and writing an article in *The Guardian* expressing

your love of the works of Samuel Beckett during election campaigns. It is the quintessential high versus low culture debate; and the former, as an unintended consequence, offers perfect training for the world of politics. Without mass appeal, the theatre has to compete for funding. Rather good training for the budget restraints now being imposed at Whitehall.

And Clegg is a graduate with first class honours. He has acted with Helena Bonham-Carter, and been directed by Sam Mendes. Even as an MP he has kept the acting up, performing such diverse roles as *Sleeping Beauty's* Prince Charming, and a health-and-safety inspector checking the structural integrity of Jack's beanstalk. Clegg does pantomime very well, don't you know.

It is a false assumption that the Cambridge Union Society (or CULC and CUCA for that matter) prepares one for government. Certainly, it is the place to cut your political teeth. The Union educates in how to hack and to win (and lose) elections. The ADC is the place to go to learn the art of government. Theatres have to make a profit, so they have to negotiate a fine line between plays that will make a profit; and those challenging, quirky numbers that only sadists want to see. This was

clearly the principle employed during the coalition negotiations: the Conservatives are allowed to cut the deficit – economic recovery is always a mainstay of politics; the Lib Dems get a say on voting reform – something of a new departure in British politics.

But not all Lib Dems have taken Clegg's theatrical route to the top. Unlike Labourites and Conservatives who take traditional paths to power – paths that teach them to sacrifice all for power – the Lib Dems tend to retain such a thing as 'principles'. The result: the Lib Dems cannot stand compromise. Just look at the grumbling that surrounded proportional representation. Did they seriously think it was ever truly on the cards?

Clegg knows that visionary pieces always have to compromise. After all, he never took the starring role – he was a standard-bearer for Sam Mendes. Otherwise they either go over budget – thereby preventing the presentation of similar shows

in the future – or the director/visionary drives everyone mad – meaning he never works again. Clegg knows that sometimes a minimal set is needed if it is the price for good sound and lighting. That is why he dropped his opposition to Trident in exchange for pupil premiums. Luckily those notorious thesp-techie fights must have taught him to handle his party; especially one populated by a bizarre mixture of Europhile Tories, disaffected Labourites, and semi-extinct true Liberals.

Perhaps the best thing about a theatrical training is that most useful of attributes in modern politics: spin. Just look at the first leadership debate.

No wonder Clegg did well – look at the

audience; be engaging; don't hog the limelight. Pity it didn't last. Evidently theatre can have a downside. After all, Beckett's fame rests on making nothing happen, twice.



## Paradise Lost – literally

What sort of moron goes abroad to spend an entire holiday at the hotel?



KATE MASON

As a result of that unspellable Icelandic volcano, I recently got trapped abroad. I say 'abroad' out of habit, since the sympathy you get when people find out you've been swanning around in the Bahamas for an extra week is, as I discovered, fairly limited.

Paradise Island and New Providence, where I was staying, are

not the most culturally diverse places you may ever visit. After we had taken in the Bahamas National Library (four floors in a former jail, lined with copies of John Grisham thrillers and the *Narnia* Chronicles), the Bahamas Art Gallery (closed for renovation) and the Bahamian Parliament, we devised a cultural tour of our own: Tourist-watching.

Though tourists were noticeably lacking on the fabled beaches and in downtown Nassau, we knew exactly where to find them. Sneaking past the front desk of a resort (their natural habitat), we found our first: the obese American with chums, wristbanded and crushed into the inadequate space beside the bar beside the pool. Further in, here were more of the same, gorging committedly on something that resembled school sports teas,

while an enthusiastic rep conveyed his enthusiasm by enthusiastically announcing the impending bout of – argh! – poolside bingo.

Next door there were more. Acres of nonchalant holiday-makers swapping their dollar for what looked like the world's worst garden party. At least a bit of jelly-wrestling might have spiced things up. True, I did spot some amorous grappling between two sun-creamed scallywags but that was as hot as it got.

By the third visit – where we were unfortunately spotted by security – we knew the deadened-eyed look of the all-inclusive holiday-maker. I understand, I understand: the money-saving potential and comforting lack of restaurant choice might be just the thing. Yet at what cost? Tagged and herded, the guests, who might

have been in Sharm-el-Sheik, the Dominican Republic or Miami for all they could tell, were committedly chucking down booze to a man. Unfortunately for them it's just so difficult to get drunk on all-inclusive cocktails watered down to the strength of Tropicana.

To ignore the location of your holiday so decisively is to insult the beauty and variety of the rest of the world. On even the smallest and most uniformly paradisaical of islands, there are things to be seen – not merely glanced at on the free shuttle ride from airport to resort. To exist in a hermetically sealed self-replenishing shell with your fellow country-men for company is to mock the purpose of travel. It is to dismiss location as irrelevant.

For such travellers I have some advice: get a sunbed, and stay at home.



# Moazzam Begg: Obama is “more dangerous” than Bush

Joel Massey talks to former Guantanamo Bay detainee **Moazzam Begg** about Obama, McDonald's and life inside the world's most notorious detention facility

**“T**here was a knock on my door at midnight,” begins Moazzam Begg as he recounts his story to me to me down a crackling phone line. “I answered it to find a group of people,” he continues, “un-uniformed and un-identified. A gun was put to my head. They put a hood over me and carried me off into the back of a vehicle.”

This happened in Pakistan on 31st January 2002. It was the beginning of an ordeal that lasted until 25th January 2005 when, as Begg later says, he was “released without charge, without a trial and without an explanation.”

Begg is a British citizen, brought up in an ordinary middle class family in Birmingham. He moved to Afghanistan in the summer of 2001 with his wife and three children. He was there to “continue a project we started in the UK, to build a school for girls in Kabul.”

**“I was stripped naked; punched, kicked and dragged in the mud; dogs were brought so close I could feel their saliva dripping on my back; my hair and beard shaved off so I couldn't even recognise myself in the mirror.”**

Air raids after 9/11 led him to flee with his family to Pakistan. There he was arrested by Pakistani officials and taken to two US-run detention facilities in Afghanistan, first Kandahar, then Bagram.

“That's where the brutality began,” he recalls. “I was stripped naked; punched, kicked and dragged in the mud; dogs were brought so close I could feel their saliva dripping on my

back; my hair and beard shaved off so I couldn't even recognise myself in the mirror.”

In February 2003 he was moved to the now infamous Guantanamo Bay detention camp in Cuba. Begg says that there he “remained in a cell measuring eight feet by six feet, isolated from any other human being, except guards and interrogators for 2 years.” Was he never allowed out of his cell? “Only for something they called ‘recreation’. This meant walking around in a fifteen square feet caged area outside.” Begg tells me he was only allowed to do this for fifteen minutes twice a week.

So, what was an ‘average’ day like in Guantanamo Bay? “For me, as a Muslim, it would begin with dawn prayer, which was a welcome break from the monotony of the rest of the day. Then there was a very bland, very minimal meal served for breakfast, pushed through what they call a ‘bean hole’. And that's it. For the rest of the day I would walk around in my cell: three steps forward and three steps back.” After a pause, he sums up life at Guantanamo by simply saying, “nothing happens.”

I wonder what his relationship was like with his captors, and am taken aback by the magnanimity of his reply. “Some of them were very decent people. Some of those people are still my friends to this day; we're friends on facebook in fact. Two American soldiers have come to the UK and toured with me, talking about our opposite experiences.”

Moving away from his experiences in Guantanamo Bay, I felt I had to ask which of his actions might have alerted the suspicion of the US and Pakistani authorities in the first place. “Well,” he says, “the Americans had offered bounties of thousands of dollars on any foreign Muslims who happened to be in a certain region of southern Pakistan at the time.” But was he not once at a militant Islamic training camp? “I went in 1993, yes. But they didn't know that at the time, it wasn't one of the reasons for my arrest.” Yet why visit such a camp in the first place? “Well, tens of thousands of people were going to these camps. It was seen as quite normal. Remember they were funded by American and British money. Now we think these places are all about terrorism, but they weren't seen like that then. It was completely different.”

In the later stages of the interview I want to hear Begg's views on the broader political context surrounding Guantanamo Bay. Has the new US administration made any progress? “Obama began his presidency by saying that he'd close Guantanamo, close secret detention sites and stop torture. In reality, what's happened is that there are still 180 people in Guantanamo Bay; still military detention sites dotted around the world and proxy detention is still taking place. That's where countries known to be abusers of human rights are befriended by the United States in order to allow for the outsourcing of torture.

More disturbingly still,” he continues, “Obama has begun a policy of targeted assassinations: simply extra-judicial killings, sanctioned by the very highest authorities.”

Why does he think they have decided on such a course of action? “It's almost as if it's more expedient and efficient, rather than to detain people for years and earn public scrutiny as a result, to simply kill them. That's what's happening.”

Perhaps most interesting of all was Begg's view that, not only have we not really moved forwards since the Bush years, but that in some ways Obama has taken us backwards. “Bush was an openly combative President. He didn't explicitly endorse torture, but he talked about ‘enhanced interrogation techniques’ and everyone knew what he meant. Obama is more dangerous in a sense because he says all the right words and speaks the right language.

He uses the language of reconciliation with the Muslim world, but in reality there hasn't been much change at all.”

Finally, I ask when he thinks we might see the closure of Guantanamo Bay. “If you see Guantanamo now it's like a small American town. So much financial investment has gone into it; tens of millions of dollars just in building the state of the art prisons. You've got McDonald's, KFC and everything else you'd find in a normal American town. All of this has been built on site at Guantanamo for use by the soldiers, guardsmen, interrogators and support staff. I don't see it closing anytime in the future, whether it is ten years or more: Guantanamo is here to stay.”



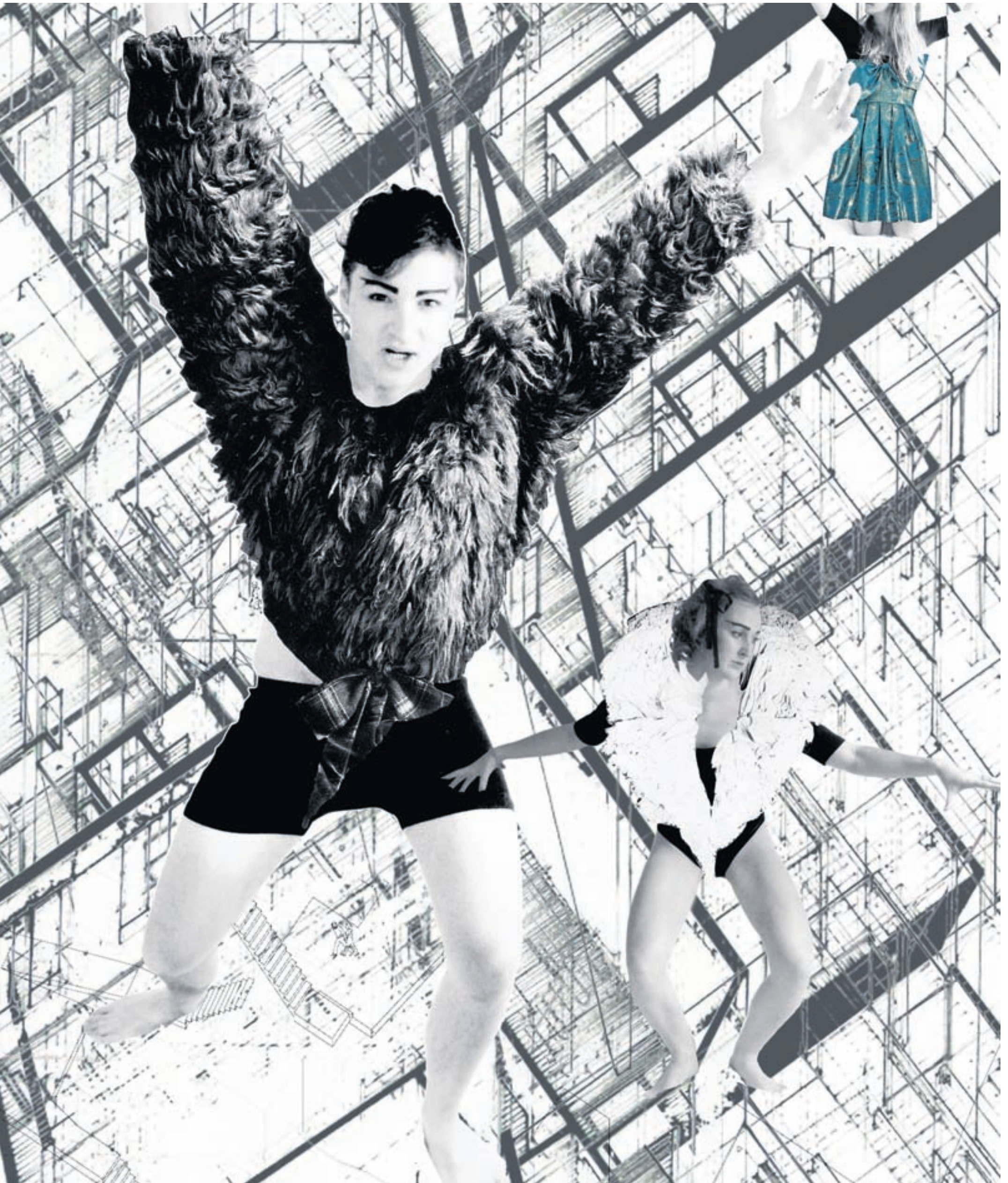
Guantanamo Bay detention camp, Cuba













# All The Pretty Fraudsters

**Victoria Beale** delves into the unconventional but surprisingly rewarding world of the academic charlatan

I cheated on my A-Level History exam. Well, I tried. I covertly printed memory jogging abbreviations running between my fingers in shaky biro. But all my spidery Italian Unification prompts: ‘Piedmont vs Lombardy Smackdown’ and ‘Fragmentation = MUSSOLINI’ sweated away in the ten minutes waiting outside the exam hall, and I spent the next three hours desperately trying to decipher blurred notes off my knuckles. Eating a post-exam bag of Nik Naks I was bitched out for my failings by my friend Catherine and told that Post-it notes smuggled in the tights was a better call.

Then, suddenly, I felt Guilty. It was awful: no sternly handsome Philosophy teacher had threatened me with consequences; I hadn’t punched my sister on the nose and had it caught on home video like when I was seven; my dad didn’t even know what I’d done, and yet I still wanted to repent. I was utterly unprepared for the remorse I felt, and spent the rest of the afternoon sprinting round all the Catholic churches in my home town seeking absolution. The priest I finally found gave me a glass of water, told me they only did confession between three and five on Saturdays, and that the Lord did not approve of my plans for breast implants.

Not a classic morality tale perhaps, but I think what we take from it is that honesty is an old fashioned virtue, and not even the clergy are that bothered about it anymore. Being an untrustworthy individual who has ended up in a prestigious university I am enduringly fascinated by the high-achieving con-artist who

**“The fear of being caught is no disincentive when compared with the thought of anonymity.”**

has completely disregarded all thought of convention and the threat of punishment. The most recent examples of such magnificent swindlers have been Adam Wheeler and Megan McCafferty. Both are or were Harvard students who attracted media attention due to quite astonishing acts of deception. McCafferty was first reported on due to her book deal for *How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild and Got a Life*, an uplifting tale of

how a middle class head-case managed to dry hump a preppy dreamboat and get accepted to Harvard. The piece of presumed autobiographical fluff, remarkable for the age of its author, was a few months later revealed to be heavily, flagrantly plagiarised from the works of well-established teen writer Meg Cabot. McCafferty was pilloried in the press and disappeared from prominence. Adam Wheeler operated on a far higher plane of trickery, faking all of his test scores, references and achievements to gain entry to Harvard, and was only discovered when he attempted, two years later, to win the Fulbright Scholarship and transfer to Oxford.

Clearly when you reach a certain level of success you feel immune from discovery; the fear of being caught is no disincentive when compared with anonymity, with failure. These Ivy League con-artists were moments away from discovery and downfall at any moment, but the thumping beats



MARTHA RAWLINSON

from the ‘Evil’ playlist on their iPod and the heady sense of Getting Away With It All made that a small price to pay. Besides, since her plagiarism debacle, Megan McCafferty has been offered a place at Georgetown, and received an internship at one of the most prestigious law firms in the country. Say what you like about infamy – it certainly makes you memorable, and perhaps employers have more appetite than the Careers Service would have you think for a lovable rogue.

Adam Wheeler will no doubt come

out of his court case, even with his custodial sentence, with a clutch of job offers from companies impressed by such an enterprising young man. Adam Wheeler and I may have little in common except all-American good looks, but I think I understand his appetite for sneakery.

So I say scam the exam boards, lie extravagantly in your next job interview, treat life generally like a free bar, and, when you are inevitably caught, walk away with eight bottles of champagne stashed in your dress and your head held high.

## A Farewell to Academia

**James Moran** muses briefly on the things he will miss most from his academic career in Cambridge

Putting the word ‘qua’ in a sentence and underling it without really knowing quite what it means.

Drawing the conclusion that matters are more complicated than they initially appeared but that space does not permit me to go into more depth.

Drinking far more liquids than feels comfortable in order to enjoy regular toilet breaks during revision.

Waiting for a friend to leave the room, and then inserting a rude word somewhere obscure in their unfinished essay—ideally one which betokens a lonely, unhinged but imaginatively sick mind.

Inventing and solving problems of no consequence in order to beef up the word count (“is Dawkins actually a witch? No. No he isn’t. So in the end we must conclude that matters are more complicated than they initially appeared, but space does not permit me to go into more depth”).

Not paying that FUCKING £45 fee the History library tried to screw out of me – I THOUGHT IT WAS A LONG LOAN BOOK YOU MONEY-GRABBING WHORES, so why don’t you look for convincing and corroborative evidence for the location of my ASS and KISS IT?

Doing Theology at Cambridge and never reading the New Testament (fuck you, Jesus, and all the rest of Egypt!)



## Cut out and keep: Surviving a Hangover

Put it in your wallet or stick it on your ceiling. You’ll be glad you did

**3** Solidarity: Safety in numbers. Choose carefully - you need a balance of support, knowledge that one of your friends was probably worse than you, and an agreement not to tag photos that were only funny at the time. Guilt, self-doubt, and dubious memory can be aided by a friend, who in an ideal world will only respond to dehydrated moans with water, and no helpful reminders of drunk-dialling incidents (deleting your sent messages before sleep saves pointless anxiety).

**4** Food: Nutritionists recommend a light, high protein breakfast including fresh fruit, whole-wheat toast, and herbal tea. Nutritionists do not drink. Avoid bizarre cravings or anything acidic (grapefruit juice) but otherwise eat whatever will help. Local favourites include

cold pizza & potato waffles.

**5** Acceptance: A stroll in the sunshine can help. Do NOT go to the gym. This is no time for purgatory. The idea of ‘running it off’ is flawed in that: a) The early morning gym atmosphere of green tea and smugness is nauseating. b) The last thing your body needs is to lose more water. It will hate you. c) The early gym clan (who all know each other) register your stumbling entrance, and are all secretly timing your (8 minutes later) scuttling exit. Embrace it. Stay in bed.

**6** Alcohol: This is a time when the ‘more is more darling’ principle works – just don’t drink whatever you had the night before (a recipe for flashbacks, and once again, nausea).

AMBER MEDLAND



# Ballcrashing 101

Like most things illegal, crashing Mall Balls is thoroughly entertaining. **Nathan Brooker** met up with two May Week jesters to discuss the art behind their outrageous pastime

The genius of the ballcrasher is one of May Week's more shadowy charms. Those that dare practise the discipline may not have the universal appeal of a cool, riverside glass of Pimm's, or the casual gamesmanship of a frame or two of croquet, but they do have each other. Take Pembroke's June Event two years ago: as the sun set on that warm summer evening, the pavements around Trumpington Street began to hum gently with an excited string of elegantly dressed students. Those excited young revellers, eager to taste the delights that their Student Committee had spent the last two terms organising for them, may be forgiven for not noticing the tall, dark-haired student hanging out of a first floor window on Pembroke Street. Attempting to scramble through a bathroom awning window, this hero was midway through his third or fourth attempt to break into the ball. Most people witnessing this would have crossed to the other side of the street; or alerted the authorities. Not our man Feste though. No, he sees Touchstone dangling above the glistening concrete and offers some sagely advice: "You know, there's an open window to your right. I think I can see a ledge that you could shimmy along just there."

"Oh," Touchstone replies, his scrambling legs pausing momentarily from scraping the brickwork, "I'll give that a go. Thanks." Touchstone pulls his head out of the window and turns to his counterpart. Their eyes meet and in a flash each knows full well what the other's doing there. As subtle as a heartbeat, the jokers have the measure of each other - 'You're

up to no good too'. Touchstone then follows his new friend's advice, pins himself to the wall and scurries into the college through an adjacent window. "I'll try and get a door open for you," he shouts over his shoulder, "go round the back."

## "Crashing has been around as long as May Balls."

So begins the story of Touchstone and Feste, leaders of a motley gang of Cambridge ballcrashers hell bent on enjoying the luxury of the university's May Balls without paying a penny for the privilege... Oh, and if there's an ice sculpture to knock over along the way, or a Survivors' Photo to spoil, then they're bang up for that as well.

When we caught up with the pair last week, the heroes recounted how that first night they gorged themselves on Pembroke's food, booze and entertainment before, in the bleary light of the morning, slipped back to one of their college rooms to drink strong coffee and regale each other with their own litany of past con- quests.

Feste's been crashing balls since his first year when, disgruntled by the fact that his college was ordering him out of his room for the duration of their event, he decided to exact his revenge. Vacating his room in the morning of the ball, Feste and a college buddy holed themselves up in a laundry cupboard for hours until the college's silly, overblown little party got under way and they could brave it down the staircase to join the festivities. "May Balls are full of rich, pompous idiots," Feste claims, a derisive glint shining in his eye, "always going around saying things like: 'Oh! I couldn't possibly do that in this suit!'. It's pathetic."

Touchstone's motives for ballcrashing are far less political than his buddy's. For Touchstone, it's all about the game and the artistry of the piece. "You could boil it down to all the free rides you can get on, or how much champagne you can drink: I don't care about any of that." Touchstone clarifies: "All I care about is that it's something exclusive and, despite all their efforts to stop me, I'm finding a way around them". There's a pause: "It's a game," he says, forcefully, "and I love it."

"So," I ask, "what tactics do you use to play this game?"

"Primarily," he says, "it's about misdirection." Feste nods approvingly. "It's like Derren Brown; you have to build a situation and get someone to start thinking in a certain way. Then, by aligning tiny principles of behaviour and reaction, you can achieve the most unlikely outcomes. It's fascinating, really."

The course of a good ball crash doesn't always run smooth, though. Touchstone warmly treats me to a story about his most epic failure. "It was at Emma," he starts, smiling, "I walked

up to the main gate and demanded to see the May Ball President". The confused besashed official stared back at him blankly. Touchstone continued: "Look! Do you not who I am?! Get Richard. Go and get Richard immediately, I need to speak to the May Ball President!". Apparently the official didn't do as told, instead he just stared at our jester more intently. "Listen!" Touchstone begins again, "I've been patient enough, will you just get the f\*\*\*ing President!". The official cuts him off, unable to take any more:

## "The jesters are not too keen to talk about the specifics of their methodology, preferring instead to focus on the mythology."

"What are you talking about?! I AM the f\*\*\*ing President!"

Our jesters are, of course, not without their jaw-dropping successes. Last year's May Balls were hit uniformly by the pair: Queens', Corpus, St John's, all crashed to devastating effect. Visitors to YouTube may have already seen some amazing footage of the crashers in action; they're slowly amassing quite an army of followers.

The jesters are not too keen to talk about the specifics of their methodology, preferring instead to focus on the mythology that surrounds their illicit passion. "Crashing has been around as long as May Balls," Touchstone declares, "I know it goes back to at least my grandfather's generation". It turns out Touchstone is not the first crasher in his bloodline. "My grandfather was at Trinity," he starts, "and he loved sneaking into John's functions". "Did he give you any tips?" I ask. "Well, not tips as such," Touchstone answers, "but he had hand-drawn maps of the college, complete with possible entrances". Has he tried them? "Well Cambridge doesn't really change," he starts, then sighs, "but most of the routes have been blocked off by now; well, all but one."

"All but one?"

"Yes, there's rumour that there's something underground, a passage; I haven't checked it myself, but I'm almost certain-" "Dude," Feste interjects, "I'm not sure we should go into that". Touchstone pauses, nods and, grinning, sits back into the leather sofa. "Yeah, maybe not," he says.

"So," I ask, "what have you got planned for this May Week?" Feste and Touchstone smile at each other. "Okay; we've got some things planned," Feste starts, coyly, "but you'll have to read the blogs". Touchstone laughs coolly: "Needless to say, we're going to do the big ones".

Varsity neither condones nor has prior knowledge of the ballcrashers' actions.



MARTHA RAWLINSON



In Context



On Sod's Law:  
*I Heart Louie Sandys*

Eponymous laws, where would we be without you? From Avogadro's, keeping gas volumes in check, to Newton's, about the body at rest and all that, such rules named mostly after dead white men have important parts to play in our everyday lives. But perhaps the most important of these is the one known as Murphy's, a.k.a. Sod's Law: the idea that anything which can go wrong, will. Whereas the former laws physically act upon us at all times without us realizing it, whenever the latter occurs, we are all too keenly aware.

There is a corollary to all this, luckily; even though we find all too often that the toast lands butter-side down in accordance with Sod's, the inverse is that sometimes, good luck will happen to a person regardless of his or her actions. Such an instance is the driving force behind today's reviewed play *I Heart Louie Sandys*, and you've probably experienced it too, albeit in the form of a total prick getting something undeserved, rather than you finally getting the good turn due to you.

Like any successful franchise, Sod's got plenty of spinoffs. The 'Law of Selective Gravity' suggests that any object which can fall will do so as to cause the most damage, and there's - shh! - the 'Unspeakable Law', which posits that when you mention something, if it's good, it goes away, and if it's bad, it happens.

Yet perhaps we needn't be so pessimistic? A philosophy student informs me that Sod's idea of anything which can go bad eventually will be guilty of that wicked logical fallacy, the appeal to probability. To assume that just because something could happen, it will happen, is quite inappropriate, apparently.

However, as another aloof, ivory-tower Cambridger, this student fails to take heed of concrete Sodding examples of the greats from history, great and small, Beethoven losing his hearing just as he was crafting his greatest symphonies is one such.

In the end, all it boils down to is that life just isn't fucking fair.  
CATHY BUEKER

I Heart Louie Sandys

CORPUS PLAYROOM  
★★★★★

*I Heart Louie Sandys* is a bit of a standout in our Shakespeare-laden theater scene: it combines 'regular' acting, video clips, nimble physical theatre, and that woefully underexplored medium: extremely loud shouting that rattles one's sinuses.

The plot, however, is not as remarkable. There's plenty of iterations around (cf. Run, Fatboy, Run): downtrodden fella (John), with a wisecracking buddy (Ben), somehow, in competition with a much more charismatic and successful man (titular Louie Sandys), gets The Girl (Nora) after several setbacks. The difference here is that there's no eucatastrophe and his lady goes off with the non-loser option.

Unorthodox choices are the play's strength. Two monitors on either side of centre stage played video snippets. In the clips, flashbacks occurred -- young Ben and John assaulting someone in a port-a-loo -- or scenes which would have been awkward to stage -- new couple John and Nora getting their hump on for the first time, in super sped-up footage to show perhaps ten couplings (no full frontal nudity, though). The technical team deserves many plaudits for successfully engineering this rig.

There were also interludes of vigorous physical theatre. The best was a moment of four actors onstage, an actor tipping the other three one at a time, so that they rocked back and forth like



RYAN O'SULLIVAN

mannequins, chanting mindlessly that they liked tennis and dancing.

The play cleverly borrowed a technique seen in traditions like kabuki theatre wherein stagehands assist in special effects on stage, such as sudden costume changes, but count as invisible since they're clad in all black. An IHLS scene where this worked particularly well had one of the actors, in black clothes and black ski mask, make a candy bar float in a slow motion and bounce from the protagonist's clumsy hand into the eye of a hapless office assistant. In another, the (presumably same) man acted as a recalcitrant vending machine trapping a sweetie.

Unfortunately, these absorbing moments don't add up to a coherent whole. The above mentioned interludes were exactly that, islands that didn't contribute to the plot.

Plenty of jokes cropped up here and there -- at the beginning of a job interview, John is asked whether he would care for any chocolate,

“I thought the whole zombie/ pirate/viking trend had been laid to rest.”

and on declining is told, “But the chocolate will die if you don't care for it.” The interviewer then began a seemingly endless flight of rants about the joys of chocolate, in a speech as flabby as the aimless exchanges John and Ben have.

And while the jokes elicited

laughs, they sometimes sprung from overused premises. Nora tells John that she's in a radical new production of Hamlet, starring...a banana. What? Theatre is sometimes pretentious? You don't say! Later on, the screens inform us that she is afraid of pirates. I thought the whole zombie/pirate/viking trend had been laid to rest, but apparently not.

The play's main theme, most certainly, is bravery. The bravery to carry on even when your life is a string of utter failures, one right after the other. The bravery to include novel video techniques in a drama (which would have earned the play another star, but was negated by the garbled dialogue). The bravery for an actor to lurch onstage as an old lady, covered in fake excrement.

CATHY BUEKER

It wasn't exactly night music. Compulsory June sunshine

A Little Night Music

EMMANUEL FELLOWS' GARDEN  
★★★★★

and the mini-paradise of Emmanuel Fellows' Garden made sure of that. There's little to be made of this musical Swedish romance but great songs and pleasant froth, and director James Hallett was right to leave it at that.

Staggeringly inept ticket-handlers and a worryingly thesis-like plot synopsis in the programme set the stage for a real-life farce alongside the staged one; thank what can only be May Week charm, then, for the winning performances of Andrew-Mark Hanrahan and Jonathan Padley, who did infidelity with all the shameless bravado of John Terry hitting Cindies.

A mime of the lined-up lovers manipulated through clasped and broken hands made for a banal beginning, and too many early lines were gone with the summer wind. It was slow, and stilted; Madame Armfeldt seemed vulnerable to dying in her wheelchair, and her granddaughter vulnerable to dying in tedium. It's expected

for hungover students to succumb to the laze of a sunny afternoon and

music set to a waltz time; not so when our actors are equally soporific. But Fredrik Egerman (Padley) resurrected the thing with a nice injection of lawyerly sleaze in Now, and the best line of the script: 'I could ravish her -- or I could nap'.

From then on, it was increasingly all a garden play should be: fun as hell. The liaisons of the Egerman clan and brash actress Desiree possessed the frantic pace deceit requires; actors darted amongst the great tree-cum-dressing-room and Count Carl-Magnus Malcolm and Petra (Lottie Greenhow) amped up the bawdy humour. The absence of law students in the audience, however, left the jibe at testamentary lawyers to fall a little flat; maybe they were too busy with their garden party.

It's hard to blame them. Fabulous as the better songs, *Weekend in the Country* in particular, and the setting may have been, the initial malaise was difficult to forgive. ABIGAIL DEAN

All seedy associations with stooping and conquering aside, the New Arcadians' production of Goldsmith's *She Stoops To Conquer* could not have made it more clear that it was being staged in the aftermath of Suicide Sunday and at the culmination of exam term. Most notably this was manifested in the production's distinct sketchiness, such as the slightly distracting underwear issues with one or two members of the cast (modest little Miss Neville's unexpected vampy side shining through her diaphanous white dress), although possibly this was to be expected given the bawdiness of the title. That said, this lack of finish was part of its overall charm.

Creative use of a rather limited space resulted in some innovative usage of the gallery of Sidney's Great Hall; it produced some interesting dramatic effects but posed some difficulties in terms of head-cranning and where the audience were supposed to be looking. There were some intriguing anachronisms, particularly the evident

She Stoops To Conquer

SIDNEY SUSSEX GREAT HALL  
★★★★★

legacy from yesterday in the form of Chris Page Hastings' gold Wyverns wristband which arguably did compliment his

fetching yellow collar. The Ribena used to represent some form of decanter-worthy alcoholic beverage merely served to remind me how thirsty I was, making me resent the fact that the Pimms sitting so temptingly behind me was not included in the ticket price, a point which caused some dissension amongst audience-members. It is May Week, after all.

That said, *She Stoops To Conquer* was everything you might expect from a May Week show. It suffered from the classic constraints in being evidently under-rehearsed and restrained by the set, but the acting overall was to be commended, particularly that of Emily Porton and Micky Alexander as Miss and Mr Harcastle, the blustering Alexander admirably sustaining a broad Yorkshire accent throughout. It was evident that both audience and cast were enjoying themselves; though a little patchy around the edges, *She Stoops To Conquer* is undeniably fun. ELLIE CHAN

GUIDE TO STAR RATINGS: ★★★★★ 'ISN'T IT IRONIC...DONTCHA THINK?' LAME. ★★★★★ SLIGHT WINCE ★★★★★ BUTTER SIDE DOWN ★★★★★ EXPERTLY PLACED BANANA SKIN ★★★★★ NOT BEING THE MESSIAH, BUT A VERY NAUGHTY BOY.



Frank Bretschneider

EXP

★★★★★

A young Sri Lankan child recently sex-trafficked to Eastern Europe collapses and lodges his head in the grate of an Estonian storm drain: Telomere flare; resonance calculation; synovial extension. Full-body hyper-shock ensues. Left Ulna shatters in upper-thoracic pulses against the macadamise road-surface. Motor-speech area of lower-Broca confines the synapse implosion: self-destruction of neuronal pools. As if in a rewriting of Norbert Wiener's cybernetics thesis on stochastic processes, the child's body develops a feedback system with results comparable to robotic systematicity: movements were counter-intuitive but interestingly repetitive; orifices expelled sounds similar to the release sections on out-dated hydraulic compression systems.

A Blue Prussian whirrs overhead. The gondola below

the envelope houses the 35th anniversary of the founding of Raster-Noton: mixed-race waitresses serve mocktails to the Germans with bowel-sensitivity and react to subtle brushing (but no more) of their rear ends with sensual lip filling and almost-inaudible groans.

Frank Bretschneider sits at one end of the ship calibrating the field-mics to cancel out the noise from the engines. Olaf Bender and

rendering Frank removes it from the plasma casing. He knows. WHITE BRILLIANCE. The Aleph reveals itself. A sphere of knowing, intersecting with a sphere of knowledge. WHITE BRILLIANCE.

Olaf and Carsten look on. They know.

--- Not even the Delphic could have pre-ordained such a discovery. The Aleph on a Blue Prussian!?

A(n apparently temporary) gravitational reversal focussed purely on the child's location is instigated. Chin currently below the grate. Eyelids flicker far beyond 50Hz as if Bogota could be espied through Gamma attempts. Non-success.

Body turned upside. Heels to the sky. Right arm alongside hip, shattered left between grate trembles as the reverse-gravity amplifies nervous tension.

Chute of brilliance towers and enters the envelope. Deuterium, Tritium and subsequently Helium-4 dominate the gaseous contention. Proton-proton chains are out-moded by a CNO cycle.

The child remains upside. He remains. ANDREW SPYROU



Prince of Persia

VUE CINEMA

★★★★★

Believe it or not, *Prince of Persia* was actually sort of passable for what it was. I'll admit it took some of my friends a significant amount of persuading to come and see it with me on the Saturday night before May Week, but for a fantasy film set in ancient Persia it definitely achieved its aim.

Role-reversal character twists, intense (but utterly impossible) fight scenes complete with manic assassins flailing sabres and pet snakes, a sword filled with sand which can time-travel its holder into the past and a generic love story involving a surprisingly attractive princess-warrior, the film satisfied every possible cliché its genre can offer.

It even ticked the 'dark-but-not-really-because-its-a-Disney-film political satire' box: an army invading a middle-eastern city on the false pretext that they were producing weaponry; generic evil brother (Sir Ben Kingsley) then spends most of the film digging into the sand for a precious mineral. I'm guessing the director wasn't allowed to see Avatar before agreeing to pass the 'subtle' hints towards this tediously repetitive message.

I was pretty appalled that the

actor best known for his impeccably dignified Gandhi seems to have renounced his reputation in favour of a character consumed with blind lust for power. As for Jake Gyllenhaal, on the other hand, I wasn't too surprised to see him prancing about in billowing silk robes.

Amidst the swelteringly romantic camel-rides back and forth across the desert, the dialogue between the main 'couple' (Jake Gyllenhaal and Gemma Arterton) was somewhat parched of any depth beyond the cheesy Hollywood one-liners. In short, it was about as wooden as foreplay with Pinocchio. In spite of the script, though, you could cut the sexual tension between them with a knife (perhaps one of the many throwing knives of which the assassins appear to have an unlimited supply up their sleeves?).

The casting for the minor characters was unsurprising. I'll pass over the fact that tokenry was rife and pretend that this doesn't happen any more. Without spoiling the ending, at the end Jake Gyllenhaal uses time-travel to go back to the beginning of the film. So none of the above actually happened. The End. Believe it or not...

NICK CHAPMAN

Picasso: War and Peace

TATE LIVERPOOL

★★★★★

Liverpool: cultural capital of Europe 2008. Marking out the triangle of cultural corners are two artful cathedrals and the Tate, which sits on Albert Dock, guarding the sea from the sad history of the city. Since the end of May, the Tate has hosted an exhibition of Picasso's more political works, which seems appropriate to the troubled history of Liverpool.

The exhibition is arranged tightly and intelligently around the theme of war, but spans a broad range of Picasso's famously diverse styles. As well as a thorough collection of Picasso's drawings and studies for his much underrated War and Peace murals, his largest political work post-WW2, the exhibition holds a number of unusual works. It ventures off the beaten track of Picasso's canon, even treading tentatively into his less successful ceramic work.

There is also a strong presence of his better-known works, like his Weeping Woman and his dark still life series, such as Black Jug and Skull (1942, below).

But it is his obsessively recurring depictions of birds that steal the show. From the many doves of peace to the nationalistic French symbol of the rooster, the exhibition traces his life and politics through the symbolic birds he obsessively reproduced in his art.

Surprisingly, the most interesting and unusual piece of this thoughtful exhibition is Picasso's 1932 brass Cock. This fairly large bronze depiction of a rooster, its head turned round and its leg stretched, renders the bird twisted but elegant, and seems to capture the same darkness and beauty that can be found outside the exhibition in Liverpool. Most certainly worth a day-trip. JESSICA JENNINGS

Almond Croissants

... in store in Cambridge

Almond croissants have their origins in nineteenth-century France. Now they're everywhere, and in variety. So I thought I'd find out where to get the best almond croissant in Cambridge.

Almond croissants are made by wrapping the croissant around an almond paste, made from equal amounts of pounded almonds and sugar, moistened with egg white. The almond filling should be soft, sweet and not overpowering, sitting evenly inside the squidgy, flaky shell. It seems simple, but many of the chain stores get it very wrong.

First: the exterior. The croissants should be golden-brown. While the croissants on the market tend to be quite a good colour, Café Nero has the best flaky squidginess, even though, somehow, their croissants don't look as good. Although the original French recipe has the croissants glazed, most shops go for the more sophisticated option of dusting the croissants with icing sugar and sprinkling flaked almonds on top. The exception to the rule is Starbucks, whose thick glaze gives a too-sweet effect and brings about sniggers, even from people less puerile than me.

Surprisingly, given its beautiful cake selection and perfectly presented meals, Patisserie Valerie comes last by miles when it comes to looks. Hard and dark from overcooking, their huge croissants (at least twice the size of any other) are intimidating and sadly unappetising. At £1.50 to take away, or £2.50 to eat in, these croissants approach the top of the price range, and, with a filling that's pretty much a log of grainy, perfumey marzipan, you're paying for quantity alone.

The too-perfumey effect comes from an over-use of almond flavourings. Café Nero does well, not having an overpoweringly nasal taste, as does Pret A Manger. The filling in Pret's croissants is the only one that is gooey as opposed to solid, and this is a pleasant break away from tradition.

Pret steals the show with its great value: at £1.25 to take away, it's a good 25p cheaper than the average, and with its slight bitterness, it's also the only one with truly croissant-y flakiness. JESSICA JENNINGS



Varsity  
May Week Listings

Film	Music & Nightlife	Theatre	Arts	Talks & Events
<p><b>Released Today</b> <b>Killers</b> VUE CINEMAS, 12:15, 14:35, 17:05, 19:20, 21:40 Katherine Heigl gets back into her comedy casting box, starring alongside Ashton Kutcher in this spy-fi rom-com along the lines of <i>Mr and Mrs Smith</i> and <i>The Bounty Hunter</i>. When flashy super-assassin Kutcher meets Heigl, fun-loving beauty on the rebound, he falls in love and gives up his life of international intrigue. But his past comes to haunt him and anyone could be his enemy.</p> <p><b>Ongoing</b> <b>Bad Lieutenant</b> ARTS PICTUREHOUSE, 12:00 18:40 Gambling, womanising, drugs, mobs, prostitution, exploitation... director Abel Ferrara sticks to what he knows.</p>	<p><b>Today</b> <b>Smugglers Run</b> THE HAYMAKERS, 20.00 (£4) <b>Pick of the day Music</b> Young male 4-piece band <i>Smugglers Run</i> headline tonight's gig. Also playing are <i>The Sunsets</i> and <i>Emily Fraser</i>, the Cambridge-based electroacoustic-folk acoustic singer at the Haymakers, 54 High Street.</p> <p><b>Coming soon</b> <b>Gil Karpas and DJ Skunk at the Fountain Inn</b> THE FOUNTAIN INN, 19.00 (£12.50) With Jazz, Funk, Soul and Latin music, dance the night (and the end of May Week) away at the third of the Fountain Inn's June Fridays.</p>	<p><b>This week</b> <b>Heart Louis Sandys</b> CORPUS CHRISTI PLAYROOMS, 19.30 (£5/6) The Fletcher Players put on this play about a hopeless romantic John Harris, who finally gets the girl of his dreams as his life seems to spiral out of his control. Every day until Saturday.</p> <p><b>A Little Night Music</b> EMMANUEL FELLOW'S GARDENS, 14.30 (£6/8) <b>Pick of the day Theatre</b> The Cambridge University Broadway Savoyard joins forces with CUMTS and the Gilbert &amp; Sullivan society to bring you Stephen Sondheim's comic <i>A Little Night Music</i>, based on <i>Smiles of a Summer Night</i>, a film by Ingmar Bergman. Set in a Swedish week-end country-house, it tells a number of love-stories, and features the timeless 'Send in the Clowns.' This will probably be the best musical of the term. Continues today and tomorrow.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing Exhibitions</b> <b>The Indian Portrait</b> NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY (FREE) Tells the rich history of Indian portraiture over the sixteenth-, seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries. A magnificent collection from diverse regions of India, this fascinating and exotic exhibition will merit a trip to the capital before it finishes on 20th June.</p> <p><b>Journeys: Camlris Photography Exhibition</b> ROBINSON WAY, 10.00-17.00 (FREE) With a variety of photographic images, from digital to hand printed, this exhibition is exciting and diverse.</p>	<p><b>Coming soon</b> <b>Cam*Era: 18th-20th June</b> VARIABLE, (FREE) International student film-makers, industry professionals and enthusiasts come together for a three-day showcase of short films. With films being screened around the University colleges, as well as talks and workshops taking place in college grounds, the festival celebrates not only new talent, but also the history of Cambridge. If you're hanging around after May Week, it'd be worth checking out the events, most of which take place on Saturday, on the Cam*Era website. All workshops and talks are free, but the film festival is subject to an entrance fee.</p>

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Varsity's Charlie Lyons works with the ICA to assault the unsuspecting public with questions like "Do you think old people have earned the right to hump trash?"

Best YouTube comment

WTF I LOVE THIS GUY!

Worst YouTube comment

WTF I LOVE THIS GUY!

## Comedy Box

### The Tragedy of Hannah Pegg

Hannah Pegg was gently admired by a large portion of the college community for being humble and a good listener. But whenever she tried to tell a funny story that lasted more than 20 seconds say, everybody switched off. A real shame... they often had excellent payoffs, but her peers, disengaged by her spirit-diminishingly giddy delivery, never heard them.

## The Morning Following Homerton May Ball 2007

Tents and poles like the scaffolds and houses of the assurance of our youth are removed.

Not one echo speaks now of what was there; only patches on the lawn, which will fade.

LIAM WILLIAMS

HOT

CAMELS Varsity's favourite fat-carrying desert mammal of the moment.

FIREWORKS see 'drilling', but prettier.

CHEESE cheese at garden parties, cheese at Cindies, cheese in your room when you've run out of everything else in your fridge.

SEXOMNIA like when you CAN sleep but only when you're shagging someone. Recently a real sleeping disorder.

PACKING Who wants to be stuffing their dirty laundry into their parents' car when they could still be getting pissed?

DRILLING keeping you up all night - but then it's not like you have anything else to do.

NOT

## Cocktail of the Day

### Candied Margarita

This somewhat gentler take on the Mexican classic is the perfect combination of supreme refreshment and excessive booziness! A brilliant pre-drink for any May-Week extravaganzas planned. Everyone will love them, and their simplicity means you can make them absolutely anywhere.



#### Recipe

- 2 shots tequila
- 1 shot of sugar syrup (dissolve 3 parts sugar in 1 part water)
- 1 shot cointreau
- 1 shot lime juice (can be bought by the bottle from Sainsburys)

Bung all the ingredients into a tall glass and stir them vigorously together. Then top up with plenty of ice, and enjoy. This is a great way to use up any left over tequila, and is sure to get any party started! If you're feeling particularly in need of a drink, making them by the jug works brilliantly.

TOM MICHAELIS



## Mixtape

### Abortive Summer Blues

#### Wavves - No Hope Kids

Lo-Fi/Noise Pop to grind the edge off a hangover & drown out the inevitable rain, Wavves weave a thick tapestry of sound to hang on a wall of unrelenting noise.

#### Neon Indian - Should've Taken Acid With You

In a backlash to the hackneyed "glo-fi", Neon Indian packs laid-back synths and rides chillwave in an anthem for endless, wasted summers.

#### The Very Best ft. Ezra Koenig - Warm Heart of Africa

Everyone needs to listen to more world music, and Malawi's *The Very Best* deserves a place in everyone's CD collection.

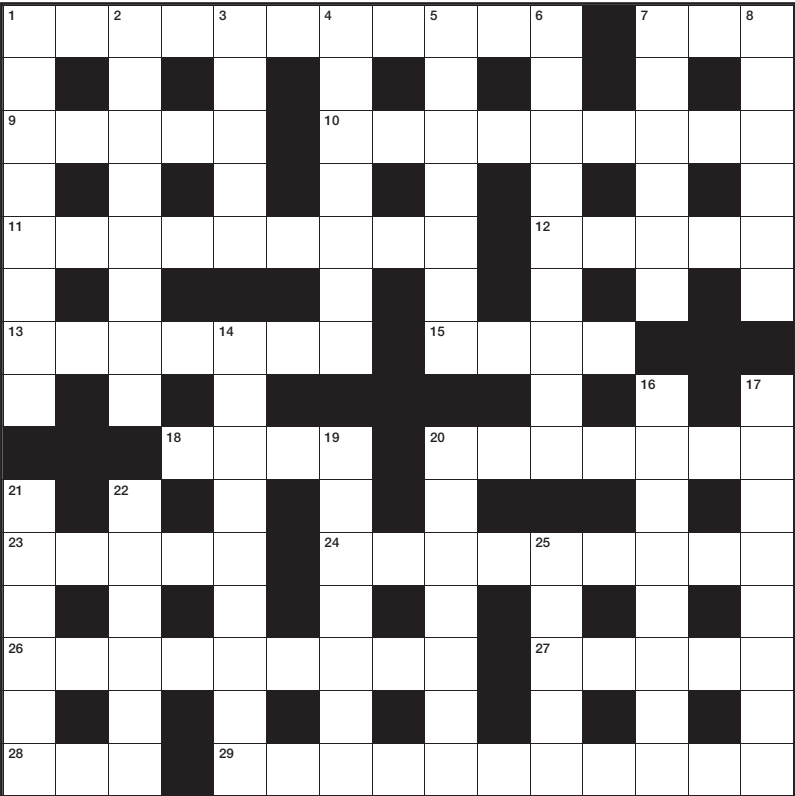
#### Atlas Sound - Walkabout (w/Noah Lennox)

One part *Deerhunter*, one part Animal Collective - you may be sick of mixed drinks after yet another garden party but as every schoolboy knows, some things are stronger than the sum of their parts. ANDREW TINDALL

# Games & puzzles

## Varsity Crossword

NO. 528



23. 11 7a sounds softly! (5)  
24. At closing, sadly reminiscent (9)  
26. Moral correctness? Destroyed it, you would say (9)  
27. 11 7a left in imposter (5)  
28. Generally established to yield confirmation (3)  
29. Rockers' partners follow trick junction for manipulators (11)

### Down

1. 11 7a - head of Catholic-controlled church, that is (8)  
2. As one academic institution said ... (8)  
3. ... A dance is not a great start in assembly (5)  
4. Casual partner's aging boy? Unknown (3,4)  
5. Ingredients of tiramisu spectacularly doubtful (7)  
6. Sprawling throw bringing in an expression of pain (9)  
7. 11 7a as reward (6)  
8. Pot of credit saving energy (6)  
14. Narcissus, perhaps: 'Come again?' (9)  
16. Type of party Nathan is to go off (8)  
17. 11 7a pants, heading off south instead (8)  
19. 11 7a, going up 9p, including gross underinflation at first (7)  
20. Turning up, regrets Sam, is a potential source of comfort (7)  
21. Circuitous nonsense worthily casting out contents of shop (6)  
22. Dickens's Bill audibly freaks people out (6)  
25. Not initially just bad (5)

### Across

1. In such places one tries to uphold the law (11)  
7. Stick to ban (3)  
9. Coming together out of one noun (5)  
10. Wanton assortment of duets and soli (9)  
11. Sweet schoolteacher scandalously stripped of hers (9)

12. Signal in which it comes back as a type of pie? (5)  
13. Literary language of Germany, condensed into one month (7)  
15. 11 7a of which Jonathan Ross might mention a box? (4)  
18. Circumstance goes with this back-handed afternoon operation (4)  
20. Enormous quantity - hardly a jewel, on reflection (7)

Crossword set by Cerdings.

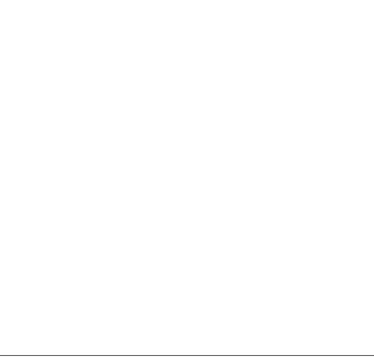
Answers to last issue's crossword (no. 527):  
Across: 1 Caprine, 5 Prairie, 9 Blackmail, 10 Crumb, 11 Staring, 12 Equator, 13 Us, 14 Avenger, 16 Me, 17 Ear, 19 Be, 21 Accrues, 24 On, 25 Opus Dei, 26 Grimace, 27 India, 28 Dominions, 29 Lyncher, 30 Beast of  
Down: 2 Ablative, 3 Rack-rent, 4 Nominee, 5 Palaestra, 6 Account, 7 Rousts, 8 Embargoes, 9 Rejoinder, 16 Drum-Kits, 17 Bel Canto, 18 Mudbath, 21 Corvine, 22 Burden

## 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.

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

### The Varsity Scribblepad



### Last issue's solutions



## 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).

						3	10
					9		
	4	8			14		
3				11			
				20			
22						13	3
	4	18					
		12					
9					9		
10							

## 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.

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



# SPORT

Varsity Croquet

## Blues play some okay croquet



Cambridge put in a measured performance to regain the Varsity title

	CAMBRIDGE	7
	OXFORD	2

JOEL TAYLOR

A spirited performance by the Cambridge team saw them return from the Hurlingham Club with a 7 – 2 result, the best Varsity match result in living memory.

Last year's 8 – 1 loss was a distant memory as both teams fielded only one player from that clash. Cambridge was headed by their returning blue, Joel Taylor, playing in his third consecutive Varsity match. The five other Cambridge players — Rob Thorman, Edward Turnham, James Folliard, Anthony Williams and David Garner — were all making their light blue debut at Hurlingham.

Even before the first ball was struck, Cambridge knew things were going to go their way.

Oxford arrived 45 minutes late, giving the light blues crucial time to acclimatise to the lightning fast carpet-like courts. Oxford also

arrived without two of their top three players, including their world number 154, who were 'unfortunately' busy doing exams.

The match consists of nine games of croquet: three doubles matches in the morning session followed by 6 singles matches in the afternoon. The winner is the first player to hit his two balls through all 12 hoops and then the peg. If time expires before either player has pegged out both balls, the winner is the player who has run the most hoops.

Turnham quickly showed that Cambridge meant business, getting in early in his doubles game and taking his ball around to 4-back (the 10th hoop) on his first real opportunity, unfortunately breaking down before he could set up a difficult next shot for his opponents.

It didn't matter though: the psychological damage was done and although the Oxford pair battled hard, they were never really in the game as Turnham and Folliard held on for a comfortable +10 victory.

After an insubstantial lunch, the teams returned for the singles games. Oxford had made several substitutions in a desperate bid to improve their fortunes, but it made

little difference, as the Cambridge team were well adapted to the pace of the courts after the morning session.

In the top match, Oxford's half-blue, Tom Whiteley, showed how he earned his half-blue, dominating Taylor from the hit in, winning +25

**5**  
The number of debutants playing at this year's match

**45**  
The number of minutes the Oxford team turned up late

with a classy double peel finish, and ending Taylor's Varsity career with a record of 0 wins and 6 losses.

It was a different story in the other games though. Turnham carried on his mental disintegration of his dark blue opposition, continuing to play through a torrential downpour that sent weaker players running for shelter. The rain played havoc with the speed

of the courts, resulting in the play becoming rather scrappy and some mildly disparaging comments from the Hurlingham members.

The afternoon matches were played without time limits. Williams and Garner pushed their opponents all the way, but were unable to adapt to the variable speed of the courts.

Turnham and Folliard played hard, grinding croquet, battling against higher ranked opponents for over 4 hours.

Thorman played in the closest match of the day, narrowly avoiding an opponent peg out and twice missing his own peg out before taking out the victory by +7 and accepting the plaudits of the very few spectators who braved the weather.

The result gives the Cambridge team great hopes for the student national championships in two weeks' time.

Speaking to *Associated Press* and the *Croquet Gazette* at the post-match press conference, Taylor thanked the Oxford team for the great competition and Watford Croquet Club's Simon Hathrell for his continued support of Cambridge croquet.

## World Cuppers



I'm sure there was a time when the group stages were more exciting.

What about back in 1998 when John Collins scored the equaliser against Brazil in the opening game? Or When Germany beat Saudi Arabia 8-0 in Japan in 2002? If these weren't exciting finishes then they were goal routs. So what on earth has happened this time around?

Already we've had a whole host of dour 1-1 games involving the likes of Algeria, Cameroon and New Zealand.

But maybe I just have selective memory. It was probably always like this. I blame the qualifying system. It's there so that the World Cup is a truly global tournament and, therefore, not necessarily involving the 32 best teams in the world.

When most of North Korea's team are turning out for Pyongyang City every week, it's hardly surprising that these teams don't enthral.

Sitting in the college bar yesterday, a group of us decided to come up with a Rest of World XI compiled from teams which are not in South Africa.

What was remarkable was the sheer talent missing from the tournament. Why do I have to watch a New Zealand team with 'creative' midfielders from Auckland FC when I could be watching Andrei Arshavin?

Mind you, as England fans, we should be quite happy that Algeria's star player, Yazid Mansouri, was once sent on his way by Coventry City in 2004 after a distinctly lacklustre loan spell. This does at least mean that England usually make it to the knockout stages when the quality football begins. But until then, we'll all have to put up with a few Mickey Mouse encounters in between.

JOSHUA GAMES