



## OPINION

The Debate:  
Should  
Valentine's Day  
be forgotten  
about?

p6



## CULTURE

The history of  
that hallowed  
place: the bed.

p9



## SPORT

Town downs  
Gown in bloody  
battle.

p15



# VARSITY

EST<sup>D</sup> 1947

## Clegg slams Cambridge fee decision

Deputy PM says Oxbridge plan to charge  
maximum tuition fees is "not up to them"

TRISTAN DUNN  
political correspondent

Nick Clegg has criticised Cambridge and Oxford for considering tuition fees of £9,000, stating that the decision "is not up to them".

Mr Clegg's comments came after an internal University document revealed on Tuesday that the University is planning to charge the maximum fees allowed under the Government's new higher education proposals.

The document makes a number of recommendations to the University Council on fees, bursaries and widening participation. Its main point is that a flat-rate fee of £9,000 should be charged to all UK and EU students irrespective of course or College.

One section of the report says: "The level of tuition fee charged from 2012 entry should be the maximum permissible, i.e. £9,000 per annum with any subsequent adjustment for inflationary increases."

Academics at the University of Oxford convened on Tuesday to consider the same issue; it seems likely that they will also look to charge the maximum fees permissible.

Reacting to Mr Clegg's comments, Edward Couzens, an undergraduate of Downing College, told *Varsity*, "Nick Clegg's naivety appears to know no bounds."

Given the spending cuts to higher education, how can the University of Cambridge expect to maintain its academic reputation without charging the maximum fees?"

A University spokesperson refused to comment on Mr Clegg's statement, saying that they were "waiting for the University Council to consider the working group's proposals."

However, a section of the working group paper says: "To charge less than £9,000 might raise questions about our commitment to excellence since a reduced fee in the long term could only be sustained by reducing costs and hence quality."

The comments were made in a

BBC debate between students and the Deputy Prime Minister. One of the students said to Mr Clegg, "You are either stupid, or you are mad, or you are malicious."

In the debate, Clegg stated that Cambridge and Oxford would only be able to charge fees of £9,000 if they "dramatically increase" access for students from deprived backgrounds.

Universities also face fines of up to £0.5 million from the Government if they fail to meet such access targets.

The Cambridge working group paper does show, however, that the University will be making an active attempt to support those students from poorer backgrounds.

One proposal states that students whose family income is less than £25,000 will only be applicable for tuition fees of £6,000. In addition, a bursary of £1,625 will be offered to students whose parents earn less than £25,000. This bursary falls to zero once family income rises over £42,000.

The report also recommends that the University should attempt to increase the proportion of students from state schools to between 61 and 63 per cent from its current level of 58 per cent.

CUSU president Rahul Mansigani commented, "Cambridge offers a fantastic educational experience: with a tripling of the standard fee to £9000, the need for proactive Access work from the University is more important than ever."

Preservation of 'proactive' access may be an issue given that the current cash bursary of £3,400 is being cut to £1,625 under the new proposals. The fee waiver of £3,000 does however make up for the fall in the cash bursary.

The University is said to be limiting use of the maintenance bursary due to a "shortfall between costs and income".

All universities in England and Wales must send proposals for fees, financial support for students and access provisions to OFFA by 31st March. A final decision is expected from Cambridge in the coming weeks.

A sticky end: Fitzbillies closes  
its doors after 90 years (cont. page 4)



## Have an opinion on porn?

Take *Varsity's* online pornography survey



EDITORIAL

You may notice a small change in *Varsity* this week. Look to the bottom right of this page. Where for many years we have been in the happy position of offering our readers a free coffee or Chelsea bun from one Cambridge's most venerated institutions, unfortunately we can no more.

Fitzbillies, the stalwart of the Cambridge cake scene, shut its doors on Friday evening for the final time. No more the array of cupcakes tantalising generations of cyclists en route to lectures or the famously (or perhaps infamously) sticky Chelsea Buns. Where else are generations of Cambridge students going to take Granny for tea?

It is the closing of the small businesses like Fitzbillies which allows chain-run conglomerations like the ubiquitous Costa to keep popping up, a rash along our high streets – there are now six in Cambridge alone, not a metropolis by any stretch of the imagination. This is not only indicative of our hot-footed culture – coffee to go, takeaway paninis, no time to stop for tea – but also shows that a lot of the recent fashion for the locally produced and run is simply hot air.

Next time we delve into our pockets for a Starbucks muffin we should stop for a moment and consider where our money is going and what we are getting for it. Where it is going: the larger pocket of a company that has 15,000 outlets globally and counting. What we are getting: a muffin shipped in and re-heated on the premises.

The reaction to Fitzbillies closure would suggest that it was always crowded with hungry students. In fact, the number of people who bemoan its going then admit that they never sampled a Fitzbillies cake is surprisingly high – perhaps even the majority. We all like to know that these places exist but leave it to the tourist hordes to keep them alive. Admittedly, Fitzbilies was a major player in the Cambridge Lonely Planet entry but if we are so sad to see things die then why are we not supportive of them in life? Perhaps we should stop shedding crocodile tears and support the local businesses of which we claim to be so proud.



EMAILS, LETTERS & TWEETS

A CHARITABLE UNION?

Dear Editors,  
*I feel that it may be necessary to remind the Union Society of its obligations as a charitable organisation, considering the way it has acted in relation to the CUSU Shadowing Scheme, one of Cambridge's largest and most important Access initiatives. The President's initial decision to charge shadows for entry to last week's debate and ban them from the main chamber (presumably because they are a 'members' club') is disappointing. She later reversed the decision, allowing the shadows to "come into the building on a debate night, which [she] wouldn't normally say to non-members ever". Until recently the Union policies were improving its inclusivity, having previously given shadows free entry and participating in the scheme for several years.*  
*The Union Society's status as a charity provides substantial tax benefits even though many would consider it a private business. As registered by the Charity Commission on 20th May 2010, the Union has accepted clear obligations relating to its operation by which it must abide to maintain its charitable status. Statement 3.2.5 reads that one of the society's charitable objects is "assisting CUSU with the organisation and promotion of events aimed at widening access to the University of Cambridge and the promotion of higher education more generally".*

*Clearly the proposed fee for shadows would have been in breach of these terms and considering the recent nature of the registration these obligations have surely not already been forgotten, or worse, ignored? If the Union's policy is based on apparent exclusivity, then it should operate as a private company not as a charity and hence revoke the benefits it currently receives.*

**Jack Tavener**  
Access Officer, Pembroke College  
via email

VOTER BETRAYAL

Dear Editors,  
*Julian Huppert MP was completely wrong in his letter of last week to peddle the deception that he is fighting the progressive cause. Dr Huppert supports abolishing EMA, supports the unfair VAT rise, supports the Tories' devastating economic cuts, and – most dubiously – supports cutting university*

*teaching budgets by £2.9 billion. While the Labour Party has a positive alternative of slower and more sensible budget cuts and a graduate tax, Dr Huppert has constructed a complete volte-face from the arguments he made at the election. By providing lobby fodder for the Tories, he has betrayed those progressive students who put him in office.*

**Ashley Walsh**  
Chair, Cambridge Universities Labour Club  
via email

LIBEL LIBERAL

Dear Editors,  
*Libel tourism is a grossly exaggerated problem. If only 30 people in this jurisdiction read the Kyiv post article, then you may expect the case to get struck out asap. If, on the other hand, thousands of people in this country had read the article, the article was defamatory, and Firtash's reputation was genuinely damaged here, why on earth should he not sue to protect it?*  
*In any case, I cannot imagine that donations to Cambridge will have added any significant weight to Firtash's reputation, whatever his legal team may be intending to argue, and certainly not enough to justify that headline.*

**Edward Parkes**  
via website

VALUE FOR MONEY

Dear Editors,  
*I had some excellent experiences at Cambridge, and worked with some superb people. But I was also let down on a regular basis. Whether that was an academic reading my essay mid-supervision, a chaotic and unproductive seminar, or a poorly planned lecture series, there were many moments for which I would have \*not\* paid £9,000 a year. If Cambridge wants to compete with its rivals at £9,000, fine. But if it expects anyone sensible to pay them, it really must get its house in order. It must be prepared to answer hard questions about its costs and overheads – and this time, unqualified platitudes will not do.*

**Jimmy Breck-McKye**  
via website

DIGITAL DIGEST



VULTURE  
**Your conversation partner has disconnected**

Dan Brooks goes stranger-surfing to try and foster genuine debate about last year's best records, but discovers that not being 16 and a girl is a handicap in the chatrooms... Hilarious results are interspersed with his (uncontested) favourite records in a double gift to you.



VETEMENTS  
**Big Look: The Ancient World**

For Claire Healy (of 'Young Shield's fashion blogosphere fame) it's all about Egypt at the moment...on the catwalks. Cleopatra's coming back atcha.



VOYEUR  
**Night at the (Fitzwilliam) Museum**

Varsity was out and about on Thursday night at the Fitzwilliam's evening drinks party. Head to our website to see if you made it into our photo album.



VULTURE  
**Blair Waldorf: Feminist Icon?**

In the second of a 'lecture series' on the Philosophy of Gossip Girl, Christina Spens deconstructs the girl with the best one-liners, hair accessories, and powers of social manipulation on the Upper East Side, and asks what we can all learn from her.

YOU, THE COMMENTATOR

A pick of the week's comments from the website

**“Awful news. I used to lust after the custard filled doughnuts ”** Kevin Floyd

**“Noooo... there's no way I could get my degree without their milk loaf and 1/2lb of butter!!”** Dave Percival

**“I believe this is known as The Art of Denco (Denim Combination). I will only accept this on people who can wrangle horses.”**

Dan Brookes

Varsity Team

**Editors**  
Alice Hancock & Lara Prendergast  
news@varsity.co.uk  
**Opinion Editor**  
Laurie Martin  
opinion@varsity.co.uk  
**Online Editors**  
Charlotte Wu & David Rosenberg  
digital@varsity.co.uk  
**News Editor**  
Rhys Trehan & Lydia Onyett  
news@varsity.co.uk  
**Deputy News Editors**  
Andrew Griffin,

Jessie Waldeman & Jemma Trainor  
news@varsity.co.uk  
**Senior Culture Editor**  
Julia Lachnova  
culture@varsity.co.uk  
**Sport Editor**  
James Corcut  
sports@varsity.co.uk

**Features Editors**  
Lauren Arthur & Olivia Read  
features@varsity.co.uk  
**Arts Editor**  
Yates Norton  
arts@varsity.co.uk  
**Fashion Editors**  
Leah Schabas & Paula Petkova,  
fashion@varsity.co.uk  
**Theatre Editor**  
Siobhan Forshaw  
theatre@varsity.co.uk

**Reviews Editor**  
Alex Donaldson  
reviews@varsity.co.uk  
**Food Editor**  
Andrew Tindall  
food@varsity.co.uk  
**Columnists**  
Lettice Franklin  
saladdays@varsity.co.uk  
Pete Leggatt  
theyshare@varsity.co.uk  
**Theatre Critics**  
Kiran Millwood-Hargrave,  
Helen Cahill,

Ben Kavanagh & Lorenzo Santinelli  
theatre@varsity.co.uk  
**Music Critics**  
Anna Campbell,  
Elly Brindle,  
Johan Thomas,  
Madeleine Morley & Imogen Goodman  
music@varsity.co.uk  
**Film Critics**  
Jake Hollis,  
Alex Gruzenberg & Alice Bolland  
film@varsity.co.uk  
**Visual Arts Critic**  
Lawrence Dunn

visualarts@varsity.co.uk  
**Literary Critic**  
Nausicaa Renner  
books@varsity.co.uk  
**Varsity TV**  
Joanna Beaufoy  
tv@varsity.co.uk  
**Production Manager**  
Charlotte Sewell  
production@varsity.co.uk  
**Chief Sub-editor**  
Angela Scarbrook  
subeditor@varsity.co.uk

**Sub-editors**  
Olivia Anness, Katriel Cohn-Gordon,  
Donald Futers & Leonie Taylor  
subeditor@varsity.co.uk  
**Head of Design**  
George Shapter  
design@varsity.co.uk  
**Designers**  
Mike Hillman,  
Chloe Taylor & Jake Evans  
**Online Designer**  
Joe Robertson

**Business & Advertising Manager**  
Michael Derringer  
business@varsity.co.uk  
**Board of Directors**  
Dr Michael Franklin (Chair),  
Prof Peter Robinson, Dr Tim Harris,  
Mr Chris Wright, Mr Michael Derringer,  
Mr Hugo Gye (Varsity Society  
President), Mr Laurie Tuffrey, Mr Paul  
Smith, Miss Avantika Chalkoti, Miss  
Helen Mackreath, Mr Josef  
Pitt-Rashid, Miss Lara Prendergast, Miss  
Alice Hancock & Miss Charlotte Wu



FITZBILLIES

RIP

1922 - 2011

Purveyor of fine cakes, extremely good teas  
and famously sticky Chelsea Buns  
On presentation of this voucher it  
used to give hungry students a free coffee  
with their cake.

An institution that will be missed by many.



# Decadence with a conscience

Cambridge's most exclusive events are collaborating for charity this summer, by including an optional charitable donation with standard ticket prices. *Varsity* talks to the May Ball Presidents

SAMANTHA SHARMAN & JESSICA KING  
college & ethics correspondents

This year shall mark the start of a new era for the May Ball tradition in Cambridge: in a meeting on Wednesday night, May Ball presidents agreed to work towards greater collaboration, and in particular, towards greater charitable giving.

Many of the colleges will be working together to raise money for charity through an optional addition to standard May Ball ticket prices. It will be the first time that a collective pot has been raised by multiple colleges.

Speaking to *Varsity* last week, Nick Chapman, President of Trinity May Ball and effective founder of the initiative, said: "While the May Balls are a fantastic experience for all of us, and we certainly deserve to enjoy them after a year of hard work, there is an element of elitism and decadence that the national press often criticises in May Week itself and we're hoping that this will serve as a good news story, especially in a time of economic hardship."

At the meeting, the May Ball Presidents for the colleges holding balls this year voted to donate the collected money to East Anglia's Children's Hospice, a Cambridgeshire-based charity supporting young people with life threatening conditions. This is one of 10 charities supported this year by Cambridge RAG, who are working closely with the May Ball Presidents to coordinate their charitable efforts.

Some of the Presidents at the meeting objected to the idea of supporting another charity which might make them appear to have political or self-publicising motives. RAG President Emma Cooper, who has been working closely with Mr Chapman, said: "I am not doing this for glory, I'm into charity."

Consequently, all the Presidents were keen to support East Anglia's Children's Hospice as a small local charity. The donation would also have a greater net effect than for a larger national or international charity.

**The May Ball Presidents have agreed to donate the collected money to East Anglia Children's Hospice, a charity supporting young people with life-threatening conditions**

Not all of the colleges have been able to give money to the collective pot this year, but the lack of contribution was not through a lack of enthusiasm. At a meeting in November organised by Mr Chapman and his colleague RAG President Emma Cooper, the Presidents of all 17 colleges holding balls this year signed an 'in-principle' petition, saying that they were in support of every single college making a charitable donation.



MICHAEL DERRINGER

However, some colleges had difficulties getting involved with the scheme this year, either because their Ball had already happened, such as the Selwyn Snowball, or because they had already chosen to support specific charities, such as St John's, Pembroke, Emmanuel and Queens' Colleges.

St John's College has been supporting SOS Children's Villages for several years, but the May Ball Committee were keen to be a part of this new venture and have therefore decided to auction four pairs of tickets on eBay, so that the additional raised money can go towards the collective pot. Magdalene College are also aiming to sell extra tickets to alumni, in the hope of raising another £1000 for the cause.

Pembroke College, meanwhile, will be supporting Campus Children's Holidays, but have pledged to donate to the communal fund starting from next year. Other colleges, including Queens' College, also promised to support the scheme from next year, since this year their College has asked the May Ball Committee to give the money raised to a college-supported access programme.

Mr Chapman and Miss Cooper realised that the colleges' combined donation would be smaller this year but they were keen to "get the ball rolling". To ensure that collaboration continues between the colleges in future years, they have set up an official May Ball Presidents' Committee.

The Presidents have already chosen on a charity to support next year to guarantee that all the colleges are able to implement the scheme and do not suffer from administrative difficulties or prior commitments to other charities.

The charity for 2012 will be IntoUniversity, which works to help children from deprived areas – who usually are

6 times less likely to achieve a place – to gain access to higher education. The charity is exemplary in minimizing managerial costs, with 98% of their received money going directly to the cause.

**There's an element of elitism to the May Balls that is often criticised by the national press. We're hoping this will serve as a good news story**

Nick Chapman, Trinity May Ball President

IntoUniversity helps potential candidates through schemes such as mentoring sessions and by providing bursaries. The support for this charity will also coincide with the first year that students will pay the increased tuition fees.

While it is the charity element that brought the Presidents together, the Committee will aim to increase collaboration between the colleges in other areas as well. For example, the colleges, through the Society's meetings, will be able to discuss which companies provide a good service in areas such as catering and marquee provision, and which ones should be blacklisted.

With greater collaboration in such areas, different colleges may be able to order in bulk from the same companies, set up cheaper deals and therefore have more money to spend in other

areas. At the end of May Week the May Ball Presidents' Committee aim to invite representatives from the charity to another event to present them with a cheque for what they hope will be around £20,000. To ensure a continuation of the successes of this year, all

the May Ball Presidents for next year will be invited to attend. Next year they hope to raise a sum of over £50,000.

In an earlier speech to the Presidents, Mr Chapman said: "We have to do this before Oxford does...only Cambridge has balls".



## PRESS CUTTINGS

The pick of the week's papers

### MAJOR BANKS CURB BONUSES

Three major banks have signed up to a long-awaited agreement which would lend about £190 billion to businesses this year, curb bonuses and disclose the details of salaries of some of their top earners. The Bank of England will monitor the plan, dubbed 'Project Merlin'.

### SCHOOLBOY SUICIDE BOMBER

In Pakistan a teenage suicide bomber, dressed as a schoolboy, has attacked an army facility. The bombing killed 31 people and injured 40 others. Taliban militants have claimed responsibility for the violence.

### AMERICA PUSHED AWAY

Egypt's Foreign Minister has criticized the US for publicly calling on Egypt's Government for more "prompt and immediate" action, claiming it is inappropriate for America to impose its will on the country. This comes in the wake of reports that widespread industrial action in cities such as Suez and Prot Said has turned violent.

### SOLDIERS KILLED IN ACTION

Two British soldiers have been killed in Southern Afghanistan after a skirmish with small arms fire, bringing the number of British military deaths in Afghanistan operations since 2001 to 354.



## Students' favourite bakery closes down

KIRSTY GRAY  
culture correspondent

Fitzbillies, the 90-year-old Cambridge institution, has fallen victim to the hostile economic climate and will no longer be trading after having been forced into administration.

Last weekend, visitors to the world-famous cake shop on Trumpington Street were greeted not with the sweet aroma of Chelsea buns and pain-au-chocolats, but simply a typed sign in the window reading: "We are closed."

Shop owner Penny Thompson confirmed the loss: "Our closure is a result of the very difficult economic times, especially for independent businesses."

Pembroke College, which owns the building, told Varsity, "The College is sorry to see the closure of Fitzbillies. It had supported efforts by the proprietor to overcome trading difficulties, including a voluntary arrangement agreed with creditors last year. Unfortunately, these efforts ultimately proved unsuccessful."

Widespread vehement reactions to the closure of Fitzbillies have already become apparent. A 'SAVE

FITZBILLIES' Facebook campaign has gathered the support of over 500 members, while famous alumnus Stephen Fry tweeted yesterday, "No! No! Say it ain't so – not Fitzbillies? Why I tweeted a pic off one of their peerless Chelsea buns but a sixmonth ago".

Gregory Warner, alumnus told Varsity: "The news is particularly distressing since I'd been really pleased to see that Fitzbillies was still there when my son started at Cambridge, 30 years since I was a regular! It was one of the last quintessentially British institutions left in the town and I'm really upset to see it go."

The bakery has only ever had three subsequent owners who have each safeguarded the business's secret recipes to protect the uniqueness of its delicious delights.

One Pembroke student could not share in the collective nostalgia. "People have no right to get sentimental – if they love Fitzbillies so much why didn't it make more money? I mean seriously, who actually ever went?"

It is rumoured that the last of Fitzbillies' famous chelsea buns will be auctioned on eBay.



When I got into Murray Edwards, a kind (or so I had always thought) godfather gave me a congratulatory copy of Sebastian Faulks's *Engleby*. I don't want to ruin the plot but basically it's a novel that just does not make you think that life at a girls college is good, innocent, jolly fun, unless, that is, your idea of good, innocent, jolly fun involves bludgeoning and insanity. I turned to Rosamund Lehmann's *Dusty Answer* for reassurance. Her heroines certainly enjoy innocent, jolly fun, but this, I'm afraid, isn't HUGELY appealing either. From what I can remember, they spend all their time languishing within the walls of Girton, and then, once during their three years, are allowed to get a bus into town where the heroine runs instantly to Trinity and – I'm pretty sure I'm not making this up – HUGS A WALL because there is a chance that there is a boy on the other side of it.

In one almost-too-exciting-to-bear-and-inevitably-anti-climactic moment said boy comes round to tea. It is all horribly awkward (think RAG blind date for whatever lucky girl arrived at the Maypole on Tuesday night to meet the boy lingering outside as I walked past shiftily brandishing a plastic sword, that line about 'knight in shining armour' seeming more and more of a mistake with each sad, stood-up minute) and there is a lot of kerfuffle with toasting forks. The message is clear, and was to me even though I knew Cambridge only through an open day and some pretttttttt expert googling – he should have gone to Fitzbillies.

Between waves of terror, the Fitzbillies website had provided an island of hope with one beautiful sentence: 'Do you have a friend in Cambridge, at one of our colleges? We can deliver cakes locally.' It spoke of FRIENDS – which, my prospectus told me, must absolutely definitely have hair of every single shade and love joshing around on lacrosse fields and strumming electric guitars in deceptively photo-shopped college rooms – but, nonetheless, would send me a Dundee cake on a whim. Sa-woon.

Halfway through my degree, and I have never been sent a Dundee cake. With Valentine's Day approaching, Fitzbillies has been advertising chocolate fudge cakes decorated with trembling hearts, and my hopes were high, my own heart ready to be set a-tremble. Dream on Lettice, it will never happen for you, or indeed for anyone. The 90-year-old cake shop closed its doors for the last time this weekend because of economic difficulties. Let's hope all those ultra-organised boyfriends won't find their romantic purchases nonrefundable, become fundamentalists and start a second occupation, perhaps involving a few half-baked puns, sorry, I mean buns.



They'd be fools to waste their time there when, this week, Cambridge plays host to arty party after arty party. This combination is a surefire winner, not only does it trip off the tongue joyfully, but it also seems to just REEL in us students. The Fitzwilliam burns the midnight (actually half past eight) oil on Thursday night - giving students the chance to view their dazzling collection after dark. Don't get me wrong, I think this is a fantastic idea, but 1,240 people have so far clicked attending on Facebook – why the sudden interest in a place open every day? The hope of some canoodling in front of Hogarth's deeply saucy Before and After scenes? Or perhaps one excited attendee's comment on the Facebook wall is revealing: "yo voy !! vino gratis!!"

Just two days later, and about two metres down the road, Dystopia, hosted by the Architecture Faculty, is being hyped left, right and centre. Nothing's confirmed yet but you hear excited murmurs on Trumpington Street: flying green elephants... boiled eggs in hot tubs... underground prisons... spiked tap water... Kanye West played back-to-back... and everyone naked. This last rumour was perhaps sparked intentionally by the anonymous first year from Downing, desiring a second chance to parade her presumably perfect private parts, after brazenly submitting nude photos to the "My Nuts" section of the Nuts website. Post-architectural, pre-ironic, neo-conceptual artistic statement or ...just post-pre-lash mistake?

Also scheduled on Saturday, The Union Valentine's Ball in contrast had confirmed a lot: the caterpillar's shisha tent, the mad hatter's tea party, the flamingo croquet lawn, and so on. And... a performance from 'YouTube sensation' Axis of Awesome. Due to poor ticket sales, and with only 88 people attending on Facebook, the event has been slightly downsized. President Lauren Davison commented: "People are getting pretty much the same thing but we've taken away the word 'ball', the casino and the free drinks." Davison clearly hasn't factored in the absolute importance of vino gratis and the magnetic pull of the arty party...

It will be champagno gratis a-go-go at St John's May Ball. The college, this week, revealed plans to auction four pairs of tickets on Ebay and one at the Ball's launch party in March, to raise money for charity and to give us unhappy masses without tickets a chance to get our hands on a golden ticket – if, that is, we have MILLIONS of pounds at our disposal, (charge a fee for those naked pictures next time...) Personally I've resigned myself to spending the June 21st getting in touch with my literary ancestors, and indulging in a good bit of old-fashioned wall-hugging.

# Why men are from Mars

Research suggests testosterone reduces social intelligence

ISOBEL WEINBERG  
science correspondent

Researchers from the Universities of Cambridge and Utrecht have published new findings which suggest that testosterone, the male sex hormone, makes people less empathetic and reduces their ability to read facial expressions. The research has important implications for understanding why men are more likely to be autistic than women.

The researchers gave female volunteers testosterone and then examined the change in their social intelligence. The volunteers were asked to look at photographs of people's eyes and guess their emotions. This is a test of empathetic ability, and, on average, women tend to perform better than men. However, when the women were given testosterone, their aptitude for the test fell.

Simon Baron-Cohen, an expert on autism and the University of Cambridge's Professor of Developmental Psychopathology was one of the leaders of the study. He has been a sometimes controversial figure for emphasising the importance of biology over social conditioning in explaining the differences between male and female behaviour. He has championed the idea of autism as an "extreme male brain", because, he claims, many autistic tendencies

are exaggerations of typical masculine traits.

Baron-Cohen told Varsity: "The idea of autism being an extreme of the male brain is supported by evidence from psychological and neural measures where there are key sex differences, and where people with autism show an extreme of the typical male profile. But this hypothesis is formulated with a broad brush

People with autism show an extreme of the typical male profile

Professor Simon Baron-Cohen

and our research aims to identify with greater precision where in the brain such atypical development occurs."

As well as finding that testosterone reduced women's empathic abilities, the researchers discovered that women who experienced high levels of testosterone as foetuses are more likely to display this reduction. They concluded

that testosterone in the womb "primes" the developing foetus, leading to an adult brain which is more responsive to testosterone. To analyse how much testosterone the volunteers were exposed to prenatally, the scientists measured the length of the women's index and ring fingers. Whilst this may sound unconventional, the ratio of these lengths is established as a good indicator of a person's foetal testosterone exposure. Men tend to have a shorter index finger than ring finger; the reverse is true in women. The study found women with more masculine ratios were more sensitive to testosterone.

This finding has implications for the androgen theory of autism, which Baron-Cohen has also advocated. The theory claims that foetal testosterone (an androgen) is important in the development of autistic traits. Baron-Cohen told Varsity that, whilst this research relates to the androgen theory, his goal is to test it directly. "One can extrapolate this to autism but to directly test the androgen theory of autism one would need measures of testosterone in people with this diagnosis. We are currently collecting these." The recent study, he says, is important because it "contributes to our knowledge of how small hormonal differences can have far-reaching effects on empathy".



# Cinema voucher

Take a Chlamydia test  
and get a cinema voucher!

Chlamydia is the most common Sexually Transmitted Infection: sexually active people may have it without showing any symptoms. It's easily treated with antibiotics, but if left untreated can lead to infertility in both men and women. Taking a test is both easy and completely private - and you'll be enjoying a free trip to the movies!

If you're aged 16 to 24 and complete and return a test between 1 February and 28 February 2011 you'll receive a free cinema voucher.

Request a test by texting **SCREEN** to 84010 with your name, address, age and sex, or go to [www.freetest.me](http://www.freetest.me). Include your mobile number so we can text you the free voucher code.

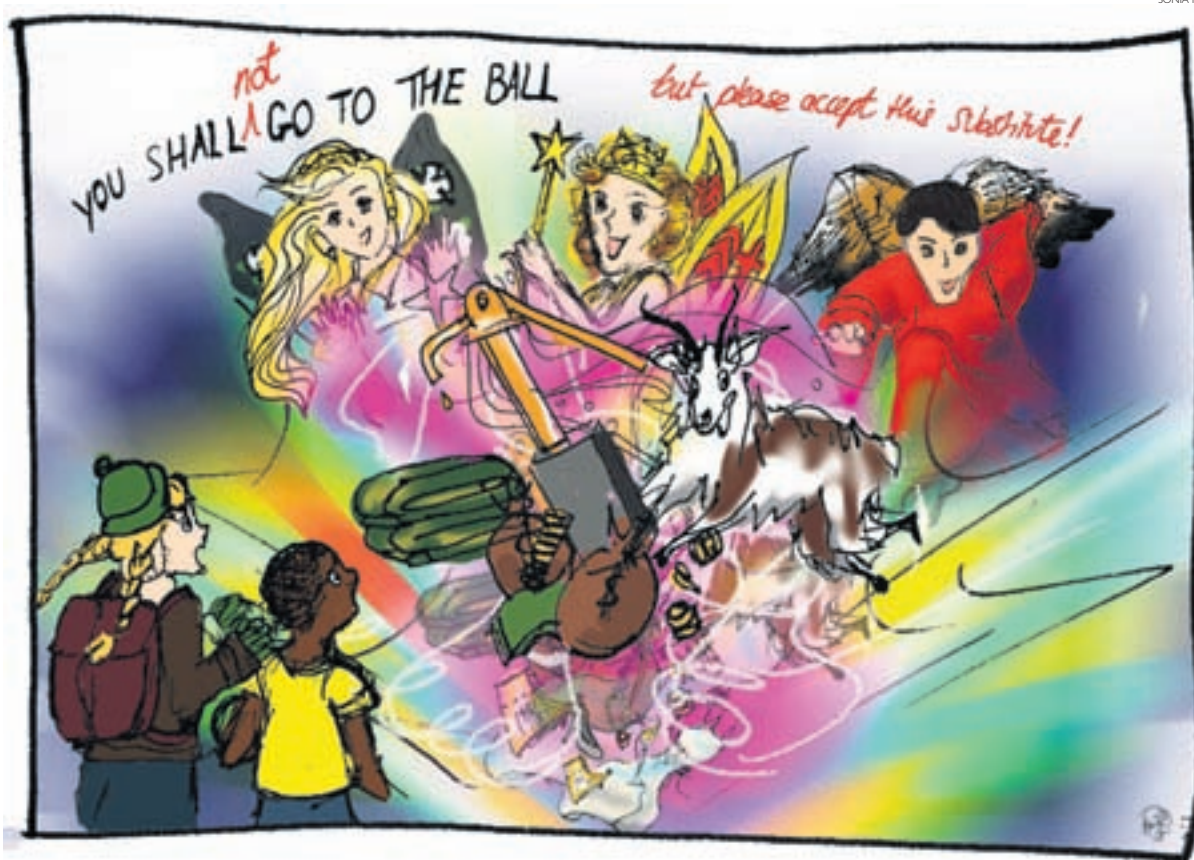
Offer limited to one cinema voucher per person and applies to Cambridgeshire residents only.

(For full terms and conditions see the website)

You will need a debit card to redeem your voucher code but no money will be taken from your card.







SONIA TONG

## This House Believes...

*We should forget about Valentine's Day*

PROP.

Felicity Genuflect, Grantabridge College

Oh, my dear boys, you do have a rough time of it, don't you? Be strong, be gentle, be spontaneous, be patient, be chivalrous, be rugged – and heaven help you if you get it wrong!

But pause a moment to hear the quiet voice of a woman's reason. Dear hearts, we are your ever-loving servants; as we transition from mistress to mother, your welfare is ever our calling, and we ask so little in return.

There are those who can stoke the embers of romance daily, and what have they to fear from the commercial retinue of Saint Valentine?

But those others among you, though we love you dearly, are in sore need of the occasional prompt. The forethought to commemorate the occasional birthday or anniversary is, I fear, lacking. The brash and bawdy klaxon of 14th February represents the only shot some of us have at reciprocated romance; do not begrudge us our fleeting celebration!

"True love is without price, more precious than jewels," as my House Mistress was wont to preach, when addressing the preened, assembled coterie of Contessa Cruxbiter's Finishing School for Ladies. "Like your virtue, it cannot be bought – but, by God, you may see to it that they pay through the nose."

OPP.

Phil McArthur, St Edmund's College

Hearts and flowers in Hallmark Pink; Me To You teddy bears and Thornton's Soft Centre Selection; petrol-station carnations and 10pm last-minute restaurant reservations... haven't we all had enough yet?

I'm a mushy romantic at heart, but the mass-produced tokens of affection, the drudgery of ritualistic romance that pounces upon us every February, sends me into annual conniptions of cynicism. Those of us who truly want to appreciate life, love and romance would rather indulge in it when it means something.

A red-letter day for love turns humanity's most beautiful emotion into a tacky show. Affection Inflation, the arms-race of love – that's the problem. A thoughtful act of spontaneous romance, undertaken in mid-August, will cost nothing and mean everything to your sweetheart, but come 14th February you'll pay through the nose just to keep them.

Celebrate romance, by all means, but leave loving to the lovers. If you need Hallmark to tell you when and how, red roses won't ever be enough.



ALI KHAN

*Sifting through the rubble of the Egyptian uprisings, it's time to take stock and rebuild.*

# When pharaohs tremble

The world is transfixed by Egypt. From Aden to the cafés of Aleppo, from Algiers to the malls of Abu Dhabi, Arabs are seeing how popular movements can precipitate the fall of dictatorial regimes.

The Tunisians have risen, the Sudanese are protesting, the Jordanian King sacked his government, the President of Yemen wrote to the Qatari Emir that Al-Jazeera is stirring trouble and other countries wait with baited breath.

Even Jeddah witnessed a short protest after heavy rains flooded areas of the city with stinking sewage. Needless to say these protests were put down immediately.

Saudi Arabia seems to have taken on the role of sheltering ousted dictators and political leaders – Idi Amin, Ben Ali, Nawaz Sharif. Their king has now offered Mubarak support. Saudi newspapers focused their coverage of the protests on lootings and are now playing down their King's statements.

Meanwhile, Mubarak seems to think that 'promising' resignation following the September elections will satiate the protesters whom he condescendingly referred to as "young people". He then sent Omar Suleiman, the much-reviled intelligence chief and valuable CIA 'asset,' to negotiate with the parties concerned. It is remarkable that Mubarak chose a man who claims the country is 'not ready' for democracy.

Most analyses of the situation in Egypt focus on stark binary choices; old guard vs. youth, islamists v. secularist, people v. dictatorship. The realities of the political arena are complex and the people who have come together in the protests are from different backgrounds; NGOs, youth movements, labour unions, international organisations, legal and judicial groups and feminist groups to mention but a few.

The police, the central security services and the army have

historically had varying trajectories and loyalties. The army is divided. The Air Force and Presidential Guard are still loyal to Mubarak whereas other parts of the army maintain a neutral position, at least for now. This may explain why General Tantawi went into crowds of protesters while the Presidential Guard protected national TV and radio buildings and at times even attacked protesters.

The \$1.5 billion of annual military aid from America has not bought the loyalty of Egyptian generals who, over 30 years, have become nationalist capitalist businessmen. This group is turning against Mubarak because of his son, Gamal's neo-liberal economic policies and his preference of doing business with Western, Chinese and other foreign investors.

Mohammad al-Baradei, although supported in Western Media and not necessarily popular in Egypt, has been part of the protests. Scholars from Al-Azhar, the famous Islamic University, in their distinctive grey robes and red fezzes have joined the protests much to the delight of protesters. Members of the Muslim Brotherhood have made it clear that they are only part of a much larger movement.

It is evident that the protests have the support of a cross-section of society. What is startling is the subdued reaction of Western governments to these protests. Hague is more worried about the Peace Process being derailed than the rights of the Egyptians. France and Germany talk of 'political transitions.' When Obama addressed 'the Muslim World' in a speech in Cairo and talked about his "fourth and most important point, democracy." He said governments must rule by "consent and not coercion".

The same year, the US

Government threw its weight behind the protests in Iran, even going to the extent of making sure Twitter did not shut down for scheduled maintenance. Today everyone is speaking in careful sentences about 'stable change' and an 'orderly transition now'. Analysts focused on Obama's use of 'now' but strikingly the 'D' word hasn't been deployed.

Iran's use of force to quell protesters was opposed with such vehemence. When Neda Agha-Sultan was shot in Iran the world was rightly sickened but there is little talk of the hundreds of people killed in Egypt. Security services are beating protesters, fighter-jets are scrambled over Cairo and communications services are suspended yet there is no clear condemnation.



The outcome of this turmoil has deep ramifications for Arab governments and will also have serious implications for future Israeli-US-Arab relations. Netanyahu said that he will do everything to 'reinforce the might of the state of Israel.' Some analysts have said that these protests are about 'them' and not 'us,' the Western governments.

It would be naïve to ignore the West's implicit support for autocratic governments, often putting short-term stability ahead of good governance and democracy.

A poem by Abul Qasim al-Shabi, a Tunisian, is on everyone's lips in the Arab world: "If, one day the people want life, then fate will answer their call, the night will fade away, and the chains will be shattered."

Although the chains are cracking, the challenge will lie in re-building a dynamic civil-society after years of suppression.

However, as Zhou Enlai said about the outcome of the French Revolution: "It's too soon to tell."

“It would be naïve to ignore the West's implicit support for autocratic governments, often putting short-term stability ahead of good governance and democracy”



# Chelsea Dun

*It's not just a poor turnover that's behind Fitzbillies's sticky demise...*

CHARLOTTE RUNCIE



Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. The famous Chelsea buns, Fitzbillies' most eminent treats, Cambridge shorthand for indulgent youth and happy tea-times, will now live only in our memory, intangible as May Balls past.

Fitzbillies is dead. It's only to be expected that Cambridge students, along with ex-Tabs everywhere, are in mourning today.

That's as it should be. The bakery was at the centre of Cambridge life for almost 90 years, supplying tea for visiting parents and thickly iced wads of chocolate things all boxed up for freshers' birthdays. A smart slice of carrot cake cuddled up to a pot of Assam was the best of all remedies for Tripos stress. It will be missed.

The passing seemed sudden; no long illness before the end, no warning to inspire a charismatic 'Save Our Buns' campaign that could have pulled it from the sticky brink before it was too late. All that sugar and fat finally did for the place, and its heart has given out. The shop disappeared in the night with no real explanation given beyond "very difficult economic times", and no apologies or farewell

letters posted in the window. There was only a stark, typewritten note for an epitaph: "We are closed."

But like all bereaved friends and relatives, current students are in danger of misremembering the past as we grieve. Fitzbillies came to represent an idyllic "Cambridge experience" for so many generations of students that even before the current lot of undergraduates arrived, we knew to revere this ancient eating place of giants. But this mythical bakery has never really existed during our time. The Fitzbillies we mourn died a long time ago.

The cute little café loved so famously by Stephen Fry was a different beast from the one that we've known for the last couple of years. Last autumn, TCS reported that Fitzbillies bakery had received only one star, and its restaurant none, in routine Cambridge City Council hygiene tests. Inspectors said hygiene was poor, and expressed "little confidence" in the management.

The management may have been the problem. Even that note announcing the closure is unsatisfying. You would think that such an important part of the local landscape and the memories of

thousands of students would end with some kind of fanfare, but this was definitely a whimper, not a bang. It says a lot about the kind of management that oversaw the end; they didn't give too much of a final thought for loyal customers. I didn't expect a namecheck, but a 'Thanks everyone, and goodnight!' might have been nice. Instead, Fitzbillies has tailed off quietly.

Though I'm sure the company worked hard to regain its reputation after the news of the unfortunate star ratings, obviously some problems were never really solved.

Within a few minutes of discussing the closure with friends, our thoughts had already turned from horror and disappointment at the loss to memories of the less appealing sides of the whole business. It was expensive, and seemed always to have been so; the décor was distinctly 1980s in a dispiriting sort of way; cakes left in the window overnight often began to sag. And after the opening of Patisserie Valerie, with its cosmopolitan London air and celestial almond macaroons, Fitzbillies began to feel a bit like a ragged old tea cosy next to a newly-bought kettle.

On reflection, we thought, were we actually that bothered it had

closed? The death throes are obvious in hindsight.

We as current Cambridge students have never been a part of the Fitzbillies golden age. We liked to pop in; to look at the portraits of great bakery alumni on the walls; to imagine we might join them up there one day. If we could resurrect Fitzbillies, there would have to be some big changes made to everything from the food preparation to the paint.

There have been rumblings on Twitter of a campaign to convince Stephen Fry to buy the name and recreate the Fitzbillies of his memory and imagination. And I'm up for calling in Mary Portas to help Fry to forge a new bakery from the ashes, somewhere clean and fresh with the same secret Chelsea bun recipe but a delicious new repertoire of cakes to go with it. Maybe with cheerful staff, and proper teapots rather than those little steel things, and certainly with a bigger sense of pride appropriate to the bakery's history.

Let's bring back the Fitzbillies of decades ago as a consolation for the ailing remains we've had to make do with instead. It will be a success.

Cambridge, after all, will always need nostalgia and buns.

## Not straight forward: celebrating LGBT month Andrew Gilliver explains why there is still much more work to be done

PRADEEPA SIVASANTHIRAN



History is full of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people who have contributed significantly to the world.

We have always been there, whether you care to investigate Ancient Greece, Rome, Egypt, or Native American and Medieval British attitudes towards homosexuality and transgender issues.

However it is only in recent times that we have been able to fully discuss issues of homophobia and transphobia openly and gain some insight into how far we have come as a community while recognising the similarity of our struggles today with those of our LGBT brothers and sisters of yesterday.

It wasn't until the 20th century that a more enlightened discussion around homosexuality, bisexuality and gender identity aimed to move away from criminalisation and towards a more enlightened understanding of the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Until the 1960s homosexuality was still largely seen as an illness but in the late 1950s the first serious movements towards legalising homosexuality began. Gender reassignment became more accessible and transsexuality was finally recognised as independent from homosexuality. The 1970s saw the gay liberation movement establish the first gay pride events only to have much of this work devastated in the 1980s, a decade dominated by AIDS. LGBT issues became linked to the problems of understanding and fighting the HIV virus and negative attitudes towards it.

In the 1990s the LGBT community began to organise itself and take the lead on providing support and services for its own people. Finally in the new millennium, ground breaking legislation caught up meaning that more equal rights became available for more LGBT people around the world. From the equal age of consent

to Civil Partnerships, this change is still ongoing. Now in the UK, The Equality Act brings together 40 years of equality legislation to protect LGBT rights and safeguard against discrimination.

But there is still much more to do. One in five lesbian and gay people have experienced a homophobic hate crime or incident in the last three years and one in two LGBT people report feeling isolated. As of 2011 more than 70 countries around the world still have criminal sanctions for homosexuality on their statute books.

The killing in January of David Kato reminds us that there are still people out there who do not wish the LGBT community well.

Here in the UK the recent murder of Ian Baynham, a gay man killed in a homophobic attack whilst on a night out in Trafalgar Square in 2009, and gay teenager Michael Causer who died in 2008 after being brutally assaulted and left for dead in Liverpool, highlights that this issue is still very much

happening at home too.

Of course decriminalizing homosexuality is the first step towards establishing genuine equality in law. But real, lasting progress can only be achieved by changing people's hearts and minds. Homophobia and transphobia are born out of ignorance and like other forms of prejudice, the most effective response is information and education.

Fortunately over the past half century, we have seen a significant shift in public attitudes. But this has only happened through many decades of campaigning by LGBT people and their heterosexual allies.

The second decade of the 21st century is proving to be an interesting time to live; in a climate where on the surface so much has been achieved and the next generation seem more empowered. History tends to have a way of showing us that after many battles have been won, new challenges will arise.

After decades of campaigning for full equality, complacency has set in

with many people, as much of the world presumes there is no longer the need for any kind of specialist support services for LGBT people, even though research and the work of LGBT community organisations proves otherwise.

Today many LGBT organisations are being completely undervalued and under invested in. Currently there are fewer than 70 LGBT registered charities in England and many of these are so overstretched and under resourced that they cannot respond to all of the needs of their service users.

Understanding our history can highlight the widespread prejudice felt by many LGBT people but history also gives us hope as to how we can make progress for the future.

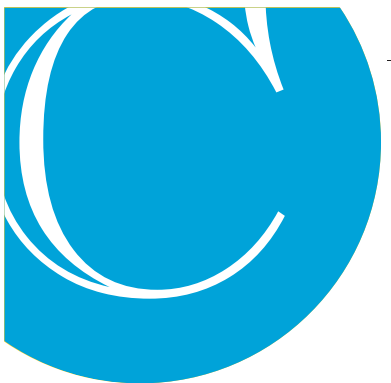
Our journey has only just begun.

ANDREW GILLIVER IS COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER FOR THE LESBIAN & GAY FOUNDATION (LGF), A VIBRANT CHARITY AIMED AT MEETING THE NEEDS OF LESBIAN, GAY AND BISEXUAL PEOPLE.

the essay

Homophobia and transphobia are born out of ignorance and like other forms of prejudice, the most effective response is information and education





## CULTURE

Unless you have been living under a rock for the last few weeks (or are crippling lonely), you may have noticed that Valentine's Day is just around the corner, a time of year where you desperately try and find a consenting date for a night of stilted conversation and awkward sexual advances. Whilst once all you needed was a Barry White record to *Let the Music Play*, those times are long gone. If you keep finding your less-than-honourable offers of 'coffee' resulting in a night of hot, steamy, sensuous beverages and nothing more, never fear for help is at hand! In a departure from the usual pithy, self-referential rants, I am going to bestow on you a foolproof guide to food to get you in the mood.

### Entres: Avocados

The humble avocado exemplifies a general rule in aphrodisiac foods - if it sort of looks like something naughty, it'll make you feel saucy. The Aztecs certainly thought so, naming the plant *ahuacatl*, or "testicle tree", presumably in an attempt to make people feel awkward eating it. Legend has it that, during the harvests, the women would be kept under lock and key, lest the men be overcome with lust. The fruit is packed with potassium, vitamins and protein to keep you dancing the horizontal monster mash all night long. Even if it doesn't work, it is by far the most palatable item on this list. A word of warning: if making into guacamole, hold back on the chilli. After the best part of a bottle of wine, any spreadable substance becomes fair game in the bedroom, and capsaicin on the intimate areas is certified sexual kryptonite.

### Fish Course: Sea Cucumber

You could go for oysters, sure, but after reading a recipe for "Manmade Oysters" from *Natural Harvest: A Collection of Semen-Based Recipes* I've become slightly squeamish around them. Instead, why not try a phallic foodstuff? The sea cucumber is

## The Hard Facts: Aphrodisiacs Under Scrutiny

Do lukewarm dates leave a bad taste in your mouth? Food & Drink Editor **Andrew Tindall** dishes up a recipe for (sexual) success

actually an animal in the starfish family, as any Natsci unfortunate enough to be served it is bound to comment between your predatory chat-up lines. Pray your dinner guest stops there as not only does this creature look like a sex toy designed to promote abstinence but it expels a sticky white mass of stomach, intestines and other 'non-essential' organs when attacked. This has led to its reputation as a promoter of male sexual health in traditional Chinese medicine, a practice that seems to suffer from a crippling lack of imagination. In spite of Heston Blumenthal's attempts to persuade the public otherwise, the sea cucumber is a truly horrifying

would provide a compelling counter-argument).

### Dessert: Chocolate

Everyone likes chocolate, so at least your date will enjoy this part of the evening. The stimulant theobromine, named from the Greek *Theo bromia* for "food of the gods", is the active compound in chocolate with reputed health-giving properties. It also kills dogs and increases the aggressiveness of prostate cancer but hey, nothing's perfect! Make sure you use the good stuff - no one's impressed by a load of molten Lion bars. If you made a fondue, it can even



ROSY SOUTHWELL

food. This doesn't exclude it from your Valentine's feast - the terror of seeing a 30cm spiked phallus stiffen and ejaculate everywhere will desensitise your date to your hairy back or stretch marks.

### Main Course: Anything in Truffle Sauce

Truffles are universally accepted to be an aphrodisiac with their musky scent and powerful flavour. Trained truffle hogs are used to sniff out the subterranean fungus, attracted by a compound related to the pheromone androstenol also found in boar slobber. If it makes pigs randy, it'll no doubt work on that portly rugby player you've been eyeing up! Try serving with lamb, which is high in zinc for a passionate evening. For a killer combo, serve with a side salad of lettuce. This mundane vegetable was deemed an aphrodisiac in ancient Egypt, implying that they achieved what no culture has since and progressed beyond the "LOL! DICKS!!!1!" stage of human civilisation (although Cleopatra's Needle

be used in an erotic setting if you're feeling adventurous but don't want to bring out the handcuffs, ball gag and cat-o-nine-tails on the first date (wuss).

### To Drink: Champagne OR Absinthe

Dinner for two rarely leads to breakfast for two without the involvement of copious quantities of booze. These drinks both speak volumes about the host: "I am classy"; "I have at least one Art Nouveau poster framed on my wall"; "I'd like to think I can distinguish Dom Perignon from Sainsbury's Cava." Sadly, this section is likely to be the most effective aphrodisiac on the list. Whilst bananas, furry beans and sea cucumbers all have one thing in common, truffles, Cristal and luxury chocolate have another. They are all rather expensive. Could the real 'aphrodisiac' secret behind these foods be money? If so it might be easier to buy your date a carton of cheesy chips, garnished with a £50 note. Who knows, it might even be the ticket to a night to remember rather than one whose memory you try to repress.



*n. a person who is self-indulgent in their fondness for sensuous luxury*

Sigmund Freud must have had a way with the ladies. His "psychoanalytic situation" originally involved the patient lying on the couch with the psychoanalyst sitting nearby, and both able to see the other. That was until one lascivious female exploited this situation and tried to seduce him; to rule out anything similar, Freud moved to the opposite end of the couch, sitting behind the analysand and out of their sight.

It seems incredibly naïve for an expert in psychology to imagine we cannot be seduced by someone whose face we cannot see, or who cannot see us; the saying 'out of sight, out of mind' is obviously not to be taken at face value. Everyone thinks of things they do not have in sight all the time - just imagine a hungry tiger running towards you. (If, at this point, you can actually see a hungry tiger then stop reading, make good your escape, and send me a note.) In fact, if you think about it, seduction necessarily ends when everything is made visible. It is what cannot be seen which is often most alluring - that, surely, is the art of burlesque. This is a fact expertly iterated yesterday by a frisky contributor to floxx.com (the new FitFinder):

*ADC Theatre, Stage Female, Brunette hair. She's got long auburn hair... light brown eyes... pale skin and is wearing a blue tie-dye cardigan. i want to see what\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\s under*

That last sentence was punctuated, apparently, by an overexcited dyspraxic, but its anonymous and mal-co-ordinated author seems to recognise the allure of the hidden in a way that Freud does not. Yet let us not be too harsh on old Sigmund. Perhaps he just felt it would make it more difficult for his nymphomaniac patient to lure him in if she couldn't look into his eyes while talking about her father.

Seduction without sight is practically an art form in Cambridge - the pure poetry, eloquent outpourings, the

often violent flights of romantic lyricism I have witnessed at this university between strangers render Cambridge to lovemaking what Renaissance Rome was to art. This city is awash with thousands of men and women who have, this week, practised their seductive expertise in a very specific and elegant genre. I am, of course, talking about the art of the RAG Blind Date form.

I do not profess to be, by any means, an expert; but, from what I can work out, the art of the RAG form at its lofty height seems to consist in getting a group of your most moronic companions extremely drunk and unleashing them upon the piece of paper with a fey cry of "Do your worst!". No one could possibly be seen to take the date seriously, so the ideal RAG sheet has a difficult balance to strike. It must demonstrate the wild frivolity and total apathy of its creator with regard to the meeting, whilst keeping open the possibility of vindictive laughter at their date and their potential shortcomings, in case they turn out to be an alien, let alone, god forbid, a [...]Sci. Or, for that matter, actually blind. For most people I saw at Cindies on Tuesday, however, a literally blind date would probably heighten their chances of success. If only Freud had been there.

PETER LEGGATT



## From the Archives: This Week in 1952

### Cupid's annual outings

ALL Freshers at Girton received a miniature Cupid's bow on Thursday morning. St. Valentine's Day, together with a card bearing the inscription "From your passionate admirers at the Ferry Dive." Made of rolled gold and silk, the "valentines" were delivered before 8 a.m. by eight Queens' undergraduates who live at the same lodgings in the Ferry Path, off Chesterton Road. A full-sized bow was also left "as a gesture to the other ladies of Girton."

Although the ladies of Newnham were not so fortunate on St. Valentine's morning, they were honoured by

the visit of a party of serenaders at night. Wearing check shirts and black sombreros, seven undergraduates assembled in Grange Road shortly before eleven and sang Italian love songs to the accompaniment of a guitar.

Within a few minutes of singing a Neapolitan song, "Love, at the window show thy face," many of the windows were opened and the listening maidens could be seen peeping through the curtains. Encouraged by their applause, the serenaders moved on to Sidgwick Avenue but they were greeted there by a volley of snowballs from the direction of Selwyn.

Sir,—In reply to Diana, Girton, re "Popsie," there are no handsome undergraduates.—Yours, etc.,  
**DISILLUSIONED,**  
P.J.S.

### EVE REPRIEVED

Only two people voted for the motion "That in the opinion of this House it would have been better had Adam died with all his ribs intact" when a Union debating team visited Cottenham Women's Institute this week. The two were the proposer and seconder, Brian Appleby and Tony Lloyd. Jimmy O'Brien and Greville Janner spoke against the motion, which was defeated by 123 votes.

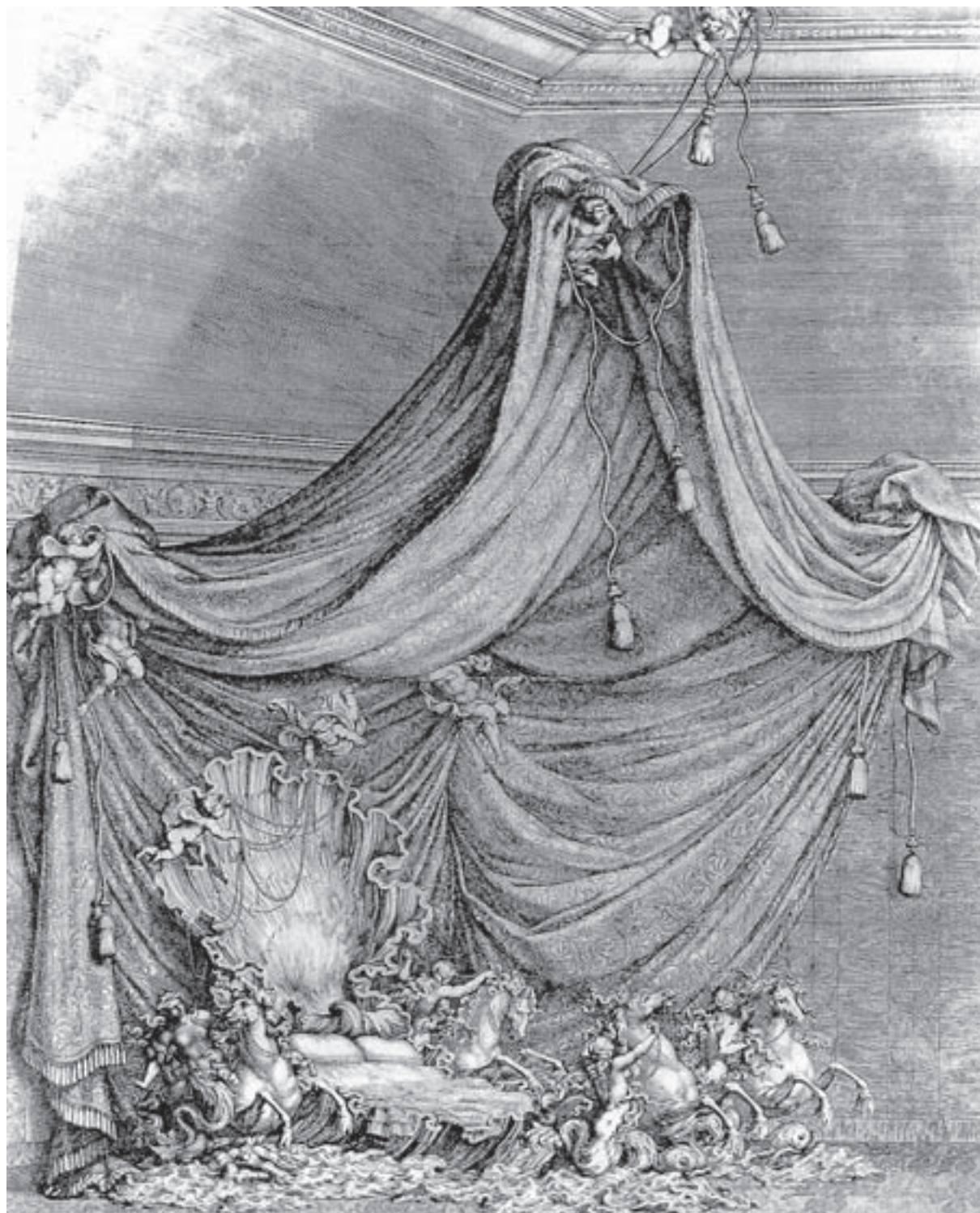
Come and be the live studio audience!  
VarsityTV will be filming Blind Date on  
**SATURDAY 12th FEBRUARY**  
**Sidney Sussex College**  
**Knox Shaw Room**  
**7PM - 8PM**  
**ENTRY: £1**

## Varsity Blind Date



# AND SO TO BED...

We spend a third of our lives in them, and during Valentine's week the more traditionalist among us may spend more time in them than usual. But the bed situation in our country is in dire straits. Time to look at its history to glean some examples, writes **Yates Norton**



Maria Mancini Colonna's magnificent 'bed' by baroque designer Johann Paul Schor – whose design sadly didn't catch on

The bed has never been just for sleeping in. This is something of which bed manufacturers even today have taken careful note by introducing a range of gadgets which make the mattress perform callisthenics, TVs to appear from the footboard, and enough pillows to make the hardest of peas pass unnoticed by the most sensitive backs and heads. All these additions are not just to aid sleeping, but to invite us to spend our lives in bed and increase that sadly low statistic of a third to the hopeful figure of a whole. For the sleep-deprived amongst us, we have to remember that the bed is not just a vessel of sleep (or lack thereof). This is the naïve mistake of boring people. Franz Joseph I, despite the

magnificence of some 1,441 rooms in the Schönbrunn palace, slept in a very plebeian affair lodged between a hard *prie-dieu* and brown wallpaper.

Now the great and not-so-good, of history know that the bed is more than a mattress and four legs, and have never even given the single bed the thought of day with its depressingly small surface area and its strict Procrustean demands on our bodily arrangements. The Turkish Sultan Ibrahim, son of Murad IV, dispensed with such arbitrary dimensions of a mattress and extended the area on which he was to 'do justice' to his concubines, by entirely lining the room with lynx and sable in the Topkapi palace in Constantinople.

Beds of such expansive proportions are clearly not just for sleep and those

who associate only sleep with the bed are the blander among us. We need only look at history to see that the bed's associations are far more exciting than sleep. Murder, lust, wrath, pride, and not to mention sloth, are the prerogatives of the bed; when Pepys wrote, "and so to bed," he was not just going to sleep, but as his diary records, to argue with his wife, to embrace his maid, and, of course, to write his diary. If he were only going to sleep our view of 17th-century England would be the poorer.

The ceremonial bed was the sleepless bed par excellence. Often the apotheosis of a long and uninterrupted vista, the *lit de parade*, as it was known in France, was the grandest bed of all. For this the king or queen would retire



Tracy Emin's bed: proof that the unmade bed cannot look attractive if contemporary

to a small room in which *le petit lever* would precede *le grand lever* in the state bedroom which involved getting out of bed only to get back into a bigger and better one; a lie-in of which only the French could have conceived.

What made the bed so grand were its bed sheets. It is the gloomier amongst us, of which the purveyors of college linen are the supreme example, who purchase bed sheets which have to be by some dreadful necessity ugly or a shade of hospital blue. The owners of

**We need only look at history to see that the bed's associations are far more exciting than sleep**

the great beds in the annals of history would be horrified at the bed-linen of today. The *lit de parade* often fulfilled its job description, enshrining the notary within a nest of costly fabrics. Maria Mancini Colonna's bed is the most exuberant example and was created no doubt to resist any tiresome attempts to 'make the bed'. A messy bed was legitimised because its counterpanes and sheets were made into artful drapery rather than mere bed linen (compare Tracy Emin's *My Bed* and Colonna's, and you will see the difference).

Rarely would one have been lost alone in such a wilderness of drapery because bed-sharing was very common during this period. College statutes often demand that the student and the master share a bed in line with the most noble of bed-sharing pedigree where even kings would invite a defeated noble foe or admired comrade to lie beneath his covers. How saddened would Francis I be who bedded down with Admiral Bonnavet to find that bed sharing is a prurient and not a noble invitation. Indeed, as soon as erotic

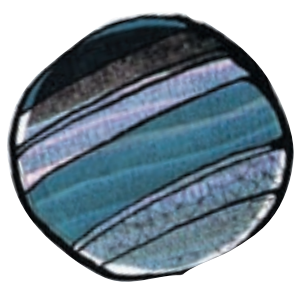
pictures (or mirrors for the more narcissistic or lonely lover) were placed beneath the canopy in the 18th century, bed-sharing was no longer a diplomatic venture. If mirrors and erotic pictures were not a stimulant enough, then the (wealthy) impotent could in the late 18th century have a lie on Dr. James Graham's 'The Celestial Bed' in the *Temple of Hymen in Pall Mall*, where by means of "Oriental perfumes" and the "powerful tied of the magnetic effluvia" the frigid could be warmed up by some "marrow-melting motion".

Unfortunately Viagra came to the rescue in the 20th century and little has been done to expand on Dr James Graham's excellent idea. What is more, in our post-Romantic society, it has been positively encouraged to 'do justice' to one's lover, as a Turkish Sultan would say, without the bed at all, for example in the corner of King's library, or for the exhibitionist, the history faculty library. This might have dealt a fateful blow to the bed as a coital receptacle. In our own times silent mattresses for energetic 'justice' without the accompanying rubber-duck-like sound-track, a spate of pillows for ease of comfort and the bed's very own positions have helped continue Dr Graham's bed reform. But if we want the bed to be better and less sleep-related, it is up to us to continue the example of our illustrious forbears, and like the University's famous alumnus to always claim, "and so to bed".



In line with the harsh, practical Nordic sensibility, Ikea's beds are symptomatic of the contemporary bed's decline





# Science Sells



If you thought only sex and scandal novels top the best-sellers lists, think again. Science's new school of literature is changing the way we read

## 'Sexing Up' and 'Dumbing Down': A comment on the state of science communication

Science reporting is often accused of being 'sexed up' or 'dumbed down' in an attempt to engage the masses. But is the science being lost in the retelling? Do intelligent non-scientists feel patronised by our attempts? Worse still: are we trying so hard to include everyone with flashy headlines and sound bites that the truth is lost?

Science communication is a growing industry. In 2009, *The Times* launched its new science magazine *Eureka*, saying that "many readers crave a better understanding of how science can transform our lives and our planet"; demand for information has resulted in an increasing number of scientists writing popular science books, and debunking pseudoscience is becoming a popular hobby. Furthermore, the multimedia revolution has given everyone the ability to share their opinions on major scientific issues - the blogosphere is full of enthusiastic contributors. Indeed, very few people outside of academia go directly to the published scientific literature.

However, Professor Paul

Nurse, president of the Royal Society, warns that "searches on the internet do not differentiate between thoroughly researched evidence and unsourced, uncorroborated assertion". When faced with such a proliferation of information, how can a non-scientist know what to believe?

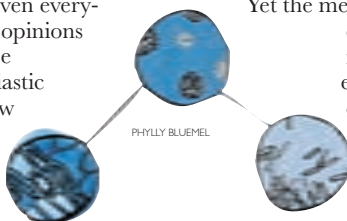
Journalists often jump to the scandals or rewrite what they find online with barely a nod at the bulk of peer-reviewed research on a topic. As a result, a disproportionate number of the headlines are concerned with controversial views, held by a minority of scientists. Ben Goldacre, full-time doctor and a columnist for *The Guardian*, explains in his book *Bad Science* that "for an experimental result to be newsworthy it must be new, unexpected and change what we previously thought".

Yet the methodical, evidence-based nature of science is seldom conducive to the 'breakthrough' ethos of the media; paradigm shifts are

rare in science. School teaches people that experiments can be fitted into a lesson or two, whereas research may involve months or years of data collection to develop and confirm a theory. Goldacre suggests one potential solution: to focus on science stories as 'features' rather than 'news'. This isn't to suggest that science isn't newsworthy, just that science is usually best presented after careful consideration of the original research.

From climate change to vaccine safety, science underpins decisions made by governments and individuals alike. Professor Nurse argues that these issues are "far too important to be left to the polemicists and commentators in the media; scientists have to be there too." Goldacre proposes that we need fewer writers and more editors: fewer poorly informed hacks asserting their own agenda and more people encouraging professional scientists to share their research. **TIM MIDDLETON**

BlueSci, The University of Cambridge's science magazine, aims to publish high-quality science writing on a timely basis. If you are interested in being involved, please contact enquiries@bluesci.co.uk.



## The Book of Universes by John Barrow Jessica Robinson considers Professor Barrow's latest work



The two words 'mathematical' and 'physics' are enough to fill most people with dread.

Yet Cambridge academic Professor John Barrow this week launches his twenty-first popular science book, which successfully tackles these ideas so that even the fearful readers amongst us can enjoy the topic.

*The Book of Universes* breaks from Barrow's past repertoire of popular maths and physics books and turns to a subject which is much closer to his day-to-day research on cosmology, taking us on a historical trail through the "unusual universes that have emerged from Einstein's equations". It discusses accelerating, rotating and magnetic universes and brings us up to the present

with ideas about the multiverse and string theory, culminating in the best description we currently have for our universe. The focus throughout is on the people behind the discoveries. Whilst putting the book together, he conducted a treasure hunt to find many previously unseen photographs of crucial players such as Eddington, Straus and Lemaître.

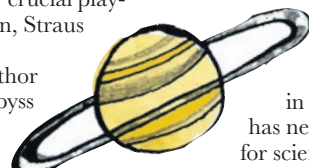
So how does the author manage to cross the abyss between theoretical physicists and the rest of the population? He believes it is all to do with "being able to relate to a subject"; we need to be able to grasp the point of the topic we are reading about. Barrow has been particularly successful in doing this. His

books have been translated into twenty-eight different languages and in 2008 he won the Royal Society's Michael Faraday Prize for excellence in communicating science to UK audiences.

Barrow comments that a huge shift in the importance of science communication has occurred since the 1980s; a time when few mathematicians and physicists engaged in public discourse. Pressure to recruit good undergraduates and a realisation of the "need to market their subject" forced university science departments to explain their work in terms that everyone can understand. This has been further solidified by government and funding agencies requiring tangible evidence that taxpayers' money is being well spent.

As the Director of the Millennium Mathematics Project, outreach activities are an area particular close to his heart. This national initiative, conceived by the Cambridge Mathematics Department, aims to aid maths teaching and understanding in schools and businesses. Barrow fully supports the ongoing efforts to improve teaching standards in the UK but highlights the problems in recruiting good quality maths and science teachers in an environment where there has never been more competition for science graduates.

Professor Barrow has made it his mission to break down complicated physical and mathematical concepts into easy to digest and enjoyable books. His latest work, *The Book of Universes*, does just that.



## Top Five Reads for the science amateur

1

**Bad Science** (2008)

Ben Goldacre

**Strap line:** 'Hacks, Quacks and Uncomfortable facts'

This is the remedy to all quick fixes. Goldacre presents the skills necessary to see through pretentious pseudoscientific jargon. Homeopathy and wonder drugs are used to illustrate the misconceptions and illusions which are the foundations of bad science. An essential read for those searching for the truth behind the smoke and mirrors.



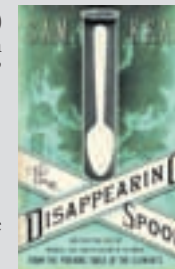
2

**The Disappearing Spoon** (2010)

Sam Kean

**Strap line:** 'Where's my spoon gone....?'

With a title straight from an Agatha Christie novel, Kean's book examines the mysteries and foibles of the chemical elements. Ever wondered why Ghandi disliked iodine or whether carbon is promiscuous? Find out with this thorough and surprising inventory of our ability to manipulate the world around us.



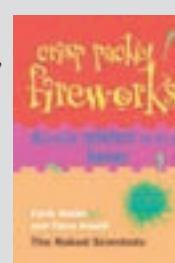
3

**Crisp Packet Fireworks** (2008)

Chris Smith & David Ansell

**Strap line:** 'Maverick science to try at home'

The Naked Scientists encourage you to get stuck into science. A compendium of exciting and thought provoking experiments that anyone can easily try out at home, no specialist equipment required. Make cola volcanoes, isolate DNA and write with invisible ink, then learn how the science is used in the real world.



4

**The Genius in All of Us** (2010)

David Shenk

**Strap line:** 'Why everything you've been told about genetics, talent and intelligence is wrong...'

A happy confluence of science and self-help, Shenk's book provides a new perspective on the nature versus nurture debate. Ignoring occasional gushing (Obama quotes and Renaissance references), his evidence for a dynamic, interactional process is convincing. Expositions of twin studies and physiology are unlikely to unlock genius but may hold the key to who we are.



5

**The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy** (1979)

Douglas Adams

**Strap line:** 'Time is an illusion. Lunchtime doubly so'

The only book with the answer to life, the universe and everything, Adams' masterpiece is simultaneously hilarious and insightful. Although fictitious, it has influenced science fact, with Google currently developing a real-time voice translator inspired by the infinitely-lingual Babel Fish. Whilst reassuring with those friendly words: 'Don't panic', this book reminds us that science survives on imagination.

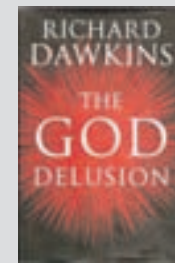


## One to Avoid

**The God Delusion** (2006)

Richard Dawkins

Whilst we support Dawkins in his scientific views, his rather militant approach makes him an inhospitable read for those with a casual interest in the subject. He passionately and vehemently makes a strong case for the validity of evolutionary theory but his argument is often so aggressive that sceptics are unlikely to give it due consideration.







Kohl-smudged Titania  
the hum of other people's talk soaks  
the husk brushing her ear, the graze of a look -  
Les nuits Blanches  
The moon lets go her absolutes -  
Soul disheveled in  
Cigarette intimacy

# Les Nuits Blanches



MODELS Clockwise: Georgia Haseldine and Joe Passmore.; Geoff Clapham and Vicky Nwosu-Hope, Claudia Fragoso and Dan D'Souza  
STYLIST Paula Petkova PHOTOGRAPHER Jess Lambert WORDS BY Amber Medland



**Rastamouse**, a new CBeebies show about – well, a stop-motion Rastafarian mouse and his crime-fighting crew 'Da Easy Crew' (also a reggae band). Most of the action revolves around cheese, chillin' and finding out "exactly wha gwan".



**'Chloe'**, the YouTube hit which consists of a man who hysterically impersonates actress Chloe Sevigny as a strange bimbo with a constantly shifting backdrop talking only in references to Balenciaga, Victor & Rolf, and "films".



With over 450 libraries in the UK threatened with closure, authors and readers alike have been attending anti-cut '**read-ins**' (pun?) **in libraries**. Protesters played Monopoly, Connect 4 and "did plenty of reading".

Did you know that eating plenty of veggies will subtly alter the colour of your skin to make you look more attractive?! A recent study says this is the case, so get your carotenoid hat on and you're **eating your 5-a-day** for Valentine's Day.

The latest Shakespeare adaptation (or abomination?) **Gnomeo and Juliet** takes the play to a Super-Mario, 3-D animated, sparkly level. We can't help but love – and also hate – this film.



A new **Confession App** for iPhone and iPad aimed at Catholics, which is also "not a substitute for confession". Hmm...



There will be **no more Guitar Hero** games. (Still, maybe people will actually learn to play real guitars?)

**No More Fitzbillies!!** Where are you going to go for nibbles now? Will tourists and family have to content themselves with King's College Chapel snowglobes for their best taste of Cambridge? Pictured: The best Chelsea bun in the world.





Drama  
Queen

SIOBHAN FORSHAW



It is an unfortunate truth barely acknowledged in Cambridge that some plays are bad. Some are excellent; most are average; a few are totally awful. What equates the three is the volume of sweat that drips off every production: the time and effort invested in putting on a play, alongside the usual pressures in Cambridge, and what's that other thing – a degree – is always thoroughly remarkable. It's difficult not to be automatically impressed by this feat (every single student play this week has so far received a gleaming four stars) and even more difficult to recognise that sometimes, these endeavours just fail, and then to say what you really think.

In such a small town, writing criticism can be a risky business. Sooner or later, you will bump into somebody you've been rude about. You will peer into their eyes when they tell you their name, struggling to place them. The truth will hit; awkward silence will descend. Learning how to wriggle out of these situations is not crucial practice for the real wide world, where real critics swan around untroubled by the probability of accidentally meeting someone they have publicly insulted. A distant cry from our weird little microcosmic bubble, where I use my compact to look around corners.

Recently, I found myself on the other side of this uncomfortable and bizarre kind of encounter. Upon flicking casually through Vivid magazine last week, I stumbled across a charming little piece of public slander written by a local scoundrel, who shall remain courteously anonymous. In his 'metareview' the author picks apart a review I thought had been lost forever in the mists of time. The soaring ecstasy I felt at seeing the four stars with which he rated my article was cruelly snatched away as I was forced to consider the possible irony behind them. "Whether or not Forshaw knows anything about theatre," he snarls, "is beside the point." Ohhh...

It's hard to write a critical article and get away with it, which in turn makes it quite easy to put on a bad play and get off scott-free. A negative review is rarely written with a personal grudge in mind, and only the stupidest critic operates under the delusion that they carry any significant level of expertise above their peers – it's just one person brave/arrogant enough to have their opinions published under their own name. The Ben Weizs' (oops) amongst us who find themselves pushed to writing such pieces of scandalous libel in reaction to a review are in fact a welcome reprieve from those who prefer to veil their bile beneath an imaginative pseudonym. I'm not sure he's aware of how many mutual friends we have, but it's a fact of which I am eager he become conscious.

INTERVIEW WITH  
Laura Wade, Director  
of 'Posh'

REVIEWS OF 'Volpone',  
'Footlights & Friends' and 'Jet, Set, Go!'

[www.varsity.co.uk/reviews](http://www.varsity.co.uk/reviews)



## THEATRE

## Noises Off

ADC Mainshow  
(Wed 9th - Sat 19th February)

★★★★★

I don't quite know what my editor thinks of my theatrical preferences, or if she just has me down as lonely, but she keeps sending me to plays where actors end up in their pants. This time, however, I am content to let it slide. This production of Michael Fayn's comedy must be one of CUADC's most ambitious. *Noises Off* – described in no uncertain terms by *The New York Times* as "the funniest farce ever written" – dominates the ADC's mainshow slot for a whole fortnight, has already sold out the rest of this week,

... heart-warming  
silliness at its best

and not without reason.

*Noises Off* follows the cast and crew of *Nothing On* as they plough through final preparations and two 'real' performances by any means necessary, with tensions building all the while both on and behind the stage, and the audience privy to all. Note that the conceptual



challenges of its play-within-a-play-ness have already begun to take their toll on the number of inverted commas demanded by their explanation. In the first act, Lloyd Dallas (Ben Kavanagh) 'directs' the dress rehearsal from somewhere around row J of the ADC auditorium itself. His array of roll-neck jumpers and general manner make his performance as the cliché of a director worryingly convincing. His positioning works brilliantly, because the audience is placed directly in the middle of the misunderstandings that are the source of so much of the humour, so that comic distance between these two poles of comprehension are apparent to none more so than ourselves.

## THEATRE

## Res Gestae

Corpus Mainshow  
(Tues 8th - Sat 12th February)

★★★★★

For most of its amenably short duration, *Res Gestae* does not pretend to be a play, and this candour works to its advantage. Barring a timely and delicious injection of farce, it has no plot. Its dialogue is sparse and stilted, while being careful never to illuminate character. That last scruple can hardly be avoided when all but one of the *rôles* are so insipid (a quality that seeps into those playing them, though Harry Sheehan's Broadus has nice hair and swaggers genially). Instead of pursuing and developing historical themes, it states and restates a few standard tropes: despots turn into hypocrites; boredom prompts depravity; women are unfairly confined, and always the victims of moral crackdowns. As such, they ought to empathise with their slaves.

Stripped of all the constituents of drama, what remains is not an empty



husk but a vivid and pungent curiosity. Like a Martin Amis novel it relies purely on the personality of its main

protagonist, and the exuberance of the monologue by which that personality is conveyed. The comparison is less bathetically inapt than we have any right to expect. This is partly because Niall Wilson (the man behind the newly-written piece) has an actress as well as a script to work with. Leonie James entrances as Julia, the Emperor Augustus' wayward granddaughter. Her flourishes are as varied as they are compelling: she can be snobbish or subversive, lyrical or scathing, petulantly childlike or anguishedly maternal. Her contempt is vulnerable, she corrodes her own delusions, she screeches and flails, yet is robotically disembodied. These conflicting traits follow each other fluidly, or even coexist in the same mad outburst. She swears with aplomb. The grape-hurling, larynx-wrenching routine after the interval is best of all, an antic disposition steeped in sarcasm. Like all proper anti-heroes, she is too interest-

... a vivid and  
pungent curiosity.

ing to disapprove of.

The relish she brings, however, she brings to the script, which is mostly superb so long as Julia can rant without interruption. The same repackaged insights come in ever wittier wrapping, while her vitriol could plausibly fleck the lips of Malcom Tucker. The last morsel of abuse spat at poor Brodius is much too choice to spoil by quoting, and makes up for fallow spots that leave Miss James with nothing to do but sigh several times in a row.

The fatal deficiency is that whereas John Self or Keith Talent fizzle along for five hundred pages, Wilson's Julia monologue cannot last the evening. The fruit flinging is its last hurrah, and after that a real play tries fitfully to emerge, marrying a sentimental and implausible plot to some excruciating forays into character development. So schedule a nap for the last twenty minutes but enjoy the fun while it survives, as Julia makes sure we know she did.

BEN SLINGO

## THEATRE

## Verge

Corpus Lateshow  
(Tues 8th - Sat 12th February)

★★★★★

A few weeks ago, I watched *Closer*, which was near flawless but hard to love; tonight I watched *Verge*, which wasn't flawless but certainly pretty loveable. Telling the story of strangers forced into conversation by a cross-country bus proving typically useless at navigating cross-country routes, Donald Futers' original script and collaborative production with Lowell Belfield was smartly written and amusing. The quicker interchanges between the lively cast worked best, human with a distinctly British, noticeably warm flavour. Everyone seemed to possess an aura of uncool neuroticism which couldn't help but make me like them, fidgeting, sighing and rambling in a service station like Scousers on holiday.

Most uncool was woman-everyone-avoids-sitting-next-to-on-the-bus Barbara, played by Katherine Message as a loud, crisp-crunching, finger-wagging, empire advocate. There is a Barbara on every bus, and we're all the better for it. Most neurotic was gangly band member, Stephen Birmingham's Benjamin: foolish, uncharismatic and boldest when drunk.

A little dose of  
silly and a slice of  
sincere feeling

The highlight of the play was the cleverly-devised trick that had us thinking this likeable buffoon was actually bold enough to pick up a phone and rant at a fellow band member for abandoning their group. What I thought was a classic case of the unconvincing on stage phonecall in fact wasn't a phonecall at all but a voicemail, and one that soon had my favourite character cursing at himself for such recklessness. These two were the standout

is collaborative. The whole cast push the seven doors and two storeys of the domestic set to their limits in a masterclass in comic timing. Through a sequence of carefully choreographed misunderstandings, exits and entrances, the confusion escalates, and the hilarity is compounded without relent.

In the second act, we see *Nothing On* once more, this time from a backstage vantage-point. The whole set is reversed and its action becomes visible only through its two windows, this time performed to an assumed audience, whilst the 'off-stage' characters perform for us almost entirely in whispers which are muted in everything but their energy. With this second theatrical dimension added, the collaborative dynamic becomes even more impressive: the watching audience focuses their attention on one of the simultaneous exchanges, only to find that when they return to a previous one it has become all the more absurd, with flowers, whisky, and a fireman's axe all circulating in various permutations.

The worse *Nothing On* becomes for its cast, the better *Noises Off* becomes for its audience. My only criticism is that, at around two and a half hours long, it does at times feel a little long. This farce is almost as exhausting to watch as it is to perform. Nevertheless, *Noises Off* is not unrealistic in its grand designs; heart-warming silliness at its best.

PATRICK SYKES

performances, but the other leads, Dominic Biddle as Michael and Eleanor Penfold as Selina were also very watchable. Biddle's earnest character, a boy on the cusp of manhood and its unattractive universities, was geeky in an non-typical way, and apprehensive without portraying panic in its more melodramatic forms.

If there was a problem with his performance it was that, other than his magazine fetish, he was not geeky or cerebral enough; his character came across more Mr Average than



Mr Would-Be Writer. Nonetheless, he rarely overplayed his part, and to do so would have been inaccurate; none of the play's themes or conflicts were particularly colossal. What mattered is that the issues at stake were convincingly portrayed as important to the characters themselves. A little dose of silly, a nice simplicity and a slice of sincere feeling was the order of the day, and it was an astute one, as it prevented the play coming across clichéd or derivative. Bored and agonising characters can be as interesting as pained and desperate ones if played well. Indeed, it was the moments when characters seemed to lapse into deeper shades of blue that tended not to work, as they were inconsistent with the overall tone. For the most part, however, *Verge* was a pleasure to watch. **SAM GOULD**



## TALK

## Alan Johnston

Cambridge Union

★★★★★

Nominally, *Reflections on Life, Politics and Captivity in Gaza* was a fascinating talk given by Alan Johnston, winner of the BBC journalism prize, on his four months in confinement after being kidnapped by the Army of Islam in Gaza City in 2007. But although Johnston's narrative promised to be insightful, it glazed over the mental aspects of his captivity with vague repeated phrases like "vast psychological trial". It is understandably difficult to articulate what it's like to sit for 18 hours a day in a plastic chair, but Johnston trivialized his experience with misplaced humour: a strange smile occupied his face as he joked: "I did manage to get myself kidnapped, I'm afraid."

After a roar of applause, Johnston explained the bare facts of his ordeal, carefully sidestepping charged judgement even of his kidnappers. His car was driven off the road by a white van, after which he was threatened with a pistol, put in the car with a hood over his head, brought back to a flat and handcuffed. One of his kidnappers spoke to him, prophesising that Johnston would live to write a book (*Kidnapped*, 2007) and to marry (no wedding ring), but also implying that he would not be freed anytime soon: "It was the most remarkable conversation of my life, I guess."

Fascinating snippets like this erupted through his self-effacement at points: the graffiti and flags in claustrophobic Gaza (which is the size and population



BBC IMAGES

of Manhattan without the skyscrapers); the way he imagined seeing himself on the floor, hooded and handcuffed, like in a film; that he heard his own death reported on the radio; that he was allowed sometimes to watch TV with his captors (mostly American wrestling),

**The stock questions were maddening as the audience followed suit in trivial analysis**

aware that underneath the television set were kept two grenades and an M16, and that against the wall was a rocket launcher. Sometimes Johnston portrayed almost domestic scenes. When questioned about possible Stockholm syndrome, he joked that the Army of

Islam had more problems than he did with Hamas and the BBC, and that his kidnapper was also confined. Was Johnston's humour a newfound optimism, a coping device, or a by-product of speaking about such a heavy subject with a crowd? Johnston had completely dissociated himself from his past: looking back, it did not even seem like his own life, he said.

Johnston was not concerned with being politically correct. Rather, he lacked any subjective evaluative capacity, frequently attempting to communalize the kidnapping – over and over again he said, "and you can imagine..." – and deemphasize himself: "I'm a middle class British bloke and there's only so much I can understand about the other side." But we *cannot* imagine, and he is not just a middle class British bloke. This was manifest even in his voice, which was quiet, hoarse and bemused as if he had emerged from confinement only a few weeks ago.

Does Johnston's ultra-objectivity stem from being a journalist? His reluctance to be biased emerged in the standard

journalistic spiel about "versions of history" and the willingness to understand the most radical viewpoints for the sake of reportage. When Johnston was first captured, he was asked his religion. Upon saying that he was Protestant Christian, he was asked if he was a "crusader Baptist like George Bush". In that moment, Johnston said, he saw the world in their eyes, with "black and white vision". Even this was not a criticism, but merely part of the filmic imagery pervasive in his talk, which revealed Johnston's detachment. He referred to the Army of Islam as the "bad guys", characterizing the kidnapping as "like a B-movie" and his conversations with kidnappers as like a second-rate script: "we know everything, Alan Johnston."

Nor did the audience notice the superficiality with which Johnston treated what should by all means have been an examination of political climate from the inside. The stock questions were maddening as the audience followed suit in trivial analysis: why had Johnston continued to be a journalist after such an experience? Did Johnston face censorship? And even worse: whether or not Johnston had come out of the experience with anything positive, as though all experience must be categorized into 'positive' or 'negative'.

Yes, Johnston's talk was *objectively* interesting, but his talk was a piece of exegetic reporting rather than investigative journalism: a B-movie version, really. Johnston has not yet been freed, and nor had the audience: we are still stuck interpreting the events in Gaza with startling ambivalence. He was a fascinating specimen, a microcosm for the empty way in which both the public and the media treat the events of the Middle East. **NAUSICAA RENNER**

## FILM

## The Illusionist

Christ's Films

★★★★★

An evening spent watching *The Illusionist* is one of unadulterated enjoyment, and the Christ's College auditorium provides a fitting environment to appreciate this unremittingly beautiful film. It tells the story of the Illusionist – or club 'magician' – Tatischeff trudging between underwhelming audiences at the start of the 1960s, a time that sees his old-fashioned act become irrelevant to a fresh young world. The hand-drawn animation is visually striking from the off, and

Sylvain Chomet's direction presents a detailed world which quickly immerses the audience. Hired by a drunk Scot to perform on a remote island, the Illusionist cuts an isolated figure until a young girl (Alice) sees his act and becomes entranced with what she believes is magic. She endures a frustration which is akin to that of Dr Johnson upon realising his accidental omission of 'aardvark' from his hand-written dictionary, and when the Illusionist offers her a small kindness she follows him to his next venue, Edinburgh. They stay there and the rest of the film explores this father-daughter relationship.

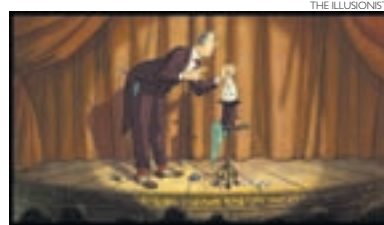
It's a simple plot and it unravels slowly, allowing time to absorb the contemplative elements of the film. Very little is said; the action is instead

pursued through physicality and mood. This allows the comic set-pieces and exquisite score to come to the fore. Gentle mockery of consumer culture lies in the background of each shot, from the greasy Scottish restaurant 'McDoonaulds' to the Swami promoting perfume in a department store. There were moments of awkwardness, when the camera panned back to show a landscape that was stylistically out of place, but these occurrences were counterbalanced by the amusement which they evoked, from the pink suit and poise of Tatischeff as chaos unfolded around him, to the vision of a clown about to hang himself to circus music. The physicality of the characters was well realised, with Tatischeff's oval body based upon the famous French mime

Tati who wrote the manuscript for several of *The Illusionist's* scenes before his death.

It would be difficult to lavish too much praise upon this film, as it skilfully interwove the humorous and the heartfelt. Even after it had drawn to an understated emotional climax, it left the audience in a state of muted awe. And rightly so.

TOM POWELL



THE ILLUSIONIST

## CLASSICAL

## Nauset

Emmanuel College Chapel

★★★★★

Nowsay, Noorset; Nowsay, Noorset? Speculation as to the pronunciation of Music finalist Joel Rust's new chamber opera had been growing all week. Fortunately Rust's librettist, David Troupes, not a fellow student but a part-time poet/social housing officer, was on hand at this weekend's performances to enlighten us: it's very much Nowwwset, after the Cape Cod bay in Troupes' native Massachusetts. Unfortunately, though, Troupes isn't a born performer, and even with the fine acoustics of Emmanuel College Chapel, his pre-show poetry reading and description of the libretto reached only the keenest audience members seated in the front pews.

It's hard to say whether the three singers – Joanna Songi as confused

daughter, Louise Kemeny as grieving mother and Edward Leach as drowned husband – are natural performers either. Songi and Kemeny were left to recite their soliloquies from the confines of the back row of pews, penned in by hymnbook holders, whilst Leach appeared to be trapped behind a music stand. There was none of the movement and spectacle which we've come to expect from opera.

Yet, there's certainly room and – judging by the audience's post-analysis on Saturday – demand for further development of the work. And the singing was promising. Songi's soprano is ideally suited to Rust's spectral writing:



MATILDA HAY

her mourning for the washed-away father could have continued for the entire opera and the audience would

**Rust's instrumental interludes... were narrated with a virtuosic intensity**

have remained just as awestruck. Leach too, blessed with the opera's lone morsel of stage direction, was impressive, although his tenorific top notes proved punchier than his lower register. Unfortunately Kemeny's diction failed to give Troupes' libretto the full exposure its beauty deserved, her declamation resembling little more than a frothy wash. But with expansion, it would be interesting to see how the opera translated beyond the confines of a college chapel, which ultimately imposed severe limits on performance – candle holders are hard to disguise.

Praise too must go to conductor Christopher Stark and his players for their musical personification of the lapping sea. Rust's instrumental interludes, redolent of *Peter Grimes* (another sea-obsessive opera) watery scapes, were narrated with a virtuosic intensity by the bassoon player and cellist, and the three percussionists' 12-pronged marimba summoned a sonorous rippling ocean, complete with grating pebbles at the shore.

While some might accuse Nauset's creators of false advertising in their marketing of the project as an opera – its distinct lack of theatrics forcing stand-and-deliver renditions from the singers – Rust's 45 minutes of music in homage to, or in bewilderment at, the wonder of the sea is certainly dramatic stuff. When Stark's hands lowered after the final wail from his orchestra, the quiet was absolute: the words pin and drop come to mind. No one wanted to begin the applause that singers, players and creators alike undeniably deserved, for fear of breaking the mood of sea-salted contemplation. **ELLY BRINDLE**

## Keeping It Reel

ALICE BOLLAND



Yes, it's the run-up to Valentine's Day. Again. Is it me or does it always seem to be the run-up to Valentine's Day? The only time of the year when it's perfectly acceptable for those happily-coupled to smile smugly at those desperately-seeking and say things like "you'll find someone soon" and (even more smugly) "being single is much more fun anyway". Whatever. When it comes to films, happiness is over-rated: tragedy is much more fun, and here are a few of the very best.

## 5 The Painted Veil

Set in 1920's China, this emotional drama follows the diffident relationship between a young married couple (Edward Norton and Naomi Watts) living in the heart of a cholera epidemic. As you can probably imagine, not massively uplifting, yet incredibly affecting and thought-provoking.

## 4 Brokeback Mountain

Award-winning film-maker Ang Lee explores the relatively uncharted territory of homosexuality in the early 60's in the southern states in this story of forbidden love. It is beautifully told, set against a stunning backdrop, with outstanding performances from both Jake Gyllenhaal and Heath Ledger.

## 3 Brief Encounter

The quintessential tragic romance: boy meets girl, boy falls in love with girl, sadly boy and girl are both married, isn't life unfair, The End. This classic British melodrama focuses on temptation and desperation, and, unlike most love stories, remains shockingly realistic and honest.

## 2 The Fountain

A truly beautiful film (by *Black Swan's* Darren Aronofsky) about the efforts of one man committed to saving the woman he loves. It is a masterpiece, both visually and in terms of narrative, with Aronofsky incorporating varying levels of reality and subconscious into what is essentially a heart-wrenchingly sad tale of love and loss.

## Now, Voyager

The ultimate tearjerker; a classic weepy starring Bette Davis as the victim of unrequited, or impossible, love, who must learn to live with her unhappiness and accept her fate: "Don't let's ask for the moon; we have the stars." Grab the Kleenex – it's going to get emotional.





This week's...



Theatre

**AND/OR**  
*Tues 15th - Sat 19th February, 22:00*  
CORPUS PLAYROOM (£5)  
A new play by Xavier Buxton and Nicolo Crisafi, AND/OR is thirty minutes of chicken legs, bad jokes, Tony Blair, Gary Kasparov, people who don't listen and/or divided hearts on a divided stage.

**The Good Soul of Szechwan**  
*Tues 15th - Sat 19th February, 19:00*  
CORPUS PLAYROOM (£5)  
A 'funny, tragic and thought-provoking' experience from a performance aiming to probe the depths of the practicality and prudence of being good in a world such as ours.

**Endgame**  
*Tues 15th - Sat 19th February, 19:30*  
ADCTHEATRE (£6/£5)  
The inevitable first Beckett of term; BATS bring you the absurd masterpiece that sits alongside *Waiting for Godot* as one of Beckett's most important works.

**Dannish Babar Knows What You're Thinking**  
*Tues 15th - Sat 19th February, 20:00*  
PEMBROKE NEW CELLARS,  
Footlights regular Dannish Barbar makes the comedy circuit rounds to talk about ordinary things in an amusing way.

**William Fergus Stuart - The Revival**  
*Wed 16th - Sat 19th February, 22:30*  
FITZPATRICK HALL (£4)  
Explores and explodes autobiography, life, death, romance and struggling to find your heart.



Film


**The Fighter**  
*Fri 11th - Thur 17th February*  
CAMBRIDGEVUE AND CINEWORLD CINEMAS,VARIOUS SHOWINGS (PRICES VARY)  
The story of Micky Ward (Mark Wahlberg), a boxer trying to turn his losing streak around with the help of drug-abusing brother Dicky (Christian Bale) and family.

**Never Let Me Go**  
*Fri 11th - Thurs 17th February*  
CAMBRIDGE ARTS PICTUREHOUSE,VARIOUS SHOWINGS (£6.50)  
Adaptation of the novel. A group of children raised at a seemingly idyllic English boarding school have to confront the realities of their existence as adults.

**ArcSoc: Hausu**  
*Mon 14th February, 8pm*  
FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE (FREE)  
Stuck for something to do this Valentine's day? Why not watch this Japanese 1970s horror thriller? The famous trailer promises horror, cats and inexplicable country music - a winning combination.

**(500) Days of Summer**  
*Sun 13th February, 7pm & 10pm*  
ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, PALMIERS ROOM IN FISHER BUILDING (£3)  
Romantic comedy that defies the genre with truth, wit and a kick-ass soundtrack. Starring Zooey Deschanel and Joseph Gordon-Levitt. As the film's narrator warns us, it's not a love story.

**Another Year**  
*Sun 13th February, 7:30pm & 10pm*  
CHRIST'S COLLEGE, NEW COURT THEATRE (£3)  
Mike Leigh's heartbreaking portrayal of a happily-married couple and their rather miserable friends.



Exhibitions

**Watercolour**  
*16 February - 21 August*  
TATE BRITAIN, LONDON  
Tate splashes out in showing that this medium of art is not just for amateur daubs. From the 13th century to the present day, the flow of creativity in watercolour is far from a trickle.

**Hoppé portraits - Society, Studio and Street**  
*17 February - 30 March*  
NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON  
Dandies to dictators, Hoppe's unnerving photos have captured them all. Lauded 'the master' by Cecil Beaton, at-once celebrity portraitist and man on the street Hoppe championed the art of photography to capture all walks of life.

**Madeleine Strindberg: Over There**  
*5 February - 20 March*  
MURRAY EDWARDS  
The Israeli/Palestine conflict evoked and explored in personal ways, Strindberg's paintings take a different look at a delicate issue.

**Masterpieces of Botanical Illustration**  
*5 February - 25 September*  
VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON  
The best botanical drawings from the V&A archives.

**Tom de Freston: Paradise Lost**  
*22 January-7 April 2011*  
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY  
University Library has been hurl'd head-long through the ethereal air with dark and strangely decorative works by Tom de Freston.




Talks

**Chocolate, the Bitter Truth**  
*Fri 11th February, 7:15pm*  
TRINITY HALL LECTURE THEATRE  
Apparently 1.1 billion boxed chocolates are sold each year for Valentine's Day in the U.S. alone. In this talk, Panorama journalist Paul Kenyon delivers his verdict on how ethical Fairtrade chocolate actually is.

**Sir Richard Dearlove**  
*Tue 15th February, 7:30pm*  
THE CAMBRIDGE UNION (FREETO MEMBERS)  
As the former Head of MI6, Sir Richard Dearlove has been at the centre of some of the most poignant moments in our lifetimes, including the September 11th attacks and the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. Head down to the Union to hear what promises to be a gripping testimony.

**This House believes pornography does a good public service**  
*Thu 17th February, 7:30pm*  
THE CAMBRIDGE UNION (FREE FOR MEMBERS)  
Much anticipated debate featuring: a teacher turned hardcore porn star, the UK's first ever female porn director, a 'sexademic' and a porn star-turned-chaplain. This is definitely one of the most exciting debates of term.

**Fit for a King: The Boule Cabinet-on-Stand**  
*Wed 16th February, 1:15pm*  
THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM (FREE)  
Victoria Avery from the Department of Applied Arts speaks about the exquisite 1600s Parisian cabinet.



Music


**The Bravery**  
*Fri 11th February, 7:30pm*  
THE HAYMAKERS PUB (£10)  
Yet again this tiny venue plays host to a world class band. The Bravery are on their UK tour playing tunes from their upcoming album. Pop Rock and a beer? Why not? I bet they'll play *An Honest Mistake*, you remember that one, don't you? Spotify it.

**Harry Ogg / Jupiter Sinfonia: Mozart, Haydn**  
*Fri 11th February, 8pm*  
SENATE HOUSE, CAMBRIDGE (£5)  
Senate House opens its doors to the general public and non-graduates for one night only. Student tickets are £5 from Clare Porters' Lodge.

**Songs in the Dark**  
*Sun 13th February, 8pm*  
CLOWNS CAFE (FREE)  
An intimate, cosy acoustic open-mic session by candlelight, featuring some of Cambridge's most talented young artists, musicians and poets.

**The Rake's Progress**  
*Fri 11th-Sat 12th February, 8pm-10:45pm*  
WEST ROAD CONCERT HALL (£15)  
A modern production of Stravinsky, Auden & Kallman's colourful and accessible masterpiece on its 60th birthday.

**One Night Stand**  
*Sat 12th February, 9pm*  
THE CAMBRIDGE UNION (£10/£8)  
A new Union event featuring infamous lycra-suit sensation Truly Medley Deeply, Youtube hit The Axis of Awesome and DJ Christian Bjoren Bak.



Events

**Vegan Cookery Workshop**  
*Fri 11th February, 12:30pm*  
CAMBRIDGE COOKERY SCHOOL (£5)  
Part of CUSU's Green Week, this session is suitable for "vegans, vegetarians, and omnivores alike". Learn how to cook Indian spiced bean pasties, vegetable and lentil sprout salad, and coconut and cashew cream cake. Definitely a welcome change from bog-standard hall offerings.

**Stephen K Amos**  
*Fri 11th February, 8pm*  
CORN EXCHANGE (£18.50)  
Stephen K Amos is back on tour and promises to deliver an evening of "melt in the middle, heartfelt humour to warm the very cockles of your heart". Exactly what "cockles" are remains a mystery, but this highly-praised comedian is sure to entertain.

**Churchill Spring Ball**  
*Fri 11th February*  
CHURCHILL COLLEGE  
Indulge in all seven of the deadly sins at the highlight of Churchill's social events calendar. Brings promises of braised venison, chilli chocolate fountains and some of Cambridge's hottest local music acts.

**ArcSoc Cabaret: Dystopia**  
*Sat 12th February, 8pm*  
FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE (£8/£5)  
How will Cornucopia's twisted sister hold up against her Edenic sibling? There's only one way to find out, but ArcSoc are promising something big:  
"This time when we say anything goes, we mean ANYTHING goes."  
Do not miss Dystopia.



Sport

**Lacrosse Blues v. Reading Wildcats 2nds**  
*Sat 12th February, 7pm*  
HOME  
The lacrosse Blues will be desperate to sustain a good run of form with a win at home this weekend, as their Varsity match looms close on the 26th February.

**Women's Hockey Blues v. Ipswich**  
*Sat 12th February, 12pm*  
WILBY  
The hockey Blues will want to make sure they are in good form with their Varsity match on the 21st February. nearly upon them,

**Blues football v. Lloyds F.C.**  
*Tue 15th February, 2pm*  
HOME  
The Blues have been playing well this term and have looked consistently strong. They will want to consolidate their good form with a win here to keep their confidence high.

**Varsity Swimming**  
*Sat 19th February, 1:30pm*  
CAMBRIDGE PARKSIDE  
Having beaten Oxford in their recent BUCS southern qualification round, the Light Blues team will be confident of a big performance here.

**Basketball Blues v. Anglia Ruskin**  
*Tue 23rd February*  
HOME  
The Blues have their Varsity match a mere three days after this fixture so will want to iron out any creases in this tricky BUCS league match.




UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

# Looking for work this summer?

University of Cambridge International Summer Schools can offer 4 - 7 weeks work for Cambridge undergraduate and graduate students. £250 per week plus college accommodation.

*For details call network: 60850 or 01223 760850 or email: intrestut@ice.cam.ac.uk*

T-SHIRTS · HOODIES · POLO SHIRTS · FITTED T'S · RUGBY SHIRTS · SPORTSWEAR · LONG SLEEVED T'S · SWEATSHIRTS · FLEECES · BASEBALL CAPS · TIES



celebrating 22 YEARS est. 1989

## TALKING T'S

www.talkingts.co.uk

### PRINTING & EMBROIDERY

All work is carried out in our Cambridge workshop ensuring excellent quality and service  
Come and talk to us, try on samples and see colour swatches or phone or email for a quotation


37 BRIDGE ST. CAMBRIDGE (opposite Quayside)  
**01223 302411** shop@t-shirts.co.uk

FLEECES · FITTED T'S · RUGBY SHIRTS · BASEBALL CAPS · TIES

### YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Join a **stimulating, home-based plan** for our 16-year old, mildly autistic daughter, based on the 'son-rise' programme.

We would like to ask you to work for **2-4 hours a week** (for six months). No experience needed; full training given. £6.50 an hour. Make the call: Tel: 01223 248622 **Make a difference!**



### READING THIS AD?

Obviously. But wouldn't it be great if it involved something you actually cared about?

Advertise your play, party or event here in Varsity:  
advertising@varsity.co.uk

# Sudoku

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

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

**The Varsity Scribblepad**  
sponsored by  
Jacques and his Master/Week 5 Lateshow, ADC.



# Town downs Gown

In a bloody encounter the Town come out stronger despite good Gown performances

JOSHUA GAMES  
Boxing Correspondent

The University Boxing club fell to a 6-2 defeat on Friday night in the annual Town v. Gown match. An unfair score line perhaps, it was not helped by the late withdrawals of the much fancied Cambridge duo Kiwanuka and Simpson.

The atmosphere in the Guildhall was already at fever pitch by the time Corpus philosopher Nick Melgaard had dispatched the less experienced John Lacy in an all-Cambridge fight before the Town fighters appeared.

Heley Matthews was up first against Svetlana Link of the Metropolitan Police. The fight set the tone for the evening with both boxers adopting attack-minded philosophies. The Russian, however, had Matthews down halfway through the first with a fine right hook. Matthews, to her credit, recovered well, but couldn't pull herself back from her unfortunate start and lost on a points decision.

Ex Cambridge Karate captain Nim Sukumar showed nifty footwork against Dean Bently. He tried to rattle his opponent with an opening flurry of punches but Bently was wise to it and dominated with some impressive shots. The town took a 2-0 lead.

Robinson second year, Elliot 'Chain-saw' Chambers was up next. A counter attacking boxer at heart, he tends to soak up pressure and let loose late in the bout. However, his opponent from the Police, Alex Omar, breached Chambers'



JOE PITRASHID

guard with a couple of tasty jabs to win on a unanimous points decision.

The next two fights also went the way

Chris Webb put on a sensational performance...he is one of the University's premier sportsmen

of the Town. James 'JP' Phillips fell to Deacon Cianciola of Bishops Stortford while Robinson graduate student Simon Paul put up a brave fight before just losing to Perry Gallagher.

Staring at a whitewash, returning Blue Chris Webb put on a sensational performance to show why he is one of the University's premier sportsmen. The Queens' student demonstrated his incredible speed and jab. In cruise control, Webb executed some fine hooks and will only be disappointed not to have seen his opponent on the canvas

at any stage. Unsurprisingly the verdict was a unanimous points win for Webb.

Following Webb, ex City Lawyer, 37 year old Kevin Morgan gave a mature performance to dispatch Islington's Maxwelll Badu in arguably the fight of the night. The pair traded blow after blow but Morgan stepped up the plate in the third and deservedly left the ring the winner.

The night's last fight was between Churchill's Chris Kelly and policeman Joe Kirkby. It wasn't to be, however, for Kelly and Kirkby was in control for most of the bout. The scores finished at 6-2 to the Town.

Team captain Ssegawa Kiwanuka was nevertheless upbeat about the performance: "Boxing is the hardest sport out there. CUABC had seven fighters making their debut. The fact not one of them gave up or got overwhelmed by the occasion shows the amount of boxing heart they have. I am immensely proud of all my boxers and the work of our three coaches."

Despite the loss, the club have every reason to be confident going into the Varsity fight on March 17th when they

## From the Commentary Box: Why the Six Nations risks being an Agincourt re-run



CHRIS WALSH  
Rugby correspondent

Round one of The Six Nations complete and it seems there are only two teams left in the competition. With Ireland ageing, Wales crippled by injury, Italy without quality backs and Scotland lacking historical credibility, it seems the competition once again boils down to a duel between England and France, the two most successful nations in Six Nations' history. The centuries-long feud between these two nations is to be resumed in 2011.

France may have seized the trophy last year, but they have not solved their problems with inconsistency. They have an expectant crowd and the best squad depth but seem unable to manipulate their strengths to their advantage. With such high quality youngsters being brought through the academies of Stade Français and Toulon, there is far too much temptation for Marc Lièvremont to tweak the side every match to test for the perfect combination, which is exactly what happened when Australia put 59 past them in autumn.

The French coach also faces a setback due to the length of the Top 14 season, which restricts the time his team have to gel together before they are rushed to perform on the international stage. However, judging by the side that turned up to play Scotland on the weekend, Lièvremont has got it right this time and we can only expect the French side to improve as the competition unfolds.

England have other problems. It may or may not have come as a surprise that Martin Johnson chose his old friend Mike Tindall as captain in Cardiff, despite being well past the form

of his World Cup-winning days. With both centres - Tait and Flutey - out of form, England must desperately find a replacement for the sluggish and unventive crash-ball tactics of Tindall if they are to win The 6 Nations.

This aside, England did look very clinical against Wales. They didn't make too many chances, but when they did they made it count by getting over the game-line. Toby Flood was something special; surely he deserves the captaincy for stepping up to the plate and making the number 10 shirt his own. The pack appeared relatively lethargic without Moody but will pose more

England must find a replacement for the crash-ball tactics of Tindall if they are to win the Six Nations

of an attacking threat upon his return. So what do England need to do to win the 6 Nations? Put Wilkinson in his old number 12 shirt against Italy and reap the rewards. It would certainly be a gamble, but one that has the potential to give England a telling advantage as the tournament develops.

However all we know for certain is that when France visit Twickenham on 26th February it will be a decisive moment for both of their campaigns: and possibly the highlight of the competition: The Hundred Years' War in 80 minutes.

## Selwyn stun Downing

SELWYN 4  
DOWNING 2

JAMES CORCUT  
Sports editor

Downing, last year's runners-up and pre-match favourites, were shocked to find themselves go crashing out of the cup to second-division leaders Selwyn in a thrilling six goal encounter. In extremely windy conditions Selwyn showed the better tactical nous, something which will no doubt stand them in good stead for their quarter-final with Fitzwilliam.

The match was packed with surprises right from the off. Downing quickly took the lead through a Dan Sellman free-kick, which was carried by the wind into the top corner of the Selwyn goal from 30 yards out.

But Downing's celebrations were short-lived as they conceded barely two minutes later. A long throw into the Downing area was met by Chris Hutton's head which sent the ball into the bottom corner to bring the scores level.

Downing would have the better of the chances in the rest of the half but would not be able to convert. Tom Clare had the half's best chance with a one-on-one but the legs of the Selwyn goalkeeper denied him to ensure the teams were

level at the half-time whistle.

But it would be Blues player Mark Baxter who would prove the deciding factor between the sides as he bagged a hat trick. Midway through the half he stepped up to take a free kick for handball on the edge of the Downing penalty area. His curling shot beat goalkeeper Mather and gave Selwyn the lead to stun the visitors.

They soon consolidated their advantage with two further goals. After a quick counter-attack the ball fell loose at the six-yard mark. Despite some desperate defending Baxter was at hand to latch on to the ball which had squirmed beyond the reach of unfortunate full-back Tom Lloyd and drill it into an empty net.

Before long Baxter was at it again. As Downing pressed forward in search of a way back into the game they were undone by a clearance which was caught by the wind and carried deep into their own half. Mather scurried after it but scuffed his clearance which fell to Baxter who placed the ball into the vacant goal.

There was time for a Downing consolation. Tom Clare headed home a fine cross from the wing but it was too late to launch a comeback. Selwyn adapted better to the difficult conditions and capitalised on their chances with a ruthlessness that will serve them well in the cup.

## Penalty heartache for Homerton

FITZ 1  
HOMERTON 1

Fitz win 3-1 on penalties

JAMES CORCUT  
Sports editor

A cup exit on penalties is always a bitter pill to swallow. But this match between two of the first division contenders for cuppers was so even an affair that the dreaded heartache of a penalty shoot-out was the only way a result was ever going to be reached.

The game itself was dominated by the midfield battle. Time after time Homerton and Fitz defied the windy conditions to bring the ball onto the floor and play passing football, only to be thwarted by a solid defensive back-line or an outstanding piece of goalkeeping. Possession oscillated between the two teams with metronomic regularity but neither could find the net in normal time.

Homerton started the brighter but left themselves exposed to Fitz counter-attacks, which were smoothly dictated by Theo Todorov, who needed no invitation to dart goalwards at every opportunity. With 20 minutes gone Fitz won a corner which was floated into the area and landed on the crossbar being to safety by a relieved Homerton defence.

Neither side was able to score in

normal time. The sides were forced to return for extra time, which would be a tale of two corners. After 115 goalless minutes, Homerton's Matt Ashfold headed home from a corner to stun the home players. But with moments left on the clock Iain Dummatt of Fitz scored a carbon copy at the other end, firing in skipper Bennici's corner to equalise: 1-1 with less than two minutes to play. The Homerton players were angered by what they perceived to have been an incorrect decision during the build up to the goal. However, their protests perhaps owed more to their obvious disappointment at conceding so late on and with victory so near, rather than to any unfair officiating.

The referee blew for the end of extra time and the teams braced themselves for penalties. Both sides appeared nervous but Fitz showed the greater composure to win 3-1. It was a cruel end to a hotly contested and even contest.

Homerton captain Ryan Stevens remained unconvinced by the referee's performance: "We possibly played a bit longer than we should have. The lad from their own college was refereeing and he gave them a throw-in which they got the corner from and scored."

Given the manner of the defeat his disappointment was understandable, but he acknowledged that the game could have been won in normal time: "We've only got ourselves to blame. We

had seven or eight chances we should have buried."

Fitz skipper Bennici had a different view of the game, "It was a heated encounter, and we were getting a bit frustrated with the way three or four of the same figures were persistently trying to bully the referee."

But his satisfaction with the win was evident: "I'm incredibly proud because losing a goal in the second period of stoppage time is a real test of character and coming back with only a minute to go to force a penalty shoot-out gave us the lift to go on and win."

RTZWILLIAM



HOMERTON







# A cup exit on penalties is always a bitter pill to swallow

**James Corcut** on Homerton's defeat to Fitzwilliam in a dramatic cup-pers encounter, page 15



## High-flying Blues defeat RAF

HELEN HILLIARD



**Flying High:**The Blues outperformed the RAF to earn a deserved victory against well-organised and strong opponents

The Cambridge Blues earn a well-deserved victory against an organised RAF team

**CAMBRIDGE** 29  
**RAF** 20

CHRIS WALSH  
rugby correspondent

In a game that could have gone either way, the Light Blues came away with their heads held high at Grange Road on a bitter Wednesday evening.

Although the defensive lines were broken on many occasions, glorious chances were thrown away into touch or fumbled along the floor on too many occasions. Cambridge in particular had many opportunities and could have



easily finished with double the number of tries that they managed to chalk on the board.

Ironically, it was Cambridge who came out flying, scoring two unconverted tries off the fantastic Rob Stevens within the opening five minutes. The RAF's defence had no time to organise themselves and they soon found they were being attacked from all directions by the great footwork and offloading of a well-oiled Blues team.

Reg Reid, the RAF's captain, used his booming voice to discipline his side and get them back on track. With his words ringing in their ears, they recuperated and organised themselves better, using their physicality to win ruck after ruck.

A long period of sustained pressure saw the visitor's scrum-half dart through the middle before passing the ball to McNally, who did well to get over for the converted try. A penalty on the 18th minute from their fly-half pulled them level at 10-10. The RAF seemed to have the momentum.

Just before the break, the experienced Daly was caught interfering in the ruck

and was sent to the dreaded sin bin. The RAF sent the ball between the sticks for another 3 to edge the lead and leave the scores 10-13 at the break in their favour.

But Cambridge came out playing well

“Cambridge could have easily finished with double the number of tries”

despite being a man down and were rewarded with a try after a crucial turnover at the line-out, Tom Harrington leaping like a salmon to poach the ball once again. Rob Stevens completed his hat-trick by sliding under the posts and Thomas converted to edge in front, 17-13.

Soon the RAF found themselves camped on the Cambridge try line and put their faith in their substantial forwards, who scrappily ground the ball

over the line to win a great battle of strength around the ruck. A superb conversion meant they led 17-20.

At this point Cambridge, looking down the barrel of a fourth straight defeat, substituted three veterans of the Light Blues onto the field as they looked to take hold of the game.

Within minutes, Cambridge's number 12, Daly, was in acres of space. He chipped the ball over the opposition's fullback, but the bounce was unlucky and thwarted his skilful effort. Some quick hands distributed the ball out wide, however, allowing John's Chezerov to go over in the corner. 22-20.

With just over five minutes left on the clock, a Blues rumbling maul meant substitute Wolf could seal the victory with a converted try. Final score: 29-20.

Man of the Match Rob Stevens spoke highly of the part that the overall team effort had in his hat-trick. His modesty was endearing as he claimed that he was “just in the right place at the right time” on three occasions. Fortuitous or not, his points were crucial in ensuring a Cambridge win.

## SPORT IN BRIEF

*A round up of the week's sport*

### WOMEN'S BLUES BACK TO WINNING WAYS

The women's Blues won 4-1 against Chelmsford on Sunday to give them a much-needed boost as they continue to struggle in a relegation battle

Leesa Haydock bagged a hat-trick with Mandy Wainwright also scoring to give the side a well-deserved victory. Despite having chances to make the score even more emphatic they will be pleased to have put four goals past their opponents and to have gained three valuable points.

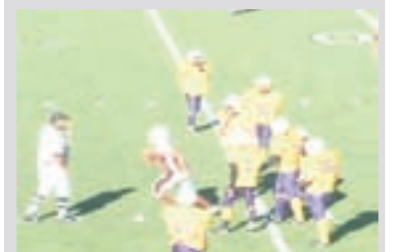
With their Varsity match nearing the side will be hopeful of keeping up the form to defeat their Dark Blue rivals. First, however, they must deal with a tricky away fixture against Hethersett on 13th February.

### BLUES SWIMMERS DEFEAT RIVALS OXFORD

The University Swim Team looked on top form against Oxford ahead of their annual Varsity match on 19th February. Cambridge triumphed over the Dark Blues at the BUCS regional qualifiers this weekend. The Light Blues held their nerve to place second against the top swimming squads from the south of England. Cambridge dominated in a number of events, placing first in the Women's 4 x 50m Medley relay, 100m Fly, 50m Fly and 50m Breast. Beating the Dark Blues to the touch in a number of races meant that Cambridge finished with 164 points leaving Oxford drowning with 160 points.



Search: Driscoll school trick play



Green Bay won their superbowl clash with the Pittsburgh Steelers but both sides could learn a thing or two about offense from this smart school kid.