

WEEK
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LENT
2012

VARSITY



The
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Newspaper
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7 Science: *Rock of the week*



5 Interview: *Tony Benn reflects on a political career that has spanned more than 60 years*



10 Features: *Those Were the Days with David Mitchell*



20 Fashion: *Get your kicks for the new year with a pair of your very own personal trainers*

“Dear Diary, I might be some time”



In Features: Captain Scott's diaries from his fateful final expedition are uncovered for the first time at Cambridge's Scott Polar Museum. In News: The Duke of Edinburgh, below, arrives at Corpus to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Scott's party reaching the South Pole



Student rejects Oxford University offer

Elly Nowell, 19, sent Magdalene College, Oxford a rejection letter after attending an interview at the college, before finding out whether or not she had procured a place at the prestigious university. Nowell, who was applying to read Law, rejected the college upon the grounds that her experience at interview was one of “elitism” that bordered upon “discrimination”, emphasising the “obvious gap” between white middle class students and minorities at the college.

In her rejection letter, which she posted on Facebook, Nowell wrote that Oxford did not “meet the standard” of the other universities she was considering attending. She went on to note that the buildings and grounds of the famous college, which was founded in 1458, in which the interviews were held were “intimidating”, declaring that this “allows public school applicants to flourish and intimidates state school applicants”. Nowell hopes to read Law at UCL instead, to escape the “traditions and rituals” of Oxford that she believes “reflect badly upon your university”. *Helen Charman*

‘It’s very freeing. You take these clothes off and you’re taking off a lot of burdens. Naturism is a great leveller’



Varsity investigates
Cambridge nudism

6

Clegg visits Cambridge

Students challenge Clegg despite low protest turnout

by Helen Charman
Deputy News Editor

Nick Clegg’s first visit to Cambridge as Deputy Prime Minister yesterday was interrupted by a vocal minority of protestors who had travelled all the way to Cambridge Regional College to voice their anger at Clegg and the Liberal Democrats’ u-turn on tuition fees.

Clegg, who read Archaeology and Anthropology at Robinson College, visited the College for a tour of the carpentry and bricklaying facilities there in support of apprenticeships, before then giving a question and answer session for Liberal Democrat members.

A sizeable protest group had been expected to meet him, but the turnout was small with just three members of Cambridge Defend Education (CDE) turning up.

Andrew Osborne, the secretary of

Cambridgeshire Against the Cuts, had also spoken of plans to protest ahead of Clegg’s visit: “We’re looking forward to welcoming Nick to Cambridge and explaining to him the devastating impact his government’s cuts and austerity measures are having on the people of Cambridgeshire. I can only hope he’s listening.”

There was a large security presence at the college too in anticipation of potential demonstrations, but the Deputy Prime Minister arrived before any protestors and evaded a hostile welcome.

Upon emerging for the second part of his visit though, he was interrupted by the three members of CDE, banging a drum and chanting about cuts

One of the protestors, who described himself as Hugh from Cambridge Defend Education, shouted at Clegg “shame on you, you hypocrite!”

Speaking to Varsity, he said that he

was disappointed with the turnout at the protest, stating that: “this clearly does not reflect the national climate, as is shown by the thousands who attended the recent demonstrations and strikes at the end of last year.”

He added: “We need to gather together and generate the momentum that could be possible.”

Another protestor, a student at Christ’s who wishes to remain anonymous, thought that their small but vocal protest was still a success as Clegg was met with some form of obstruction. He told Varsity that: “it’s not just Clegg’s hypocrisy that’s worrying, but the fact that he is willing to go along with the destructive progression of ideological cuts and the destruction of the welfare state.”

The lack of publicity surrounding the event and the distant location were both considered key factors in the disappointing protestor turnout.

- MUSIC** *The Weeknd, Guided by Voices*
- BOOKS** *Foule Readings, Esther Morgan*
- FILM** *Steve McQueen’s Shame*
- ART** *Leonardo Da Vinci, Taylor Wessing Prize*
- THEATRE** *ETG’s King Lear, Liam Williams*

WEEKEND WEATHER



PS. Look out for our new look website, coming soon to a laptop near you

It's amazing that the amount of news that happens in the world every day always just exactly fits the newspaper – Jerry Seinfeld.

Inside

DIGITAL CONTENTS

Online:

Our top 10 picks of 2011's music, film, art and literature

Podcasts:

Alternative Idea of the University:
CUSU President, Gerard Tully, on his idea of the university

My Ear Abroad:
Becky Featherstone, on-location in Beirut

Soapbox:
Rhys Jones on the solipsistic perils of genealogy

VarsiTV:

Hidden Treasures:
Jesus College's art collection

Next week, behind the scenes of how Varsity is made



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...24 pages of words, pictures, facts, opinions, thoughts, clues, statements, conclusions, insinuations and the occasional *flash* of genius...

INTERVIEW

Tony Benn

5

Former Labour Party MP and current President of the Stop the War Coalition talks about his life in politics



SCIENCE

Plastic planes

7

Will planes of the future be made of plastic?



FEATURES

Scott's final diary

10

Will planes of the future be made of plastic?



FILM

Hidden depths

14

Bafta nomination for graduate film-makers



THEATRE

Pick me up

18

The cast of the next week's ADC lateshow talk about redemption, pressure and priesthood



SPORT

Guilty of injustice

22

Weekly kickabout questions the vagueness of Suárez's prosecution



DON'T FORGET

The Fab Varsity Quiz

23

Post

January 2012 – a retrospective letter

Dear Editors,
Merry upcoming Christmas. I hope you are decking the halls appropriately, i.e. with the heads of your enemies, and that the unsuspecting Trinity swan is stuffed and in the oven. Whether or not these are the case, I thought I'd do a festive good deed by saving you some time and recapping the most notable events of the Cambridge year owing to their shock value.

Bidding adieu to the Tab (RIP, we especially miss their "Tab Totty" section) due to lack of interest was quite a blight on this year's Cambridge calendar. Trinity's surprise drop to 30th in the Tompkins table amused us all, as did the protests and subsequent occupation of the ADC against the institution of Suicide Sunday. Needless to say, nobody paid any heed and Suicide Sunday continued to inspire many to commit the eponymous misdeed.

These are all without mentioning the Union's impromptu vote in March and, in an ironic twist of fate, Charlie Gilmour's election into the Presidency; when asked about this sudden change, an anonymous source cited "artistic differences" within the 2011 Union Committee. Mr Gilmour was quoted as saying, "let's make all the laws".

Amongst lesser events were the merging of JSoc and LGBT Soc to form one society (I attended their Ball, it was outrageously good) and the nuclear apocalypse that rendered both Cambridge, and this letter, void.

Love and kisses,
RUSSELL McNAB

Comment

Dear Editors,
I'm unsure as to whose idea it was to rename 'Comment' 'Perspectives' and include art commentary but I have my doubts about it. The new title sounds vague, woolly and naff, like something out of an GCSE English Literature exam.

EDITORIAL

Beginnings: In with the old and the new

In his opening statement to the Leveson Inquiry into the Culture, Practise and Ethics of the Press at the end of last year, *Guardian* editor Alan Rushbridger discussed the realities of journalism in the modern age of continuous 24-hour news cycles and social media. The once-a-day deadline has been replaced by this continuous stream of twitter and blog updates.

With this new possibility to respond, add to, clarify and disagree, journalism as it was once known seems to be becoming increasingly redundant. With circulations declining at a rate of 10% a year and digital audiences growing rapidly, Rushbridger argues that "journalism today is often less a snapshot, more a moving picture." The idea of journalism is being quickly, vastly and wildly transformed.

As editors of your beloved student newspaper, being the bright-eyed hopefuls wishing to spend our post-graduation days making coffee (sorry, interning) at the *Guardian* for Rushbridger's secretaries, we must decide what the future of print media holds. If journalism is changing in such profound, uncharted ways, why do we continue in a threatened medium with our weekly University paper? Is it the allure of inky fingertips and the smell of freshly printed-paper, or the desire to create something that we can hold in our own hands?

These are all questions that demand to be answered: *Varsity* recognizes that it's now time for some serious, positive – and radical – change. Rushbridger compares the new media to a moving picture, with its audio snippets, videos, blogs and feeds, whilst old media is a snapshot. The Lumière *L'Arrivée d'un Train en Gare*, screened in 1895 at the

Salon Indien has taken on an almost mythical status due to the audience reaction at its first showing, fleeing in terror from the screen at the sight of an approaching train so realistic they thought it real. This captures the potentially startling nature of the shift from still to moving image, and the very real change we're dealing with.

This term, *Varsity* will embrace these changes in the new media, and create something that is witty, informative and thought-provoking: a website and newspaper that pushes boundaries instead of sticking to them.

Yes – a newspaper is still important within the media landscape and should not be replaced, just as television did not ultimately replace cinema and radio. The internet simply creates new possibilities for familiar mediums.

Varsity provides an opportunity to pause, and, in the future, an opportunity to reflect. It is at once a live, moving picture of ideas, opinion and information, and a fixed snapshot that represents your time here.

Varsity will capture this each week – something that is certainly needed all the more with the fast pace of the Cambridge bubble. After all, this is not just any newspaper. It is your newspaper. Without your news, it's only paper – and if digitalised, it's not even that.

So get talking, get reading, get writing – and get in touch.



Madeleine Morley & Louise Benson
Editors, Lent 2012

*Dear Darius,
Thank you for your rather premature concern, for a section that you have yet to see in print.*

This paper is a platform for the multitude of student voices present in our university – a range of perspectives, both political and non-political, if you will.

This brings us to your quibble regarding the incorporation of 'Arts Comment' into the section; to deduce that this excludes all but visual art is a gross oversight, to put it kindly, and, put bluntly, sheer idiocy.

We'd also like to reiterate that Varsity is a student, and not a national, newspaper. To adopt the style of the latter is to come across with more air than graces. The people of Cambridge must have a reason to turn to Varsity – we should be talking about them and their concerns, with an insight that no other paper can lay claim to.

In regards to your headshot, perhaps your vanity could do with being put a little more in ... perspective.

*All the best,
LOUISE AND MADELEINE*

Me and my Shadow: CUSU shadowing scheme 2012 launches next week

by Stephanie Barrett
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

Hundreds of school students will be descending upon Cambridge supervisions over the next three weeks as the CUSU shadowing scheme launches.

The scheme, which has been running for twelve years, brings to Cambridge UK students from schools without a tradition of top university entry.

The prospective student spends this time 'shadowing' a current undergraduate in a subject which interests them as they go about their day-to-day university life.

Over the next three weekends, 286 school students from disadvantaged backgrounds will arrive for the shadowing scheme. More than double this amount of university students applied to be mentors, with 600 applying for the position.

Matt Gardiner, a shadow last year felt "the experience was very worthwhile – I'd recommend it to anyone considering applying to Cambridge as it gives a much better insight than any Open Day."

Another 2011 shadow, Daisy, commented: "It was definitely seeing the academic side of the university that inspired me most to apply... it gave me a taste of what it might be like for me."

The successful shadowing scheme is just one of many initiatives working to attract the most promising students

from a wide range of backgrounds and to dispel myths and prejudices dissuading applications that continue to surround the University, often perpetuated by the media.

In light of this, Taz Rasul, Access and Funding Officer for CUSU who is fronting the scheme, states her additional aim this year is to counteract this media characterisation. She hopes to publicise the achievements of the scheme in the local media of the shadows' area.

286

is the number of students from disadvantaged backgrounds coming to Cambridge for the Shadowing Scheme

She also believes that it is essential that future shadowing schemes replicate this year's popularity saying: "Access work is more vital here than at almost any other university in the UK."

Access Officers across the university work dedicatedly and closely with their colleges to ensure school students are accurately informed about Cambridge.

Matt Pullen and Adam Squibbs, Access Officers at Pembroke, agree that school students they have encountered in their work generally do not know what university entails. A previous

Access Officer remembers the boys' shock in the school group being shown around that girls were allowed in boys' rooms.

However, it is the more serious misconceptions that prevent worthy students applying which the scheme is there to prevent.

Daisy admitted to her mentor: "my previous idea about a typical student was that they would be a bit over-the-top and snobby, but you were just normal and nice, so that encouraged me to apply!"

Last year's shadowing scheme saw the introduction of e-mentoring, as participating undergraduates communicated with sixth formers both before their stay in Cambridge, and continued answering questions and dispelling myths about Cambridge after the scheme finished.

The University devotes much time and resources into Access, engaging with schools and colleges through an extensive range of outreach activities. These include student conferences, summer schools and CUSU's Target Campaign, which involves the shadowing scheme and visits to state schools.

Such work yields clear results. In her role as Gonville & Caius Access Officer, Kirsty Gray has observed the direct correlation between Access work and the number and type of applications: "Caius visited 52 schools between January and September last



'A previous Access Officer remembers the boys' shock in the school group being shown around that girls were allowed in boys' rooms'

year and students produced an excellent Alternative Prospectus. As a result, our applicants increased by 25% and, despite fees tripling, we have the highest proportion of state school

'Access work is more vital here than at almost any other university in the UK. Students are visibly pro-access, with more organised student access activity here than at any other Russell Group University'



Taz Rasul (CUSU Access Officer)

applicants in Caius' history."

She added: "It's clear our university is becoming a leading example to other institutions for widening participation."

DESTINATIONS

INDUSTRY	IMPACT	GATE	ARRIVAL
GLOBAL	ASSIGNMENTS	OW	FASTER
SENIOR	CLIENT CONTACT	OW	FASTER
CAREER	DEVELOPMENT	OW	FASTER

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COMPANIES**

Corpus Christi silverware stolen from chapel

CAMBRIDGE Antique silverware was stolen from Corpus Christi last week after thieves managed to sneak into the college's chapel. The items, used in Eucharistic services, were grabbed from a wooden chest in the chapel, and are part of the college's silver collection. They were grabbed from a wooden chest in the chapel while the college was open to the public. Police have released images of the "very distinctive" silverware and urged anybody with information to get in touch.

Bicycle theft in Cambridge falls after undercover sting operation

CAMBRIDGE Police in Cambridge have announced that the high numbers of bicycle theft that Cambridge is notorious for have fallen, thanks to a series of undercover operations and other initiatives organised by the police department.

Thefts have dropped noticeably in the past year, with only 2,146 bikes stolen in 2011, compared to the recorded thefts of 2,870 bikes in 2010.

The secret Operation Northwood last year saw undercover police officers set up a second-hand bike shop in Arbury Road and managed as a result to recover 500 stolen items, and convict 20 thieves both for bike thefts and for other crimes.

Former Cambridge Footlights nominated for BAFTA

UNIVERSITY Tom Kingsley and Will Sharpe, both former members of the Footlights Revue, have been nominated for the 2012 BAFTA award for Outstanding Debut for their film, *Black Pond*.

Kingsley and Sharpe met at Cambridge in 2005 and the film is loosely based upon an ADC lateshow they wrote with a friend, Tom Williams, entitled *Our Darker Purpose*.

The annual BAFTA awards ceremony will be hosted by another Cambridge alumnus and former Footlight, Stephen Fry, and will take place at the Royal Opera House on the 12th February.

Check out *Varsity's* exclusive interview with the pair on page 16.

Martin Luther King memorial inscription to be changed

WORLD The newly opened Martin Luther King memorial, which lies alongside the National Mall in Washington, is to have its inscription changed after the quotation was revealed to be taken "out of context".

The inscription, which read "I was a drum-major for justice, peace and righteousness", was taken from a longer sentence, and a *Washington Post* columnist noted that the quote made King sound "conceited".

The US Interior Secretary Ken Salazar has now ordered the National Park Service to consult with King's family and the Martin Luther King Foundation to decide on a more appropriate quotation, declaring that "This is important because Dr King and his presence on the Mall is a forever presence for the United States of America, and we have to make sure that we get it right".

Are we really getting smarter?

by Felix Nugee
News Correspondent

Figures released in the past week have led many to claim that the grade inflation affecting GCSE and A-Level is now also affecting university degrees.

The figures show that there have been significant increases in the proportion of students graduating with the top grades across the board.

In the year 2010/2011 15.5% of students graduated with a First, compared to 12.6% in 2006/2007. The fact that the size of the student body expanded at the same time means that the total

64%

of students graduated with the top two qualifications

number of students graduating with Firsts increased 45% in this time.

It is the same trend for 2.1s, which also increased, meaning that overall 64% of students graduated with the top two qualifications compared to just 60% four years earlier.

Cambridge University itself is



Grad-ual increase in examination attainment puts a smile on the faces of two university leavers

potentially guilty of awarding a higher proportion of good grades: it only gave out firsts to 13% of graduating students in 1980 but the latest figures show 23% of students received this grade.

Members of Cambridge's academic community also appear to believe that exams have been made easier, with

Economics students receiving an email in Michaelmas term detailing how the requirements to get a first would increase by 2% in part to combat this problem.

Yet in subjects like English examiners have often been encouraged to award more firsts.

Great Scott's Photos

Scott's photos mark his anniversary

by Matt Russell
Chief News Editor

On the 100th anniversary of Captain Robert Scott's expedition to the South Pole, rare photos taken by the explorer were released to mark the landmark anniversary.

The Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI), which deals in research for both Polar Regions and is part of the University of Cambridge, bought the photos taken by Scott, using funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

To commemorate the anniversary, they released the photos online on Tuesday, exactly 100 years to the day that Scott and his team reached the South Pole in 1912.

The photos are the only ones in existence that Scott himself took as the expedition was covered by professional photographer Herbert Ponting, who researchers know taught Scott about photography.

Though the photos were printed by the team while out in the Antarctic, sadly Scott died before he ever got the chance to see them.

Among the 109 photos of Scott's are shots of the team carrying out sledge repairs, their pony camps, and science experiments, all of which are available online.

Director of the SPRI, Professor Julian Dowdeswell, said: "Captain Scott worked very hard on his photography. He was not a scientist and I think he saw photography as a role he could play in the expedition."

"It is no small feat to operate delicate equipment in freezing temperatures. Scott risked his fingers freezing to the metal."

The release of the photos come just a month after an exhibition at the Cambridge University Polar Museum which displayed Scott's last journal as well as numerous items that had never been on public display before.



Captain Scott during the British Antarctic Expedition 1910-1912

Now these new photos will be added to SPRI's archive, which is the largest photographic record of the British Antarctic Expedition, all of which is currently being digitised as well.

'It's no small feat to operate delicate equipment in freezing temperatures. Scott risked his fingers freezing to the metal'

Scott's photos will now be added to SPRI's archive, which is the largest photographic record of the British Antarctic Expedition. The archives are also being digitised in order to share the photos more openly.

Read more about Scott's ill-fated expedition in *Varsity's* double page feature on pages 10-11.

Academic asks for coincidence stories

by Gwen Jing
News Correspondent

What are the chances of two people phoning each other at exactly the same time? Of picking letters in Scrabble that spell your name? Or losing a fake tooth overboard and finding it inside a fish you catch years later..?

Professor David Spiegelhalter of Cambridge University collects coincidences. These are just some examples of strange occurrences listed on the Cambridge Coincidences Collection website as part of a study on the chances of coincidences.

Professor Spiegelhalter usually researches risk stories but is now looking to put a positive spin on the analysis by looking at chances of coincidence.

"This is not a formal research study at all", he says, as he calls on the public to send in online stories of peculiar coincidences to the www.cambridgecoincidences.org website where other tales of coincidence can

also be read

He describes the stories as "absolutely riveting", and claims that the "classic" coincidence is travelling abroad and running into someone familiar.

His favourite examples are the "little quirky ones" such as when "someone had a double-yolk egg for breakfast and then found out her friend was adopting twins".

The idea is to explore scientific explanations based on these stories by calculating the odds of a coincidence or making speculations about the way the brain works.

He says formulae can be applied to some cases to show that they are not entirely unlikely. For instance, there is a 1 in 35,000 chance that three people from three generations of a family will share the same date of birth.

According to Professor Spiegelhalter, it can be proven that there is in fact a good chance of a bizarre coincidence at some stage during our lifetime.

He adds: "it'd be very odd if it did not happen".

Insert witty headline here

Help fill in the gaps

If you've got any news, get in touch:
[email news@varsity.co.uk](mailto:news@varsity.co.uk)

Cambridge is fair employer

by **Helena Pike**
News Correspondent

Cambridge University has ranked joint 11th with The Co-operative in the 2012 Stonewall Top 100 Employers List, a jump of almost 80 places since last year.

No stranger to controversial and highly publicised debates about equality and discrimination in the application process, the university has featured in national articles such as The Guardian's 'So who is good enough to get into Cambridge?' However, in the lesbian, gay and bisexual charity's survey, which provides a 'definitive list of Britain's most gay-friendly work places', the issue of equality at Cambridge has been more positively framed.

Further praise was offered with the award of 'star performer status' to Cambridge's LGBT staff network. Cambridge was the best ranked higher education institution on the list, which is formed from submissions to Stonewall's Equality Workplace Index, and was listed above the University of Salford (21st), Cardiff University (49th) and others. Ernst and Young achieved first place.

Dr Nick Bampos, Senior Tutor at Trinity Hall and one of the University's three Equality Champions, said: "the ranking shows us that the University is a responsive and inclusive employer that values diversity and looks to provide a supportive and exciting environment."

Sigrid Fisher, Head of the Equality and Diversity (E&D) department echoed this sentiment, saying the achievement reflected the fact that "the University considers each and every member of its community to be equally valued."

This department focuses on the promotion of equality and diversity, in accordance with the University's Equal Opportunities Policy and Combined Equality Scheme. It provides information and support for staff, and organises events to combat discrimination.

Cambridge's LGBT staff network, whose achievements were recognised by Stonewall, is just one of the department's sub-groups, which works alongside other groups such as the Women's staff network and the Disabled staff network. Recent initiatives include a 'sexual orientation at work' survey, action with the local community, and events for the Festival of Ideas.

University's sports centre gets the go-ahead

by **Rosie Sargent**
Deputy News Editor

Last week the council approved the first stage of the building of the University's new sports centre, which will begin within three months.

The first phase of building is expected to cost £16 million and it is hoped that the centre will be open by summer 2013.

Although councillors approved plans for the design of the building, which is reminiscent of the Sydney Opera House, some expressed concerns that its features could have been made more interesting.

Councillor Damien Tunnacliffe claimed, "I do really feel this is an opportunity lost – something as important as this centre should have the wow effect, and this doesn't."

However, Karen Pearce, assistant director of physical education at the University, maintained that the designs were "driven by a desire to create a truly modern, safe and motivational environment for users", who will include both the general public and University members.



A computer-generated image of the planned university sports centre

Other concerns about the green belt were dismissed as unfounded by Councillor John Hipkin, who held that "if buildings are finely designed and the architecture is of a high quality, far from concealing them, they should be open to display."

The first phase will comprise a main sports hall, weights room, five squash courts and a fitness suite, while a swimming pool and tennis hall will follow.

Plans to build the centre have been in the pipeline since the mid-90s, but

the issue of funding what the University has termed an "ambitious project" has caused delays.

Now that plans are finally going ahead, Anthony Lemons, physical education director at the University, claimed, "We are very excited about the project moving forward and hope that it will make a really positive contribution to individuals, groups and clubs from the university and local community wishing to engage in health and well-being, fitness, leisure and sporting activities."

INTERVIEW

Tony Benn

Described by some as Britain's foremost socialist, former Labour Party MP and current President of the Stop the War Coalition talks to **Isabella Cookson** about his life in politics

He was just five years old when he first visited number 10 in 1930 and can remember sitting at Gandhi's feet during the Indian leader's visit to Britain a year later. Benn, now 87, greets us in his small flat in Notting Hill: his beloved, characteristic pipe in one hand, his obligatory cup of tea in the other. The room is filled to the brim with pictures, cards and trinkets, while the walls are covered with photographs of his grandchildren: family is clearly very important for Benn.

Both Benn's grandfathers were politicians and his father was a Labour MP. His mother, a feminist theologian, had a remarkable influence upon him. "We used to read the Bible every night. She taught me that every political issue is really a moral question. It shouldn't be about whether or not it is profitable, it should really be about right or wrong."

Benn recalls the lively political discussions at home, describing when his father received his title, "and so I became the heir. From the time I was elected I knew that when my father died they would throw me out. I tried to get rid of it and they wouldn't let me. They disqualified me from running for Parliament."

He fought to retain his seat in a by-election called on May 4th 1961, caused by his succession. "I was elected with a far bigger majority than when I was qualified," he smiles, "Then they took me to court and there was such a row that it became clear that there would have to be a change. But the issue wasn't really me, the real issue was the right of

the people of Bristol to pick who they wanted. Why should the fact my father was a peer prevent them from choosing who they wanted to represent them in Parliament?"

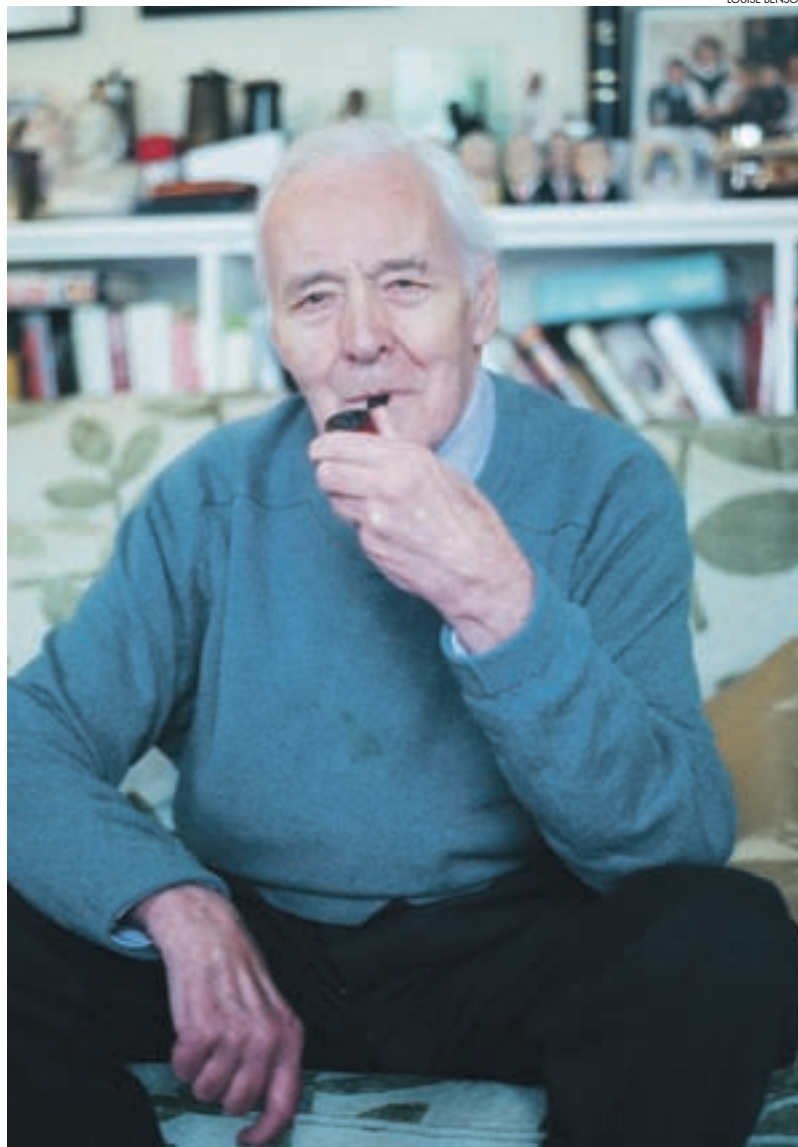
Benn has certainly not wavered when it comes to his opinion on the House of Lords. He believes that the House of Lords should be an elected, not an appointed, chamber and that the Head of State should be the speaker in

'I don't think making a mistake is wrong – that's how you learn'

the House of Commons. "If I went to an untrained dentist who could only assure me that his father was a really good dentist – well, I wouldn't stick with him!" We can keep the Royals though, he concedes – that is, so long as they don't have any political power.

Such beliefs have stuck with Benn over the years, but has fifty years under the political spotlight changed any of his ideas? "Well, I'm an old man now and I have learnt an enormous amount and have made a million mistakes. I don't think making a mistake is wrong – that's how you learn. The only thing I hope I haven't done is said anything I didn't believe in, in order to get on."

One of the big issues I changed my mind on was nuclear energy. I remember when President Eisenhower came out with the "Atoms for Peace" policy, saying that we could use nuclear energy to make electricity. A lot of people, including myself, were terribly excited



Tony Benn: still campaigning tirelessly for change at 87

by that, they said it's cheap, it's safe, it's peaceful. I ran the nuclear energy programme for many years and what I learned as the minister was that it isn't cheap because they still haven't worked out the cost of storing the nuclear waste, it isn't safe – Chernobyl, Hiroshima, the Three Mile Island – and it isn't peaceful, because although the programme was said to be about energy, it's really about the bomb. I discovered that all the plutonium from our civil power stations was sent to America for their weapon's program. So every civil nuclear power station in Britain was really a bomb factory for the Pentagon."

Benn left parliament in 2001, stating

famously that he did so in order "to devote more time to politics." He explains how this freed up time to spend campaigning for issues he believes in, rather than specific party policies.

"If you look at how progress over history is made, it is always when people have campaigned. That's how the women got the vote, how we got the health service, and why the death penalty was abolished. Pessimism is an instrument used to destroy hope and without hope you'll never have a successful campaign. So, I'm always very nervous when people say "nothing ever changes", because I know that's not true. So never be cynical to the point

that you don't put the effort in, that's all I'd say."

During the lead-up to the war in Iraq in 2003, Benn made the controversial decision to interview Saddam Hussein as a part of the Stop the War Coalition's campaigns. He was, in his own words, "hammered" by the press for talking to the enemy. The equipment for the interview was provided by Saddam Hussein himself and was broadcast on Channel Four.

"I put simple questions to him. I asked, 'Do you have weapons of mass destruction?' He said 'no'. Well, I didn't know whether to believe him or not. But, they never found any. I said, 'Do you have links with Al Qaeda?' He said 'No'. I knew that was true because Osama Bin Laden hated Saddam because Saddam was a secularist."

When asked what Saddam was like as a person, he replies "He was very friendly personally to me", before pausing for a while to stare down intently at the pipe he's been fiddling with throughout the interview. He slowly continues, a subtle note of conflicted emotion creeping into his voice: "He's the only man I've ever known executed. It was a horrible sight to see the man you've talked with just a few weeks

'I'm always very nervous when people say "nothing ever changes", because I know that's not true'

before with a rope round his neck."

One thing is markedly clear throughout the interview: Benn may be 86 but he is as opinionated and as engaged with current politics as ever. He thinks that Ed Milliband will make a good prime minister, children should be able to vote at 16 and that Cameron made the "right move but probably for the wrong reasons" for vetoing the EU-wide treaty change over Eurozone rules. Politics, he believes, "is a vocation, not a career."

But although politics has been his life, he would like to be remembered not for any significant political change he was involved in but simply, "that I've encouraged people. I think the function of the old is to encourage the young. If you can encourage people, they will be ten times stronger. I would like on my gravestone to be written: 'Tony Benn, he encouraged us.'"

Cambridge's naked truth: an exclusive exposé

Isabella Cookson uncovers the risqué side of Cambridge, investigating naturist groups the Cambridge Outdoor Club and the Newnham Riverbank Club, and speaks to two enthusiastic student life-models

After extensive digging into the fabled 'nudist colony' located amidst the sprawling flat fields surrounding Cambridge, I stumble upon the Cambridge Outdoor Club's website – and get my first glimpse of candid images shot by members of the club. On a cheerfully automatic scroll-through, the photographs exhibit sunny days spent amongst leafy trees, dips taken in an azure swimming pool, and a steaming sauna. It is the bare skin on show, though, that really arrests the eye. Regular activities conducted in the nude take on new significance; the bodies displayed on the website almost shock more in their non-sexualised banality than the pornographic pop-ups that we've learned to become desensitised to.

A series of emails later, and I'm sitting down to a cup of tea with two members of the club. I wonder first at their initial motivations for joining the club, and the effect it has had on their own awareness of themselves – sexual or otherwise. "Naturism is a great leveller," explains Linda. "You could be a millionaire or a tramp – you're all the same with your clothes off. You have the same basic male or female features."

"No-one takes any notice really," joins in Vic. "You come down to the very basic level. It's very freeing. You take these clothes off and you're taking off a lot of burdens. There's no embarrassment. There can be initially, obviously, but really it comes so naturally. No-one else has their clothes on so if you do, you're the odd one out."

"There's only one naturist club I've ever felt uneasy in," explains Linda. "It was a club we visited once in which there was only one other woman with eight men. They made it painfully obvious they were looking for females – it was not only embarrassing but the atmosphere was extremely uneasy. We left very quickly."

Being "textiled" is how the naturists refer to those who wear clothes. This is acceptable, though, within the community: "Nobody makes you take your clothes off" – with two exceptions: the sauna and the swimming pool are clothes-free zones.

There are a few other rules: "You



Hangin' out, above; dressing down for their big day, below



'The groom wore nothing but a bow-tie and the guests were all naked – even the vicar joined in'

don't make love on the site, there are doors on the toilets and every chair must be covered with your own towel before you sit down," explains Linda. "But you do shower together; often I'll go in and one of the other male members will come and stand next to me. They might even rub the bit of my back that I can't reach. It's all very friendly and very relaxed."

"We have all sorts of events," Vic is keen to stress. "We've got a naturist Burn's night coming up and we do like a BBQ (the men make sure to cover up with an apron – to stop unpleasant

burning.)" The club also plays an active role in the surrounding community. Each year they open their gates to members of the public with a bric a brac sale: "It's to show the community that we do care very much about our local area".

Linda talks of a naturist wedding they attended, explaining that the bride, holding her bouquet of flowers, wore just a veil and her garters. "The groom wore nothing but a bow-tie, the guests were all naked and even the vicar joined in – wearing only his dog collar and a strategically placed bum bag!"

She explains that the wedding was televised for a programme on ITV, on which several guests were interviewed. Upon walking into work the next day, she describes how she was met with universal applause from her colleagues who commended her bravery. Both assure me that their other 'textiled' friends and family are similarly accepting of their lifestyle choices.

In a world dominated by images of the unattainable, perfect body, the Cambridge Outdoor Club "provides a safe space to accept your lumps and bumps just as they are". I'm not sure if I'm ready to strip off in quite such a public setting just yet – although as the Outdoor Club puts it: "the only way to really understand is to try it."

The student body: Newnham Riverbank Club

The Newnham Riverbank Club Cambridge is a well-kept Cambridge secret, discreetly nestled within the Grantchester Meadows behind a green wooden door. Privet hedges hide most of the club from the view of passing punts, allowing members to pursue their "clothing optional" policy when taking a summertime dip in the river.

As a swimming place, the Cam was made famous by poet Rupert Brooke, EM Forster and Virginia Woolf. The group would, on occasion, sleep outdoors and swim under the stars in a river smelling of "mint and mud"; they were dubbed the "Cambridge neo-Pagans". Open all year, there is

only a telephone number pasted outside the club for membership enquiries. It is self-titled 'an English haven', and £16 buys a year's membership and access to the club grounds.

Tea and cake are also served regularly on the clipped lawns for the perfect picnic, Manet's *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe* -style.

Look out, then, for the Riverbank Club's painted wooden door when next punting down the river on a particularly idyllic summer's day: you never know what will be going on just behind the next hedge.

Telephone 07821266450 for all Riverbank enquiries



THE LIFE MODELS

"It's nice to have time scheduled to do nothing, especially in Cambridge": two students, Sylvia and Dominic, describe their experiences of being on the other side of the pencil.

Why did you decide to become a life model?

Sylvia: I didn't exactly "decide". I'd been attending life-drawing classes sporadically since I did Art at A-level, and decided to go to a few at Cambridge.

At my first class, the model was a no-show, so I said I would model for half of the class, on the principle that if I was willing to draw all these various naked people over the years, I should put my money where my mouth was in terms of being drawn myself.

Dominic: A friend ran a life drawing class and asked me if I wanted to try modelling and I thought it sounded interesting. Plus I got £30 for two hours work!

Describe your first experience – was there any any initial embarrassment?

S: No, just an overwhelming need to pee. (I joke... a bit).

I did the second half of the class, getting changed in a freezing cold bathroom and then scarpering into the studio wrapped not in the customary robe but in my unfortunately butt-flashing winter coat.

But overall, I found it very normal to be on the other side of the pencil.

D: I didn't find it embarrassing, because the whole thing's so non-sexual. Some people find it a bit awkward when you're walking around in a towel before or after, because in that moment you're 'more human' as opposed to just a bunch of abstract shapes for them to draw.

Is standing in a pose for long periods of time uncomfortable/ boring/ meditative... what do you think about?

S: I don't really think. I

sort of drift off. It's nice to have time scheduled to do nothing, especially in Cambridge. It's calming.

D: It's often really cold, so you're mostly just thinking "I'm really cold. I wish I was less cold"

What's it like to see artistic interpretations of your own body?

S: It's interesting to see someone's artistic style, their idiom, speaking through the drawings.

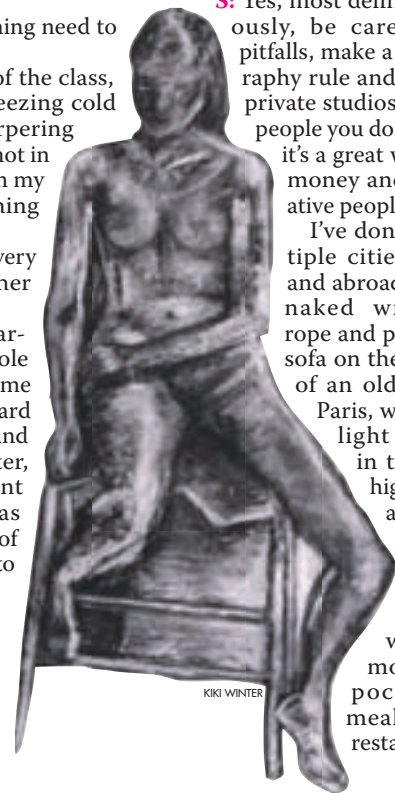
It's persuaded me that we really do see the world quite differently: I can be an emaciated, stretched out Jesus-figure in one image, and a cartoon-voluptuous comic book heroine, all from the same pose.

It all depends on who's doing the looking.

Do you recommend being a life model to others?

S: Yes, most definitely. Obviously, be careful of the pitfalls, make a no-photography rule and don't go to private studios or pose for people you don't trust, but it's a great way to make money and meet creative people.

I've done it in multiple cities, at home and abroad. I've stood naked wrapped in rope and pranced on a sofa on the sixth floor of an old factory in Paris, with the sunlight streaming in through the high windows, and felt really happy to be alive – and then walked out with enough money in my pocket for a meal in a nice restaurant.



KIKI WINTER

"I joined about three years ago because I love swimming outdoors in open water. It's not a naturist club, it's a clothing-optional swimming club; lots of people are naked behind the hedges, but the club asks members to wear clothes on the front near the river, to avoid offending punters. Probably half of the members swim naked."

I wasn't so bothered about the naturism when I first joined, and it was only after that I became a more ardent fan of swimming naked myself. It's just much more fun than swimming with a costume; it feels more free and natural, but only if the water is clean and not too cold!

Since I began swimming naked and spending time on dry land at

the Riverbank Club, I have really come to appreciate the benefits of naturism for a healthy body image. It is wonderful to stop caring what your body looks like in relation to other people's; you realise that people come in a vast array of shapes and sizes, and that personalities matter far more.

I just like being able to spend some of my summer afternoons naked, enjoying the fresh air and the water and the camaraderie at the club without being concerned with having a "bikini body" – after all, if you take the bikini away, it's just a body! I rather like that."

Student from Jesus College and member of the Newnham Riverbank Club

The stuff that dreams are made of

Will planes of the future be made of plastic? **Jordan Ramsey** evaluates Boeing's progress on the introduction of the Dreamliner 787

The 'plastic planes' have arrived. The Boeing 787 Dreamliner, whose wings and pressurised fuselage are made of carbon-fibre reinforced plastic (CFRP), took its first journey from Tokyo to Hong Kong in October of last year. CFRP – made up of layers of carbon fiber and an epoxy resin – is stronger per kilogram than its traditional counterpart aluminum. Composed of 50 per cent carbon fibre, the new CFRP aeroplanes are also 15 per cent lighter. The weight

reduction lowers its carbon footprint and increases its fuel efficiency. However, a US Government Accountability Office (GAO) report issued recently has raised safety concerns.

Though deemed airworthy, GAO questioned the ability of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to test, maintain, and repair CFRP parts. Damage to the strong composite material can remain hidden inside a component of the aircraft. In addition, damaged CFRP tends to snap when it breaks, instead of bending like aluminium would. GAO found a void in the engineering knowledge regarding the behaviour and identification of these damaged CFRP parts. The report also discovered that research into the behaviour of ageing composite materials was lacking – an important issue for passenger aircrafts that can have a lifespan of 30 years or more.

Furthermore, GAO questioned the capacity of the small crew of engineers with specialised training to inspect a fast-growing fleet of CFRP aeroplanes. Boeing holds that the technology and research are solid.

Despite GAO's concerns, there are benefits to composite aircrafts. Hailed as a revolutionary step in passenger air travel, Boeing's new product promises cheaper, greener and more comfortable flights. The lightweight CFRP reduces the 787's fuel requirements by 20 per cent, meaning airlines can turn a profit on smaller direct flights to less frequented destinations – for example, between San Francisco and Manchester. This increase in profitability means more convenience for passengers and will result in smaller cities seeing more international air travel. Boeing also claims that reduced

corrosion associated with using composite materials will cut down maintenance costs by 30 per cent. Passengers can hope that these savings will result in cheaper airfare.

Though it remains to be seen how it will fare, the Dreamliner at present is generating a lot of excitement, and rightfully so. The GAO's worries may soon be put to rest as engineers and scientists rise to the challenge of composite material testing and maintenance. The owner of Airbus, EADS, and Dolphitech are currently working on an ultrasonic gun that would allow engineers to scan CFRP components and 'see' damage that is otherwise effectively invisible.

As the potential future of air travel, 'plastic planes' have made quite an entrance. Only time will tell if the 787 will be successful. Passengers in the UK can expect to be seeing the Dreamliners in airports soon, with Thomson Holidays receiving its own CFRP planes this month.



The production line: making a Dreamliner is actually quite easy

Rock of the Week

LIMESTONE

Sorry Antonia, but that rock is the property of the Department of Earth Sciences



This week's rock is an exquisite hunk of limestone. A favourite with W.H. Auden, who loved it so much he felt he had to write a poem praising it, limestone remains the runaway leader of the sedimentary rocks. Without this partially-soluble beauty there would be no pyramids at Giza, no calcium in your cereals and no meat on your chicken breasts. It is found everywhere, from the Old World to the New. This particular specimen was formed over 300 million years ago when Great Britain was covered in shallow tropical seas; a world away from the Cambridge late winter chill. Not tempted to get one yourself? Then I leave you with the words of Antonia herself upon first seeing the sample: "Oh! It's Beautiful! I want this rock!"

Joseph White

FAQS

Can I buy one?

If you have £120 million, then yes.

Can it store my whisky?

Not if you have more than 40 cubic feet of whisky.

Will it get me to lectures quickly?

At cruise altitudes it will fly at a pace of 570 mph, so yes it certainly will.

Could Varsity have a party in it?

The Dreamliner makes for perfect party space, if you're willing to rip out the 250 seats.

Will it fit in my back garden?

I think it would be a tight squeeze given the plane has a wingspan of 197 feet, and is 186 feet long.

Will the neighbours complain if I fly it around my neighbourhood?

It has 60 per cent lower noise levels than standard models, so I shouldn't think so.

Technically Speaking



by James Vincent
Online Editor

Lent term approaches, and with it the blessed joys of academic rigour and servitude. Obviously everyone at Cambridge lives for this sort of hard work but I find it hard not to think back wistfully to the work-free school-days of yore, ICT classes being the best example of such licensed dossing. Unfortunately, after mastering the tricky business of turning the computer on and then the matrix-level hackery of customized Word Art, it's hard to think of anything I actually learnt in those classes. Well, apart from avoiding anyone who uses Comic Sans (it's the typographical equivalent of huffing glue: looks harmless, but will slowly kill your nervous system).

Anyway, it seems the government have finally clocked on to this scam with Ed Vaizey (Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative

Industries) calling for drastic reform in how IT is taught in schools. Vaizey describes computer skills as "the grammar of the 21st century" and he's completely right: being 'digitally literate' not only makes you employable but also keeps you part of modern life – in the 21st century society is a concept that happens online.

But this isn't even the issue for schools. Vaizey's 'digital literacy' may be a problem for some adults, but anyone who grew up around computers already has an intuitive understanding of how such surface systems work: the real need lies in the teaching of programming languages. These skills are the equivalent of 16th century knowledge of the screw or the lever: they are basic tools essential to the advancing technology. Michael Gove's recent announcement scrapping the ICT curriculum is the first step towards reinvigorating teaching but right now it just leaves schools without proper guidance. I feel sorry for the current students forced to waste their afternoons because a government that touts 'digital literacy' can't keep up with technology.

Higgs boson glimpsed

First evidence found of sub-atomic particle

by Jake Harris
Science Correspondant

On December 13th, scientists at the European Organisation for Nuclear Research announced that they had taken a glimpse at the Higgs boson. The holy grail of the physics world, the Higgs boson is an elementary particle that is predicted to exist by the Standard Model of particle physics. This model is a 50-year-old theory that describes the smallest particles in the universe and their interactions.

£2.5bn

The cost of the CERN project

Professor Eilam Gross, ATLAS physics group convener, said his team "couldn't believe [their] eyes" when the first readings were taken. ATLAS is one of the six particle detector experiments taking place in the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), the world's largest particle accelerator. The gigantic ring of the LHC accelerates protons and other particles towards each other, so they

will collide and break down into their fundamental building blocks.

It is possible that the LHC detectors have found nothing more than a background fluctuation, but the director general of CERN called the reading "extremely good progress". CERN spokesperson Fabiola Gianotti also remained optimistic: "given the outstanding performance of the LHC this year, we will not need to wait long for enough data and can look forward to resolving this puzzle in 2012". It was the accumulation of data that drew the physicist's attention; independent measurements that gave them hope that they'd found the particle had little statistical significance.

The LHC replicates the conditions of the beginning of the world, and the discovery of the Higgs particle would be a step towards answering some of the most profound questions in physics. Why do we weigh anything? Why does matter have mass? These are questions that we've been trying to answer since Newton. Perhaps, soon, we will be nearer to getting the answers.

Don't understand what on earth the Higgs boson is? Peter Blair explains all at varsity.co.uk

TAKE FIVE

The best discoveries of 2011

New earth-like planet

We always get excited by things in space that may be like us and this discovery was no exception, as it was the most visited National Geographic News story of 2011. I can only imagine it was named HD85512b just in case giving it a friendly name would make it more popular than Earth itself.

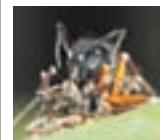


Medical mirror

A mirror has been made with a webcam behind it that captures variations in reflected light on your face. An algorithm then translates that into heartbeats, so it can tell you when your pulse is up. Science has finally shown how to diagnose narcissism.

'Zombie' ants

A fungus (*Ophiocorhyclops camponotibalzani*) has been found that infects the brains of ants. The fungus then controls the ants so it can kill them once they move to a location ideal for the fungi to grow and spread their spores.



World's first malaria vaccine

Unfortunately this was discovered at the University of Oxford, but as the vaccine has been shown to be effective against the nastiest, deadliest strains of the malaria parasite we can forgive where it was unearthed.

Micro doctors

A Korean team have developed micro-robots which can enter blood vessels to cure diseases and are now able to dig and move sideways.

"What we call the beginning is often the end. And to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from" — T.S. Eliot

Why the long face? 2012 – the year of the doomed

Ladies and Gentlemen, brace yourselves, the end of the world is nigh!

Well it's only fair that I should get one too. Everyone else is writing them. After all, what better way is there to see in the new year than with a dramatic, despairing, defeatist headline?



cheery.

The Doomsday clock has inched that bit closer towards midnight and many are counting down the days to Armageddon. I was even confronted yesterday with a radio feature about the ultimate 'bucket list' of things to do before you die.

And whilst we may not all be striking off the days until 'The End', (21st December, in case you're wondering) we can hardly claim to have got the year off to the brightest of starts.

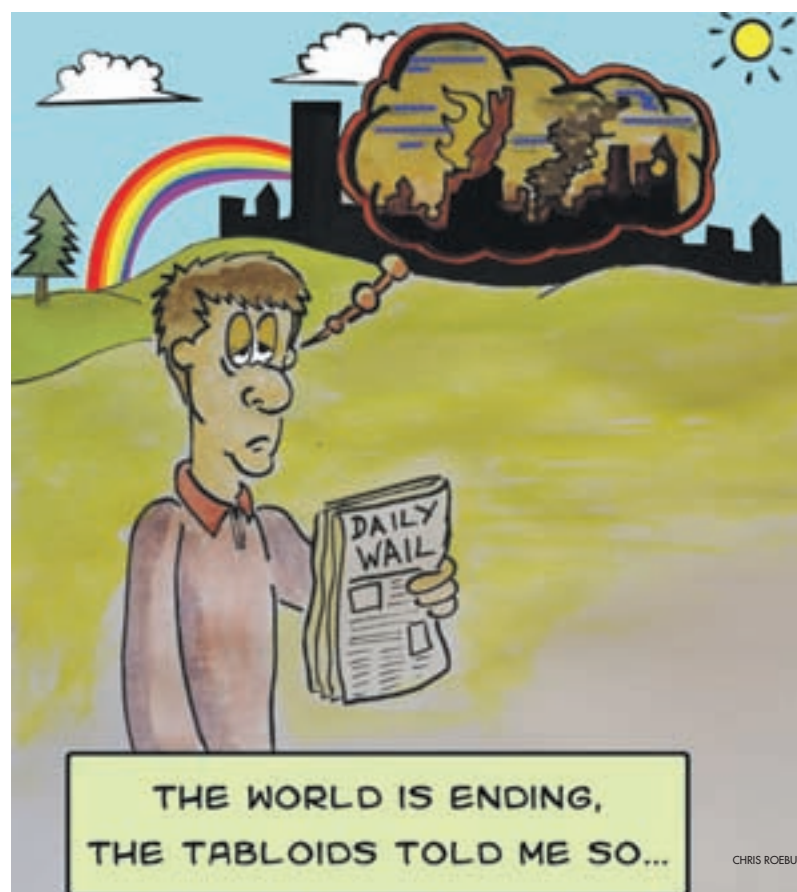
I am by no means suggesting that everything is right as rain. It's not. Merely, that hard times do not equate to the end of the world, nor do they excuse an attitude of overwhelming defeatism. These poor listeners must know that

'It really is a wonder anyone reads newspapers these days'

there's still time to attempt to sing that duet with Chris Martin, or to graffiti their name on the Great Wall of China.

We all know drama sells papers. However, when this heightened journalistic tone can no longer distinguish between the severity of a horticultural quandary (the current 'mildew crisis'—protect your busy lizzies!) and a report on poverty and death following the aid disaster in the Horn of Africa, we know we have a problem. It's high time the media took a step back and allowed us to gain the perspective we need to face a tough new year with the right attitude.

Easy, perhaps, for me to say from the safety of our ivory-encrusted Cambridge tower. Yet there is nothing quixotic about my predictions for 2012; even I at times misplace my rose-tinted spectacles. It's just that there



is something truly intolerable about a negative beginning. No matter how bleak a forecast may seem, it's a tradition, in fact, a downright obligation to throw ourselves into a new year with optimism and resolution.

Instead of facing up to the challenges of the new year, Britain appears to have preoccupied itself with an array of excuses and cop-out coping mechanisms in reaction to recession and social frustration. We have found solace in the shelters of nostalgia: even in the

arts the world of film sealed its lips with new release, 'The Artist', Vogue Britain heralds the "Gatsby glamour" of the twenties and in sport, football fans are celebrating the return of former icons, Henry and Scholes. As great as these things are, the same cannot be said for the social stagnation caused by excessively negative coverage of political and economic affairs. It is time to take a step forward, and make those new year's resolutions.

When considering our own approach

Of course newspapers are depressing. They're a morbid, literary version of You've Been Framed. However, they've kind of got to be, because it's the depressing stuff which is actually news worthy. Fact is, people do bad things on a big scale more often than people do good ones, and the fact we all find it so depressing is probably a good sign for humanity.

Victoria Sautter, Magdalene

to beginnings, we must ignore the pessimism-drenched pages of the daily press. Instead, let us seek a muse in the glorious world of fiction and follow the example of the novelist. Setting out from their very first line with a complete story in mind; they know there will be drama, but they don't give the game away. They also know that even the most dire situations will inevitably come to some sort of resolution, which will take the form, more often than not, of something less drastic than the Apocalypse.

These writers teach us right from the off to expect, to predict, but to resist fixed expectations— an attitude from which we could perhaps learn a thing or two. I know it's only fiction but even in real life, things tend to have a habit of working themselves out.

Yes. The world has plenty of reasons to be miserable, but this sadistic affixation with doom and gloom will get us nowhere. We may not all be daft enough to believe that the end is truly nigh, but heck, let's try and live 2012 like it's our last. I wish you a Happy New Year. To beginnings!

Emily Fittzell

Whatever You Say

THE CONSERVATIVES HAVE BEEN UNFAIRLY DEMONISED



ALI LEWIS



Whatever motion the Union proposes each week, I'm going to agree with it. I'm going to say 'yes' to everything, no matter how awful it sounds or how bad it'll make me look. It's something akin to the way in which Jennifer Aniston picks film scripts. This isn't because of my inherently positive outlook or because I dislike confrontation, but rather because the editors put me on the left hand side of the page and I thought that would probably be fine and didn't want to make a fuss.

A quick glance at the Union term card suggests I'll be anti-fashion, in favour of beating up Arab protestors, pessimistic about Britain's business hopes and convinced that women are only being held back by their own laziness. Luckily, this coincides exactly with all of my existing views. In fact, yesterday I punched a well-dressed but unemployed Arab woman in the face in frustration at my inability to secure a small business loan.

You might think that this makes me a bit of a dick, but you probably don't. You almost certainly think I'm just messing around. And you think that because I'm clearly a bit of a liberal. I'm writing for Varsity, I voted Lib Dem, and I just dropped my unfinished novel into my macchiato.

Think about it though, if a Conservative had written those words, he would have been instantly demonised; hackles would have been raised, blogs would have been written, and Cambridge Defend Education would have sat somewhere and defiantly eaten crisps. This is not fair. What does a liberal have to do to be a bad ass? Put Nick Clegg in a leather jacket, give him a vintage Mustang and let him have his way with your girlfriend; within five minutes he'd be in the friend zone talking about small batch preserves. It's only fair that liberals get demonised too. I beg to propose.



AHIR SHAH



Individuals who self-identify as "Conservative" may claim that the negative portrayal they receive in some quarters is centred on an unhelpful caricature utilised by the intellectually bereft in a manner that actually serves to stifle political discourse, but we must remember that the Tory scum in question are literally unwashed hellspawn who deserve to be drowned in a vat of their ill-gotten milk. To claim that Conservatives are being "unfairly" demonised is to ignore a deeper, more fundamental question. I will seek to illustrate this question through the medium of a short play:

An office. Mitesh, a precocious young man, is sitting at his desk, absentmindedly "sexting" a colleague who works in Human Resources. Brian, his Line Manager, is perusing a bookshelf.

MITESH: Brian, is it true that all Conservatives are actually demons, like in Roald Dahl's *The Witches* where the witches look like nice ladies but actually have melted faces and evil feet?

BRIAN: Yes.

Finis. Case closed, you may say. But, of course, one question remains. "All Conservatives are demons," I hear you agree pliantly, "but does this mean all demons are Conservatives?"

To answer this question I went to visit Belphegor, Demon Prince of All Hatred in his four-storey mansion conveniently located a mere stone's throw from the Lake of Quiet Sin. As he cooked me a slap-up meal of charred hope and asparagus salad, Belphegor opened up to me. "Just because you're a demon, people expect you to be like all the others," he said, his eyes swelling with pungent, corrosive tears. "I may be a lot of things," he sniffled, pausing briefly to plant a kernel of evil into the mind of a mortal, "but I'm not the kind of person who wants the private sector interfering with the NHS." For the accurate depiction of all Conservatives, and the protection of innocent demons, I beg to oppose.

'Knowledge is power', so use it

King's College Provost seems not to be blaming student activism, but rightfully applauding it

The mainstream media has latched on quickly to King's Provost Ross Harrison's assertion that a dip in exam results could be related to student activism.

The *Basildon Echo* went so far as to write that the "Provost... said students spent too much time this Summer and Autumn at protest rallies rather than concentrating on degrees."

Yet Harrison's introduction seemed, in fact, to imply that other students weren't spending enough time protesting. He wrote with a witty sense of pride about his 'political college'; yet, which university, or even school, can avoid being political? It is both necessary and desirable that students and staff are united and creative against the government's affront on teaching and learning.

Harrison rightly pointed out that concerns about the HE White Paper affect the fellowship as much as they do students. He placed his college at the centre of political campaigning: "The effigies of Cameron and Clegg that were burned in the protest in London against the increase in fees were made in the King's Art Room. We have always been a prominent supporter of the arts and it transpires that this is an additional function of an art room in a political college".



Students are quick to claim that education is a right, not a privilege, and a college that prides itself on an ever-increasing state-school intake would no doubt agree. Those in amidst the excitement and trials of a

degree must make the most of their course, but must also do their best to protect similar or even better provision for prospective students.

The value of the intellectual freedom university leads to is measured by the way in which it galvanises students to think, speak their minds and change things. Learning is empowering and any degree that empowers its students to the point of protest, in all its forms, has done at least part of its job. As a first-year myself, reading 'Coriolanus' at Occupy London instead of the UL was all part of the fun.

The value of a degree does not hang on a number or position on a chart. While league tables might be interesting for some and while a First instead of 2:1 is satisfying, it doesn't compare with the intrinsic value of learning and living in an environment centred on reading, writing and debate. Political activism is another facet of that experience, equally as important as weekly essays and Tripos stresses.

Everything and everyone is political;



'The intrinsic value of learning and living in an environment centred on reading, writing and debate is incomparable'

DID YOU KNOW?

Over 400,000 people attended the student rally in March 2011, which amounted to the biggest public protest in the UK since the Iraq protests of 2003.

sometimes that is exciting and sometimes it is infuriating. Either way, it is inescapable, and ignoring the fact will only push higher education further into the confines of oppressive legislation and excessive fees and cuts. Other universities are turning against the students and must not fall into that trap.

Without being doctrinaire, active engagement in the world in which our Cambridge bubble resides is not an impediment to university life, or an appendage we can take or leave, it is vitally important. Just as we wouldn't deny students poetry readings or rowing, we can't deny ourselves the opportunity we have to try and make a real difference. *Ani Brooker*

Cambridge talks Predictions for 2012

Every week I will see inspiring ways that so many people's lives in Cambridge are enriched through the contribution of voluntary groups, charities and individuals. Will you be there?

Ian Nimmo-Smith
Mayor of Cambridge

Sarkozy and Obama will both be narrowly re-elected. The Eurozone will survive but Greece will default and its membership will be suspended. The Coalition will still be in office at the end of 2012.. Ed Miliband will still be leader of the Labour Party at the end of 2012. There will be no military strike by the United States against Iran.

Professor Andrew Gamble
Head of Department of Politics
and International Studies

The University of Cambridge will demand devolution from St Johns. Pending referendum: 2014.

We will see the dawn of even thicker arts students as tuition fees go up and anyone with half a brain is forced to study science at university

To maintain a healthy East-West divide, the Arab Spring will be followed in 2012 by the European Autumn, during which many European countries will spontaneously give up their democracies and by means of Twitter restore it to those they originally took it from.

Patrick Devine &
Theo Hughes-Morgan, Trinity

The Wiki protest

Don't Get Caught in a SOPA Opera

We in Cambridge are part of a knowledge economy. We labour to build our 'intellectual capital' – that we might better be able to take part in industries where 'labour' means the construction, understanding and use of information. We all understand 'knowledge is power', but knowledge is also work, and consequently, wealth.

We therefore need protection for our intellectual output: without those protections, we cannot make a living. The information belongs to us, just as a chair belongs to the carpenter who fashioned it. The mantra 'information should be free', proposed by liberal thinkers and internet hackers is a staggeringly short-sighted view of contemporary economics, not to mention down-right foolish when applied to security issues.

If we do not protect intellectual property from those who would 'free' it, we will simply see a decline in those willing to provide it. Film-makers will no longer produce their films if they can be streamed online, and with the rise of e-readers, authors will fall foul of this too – why buy the book when you can download it free? Medicines are intellectual property – drug companies will stop investing if they cannot protect their patents.

Medicines make our bodies healthy; art makes our souls sing. If we believe it is socially beneficial to have individuals write rich, complex novels, or make smart, original films, then we must allow that those responsible for the production of intellectual property enjoy the proceeds. Those that seek to take those proceeds from them must be stopped.



Defenders of online piracy, 'sticking it to the man', are selfish and naïve. They see only the personal benefits of goods that many spend years producing. If they truly believe that intellectual property is theft, then by extension they should feel happy walking into Tesco's and taking DVDs for nothing. If it's ok to take DVDs, why not a loaf too? Somebody, somewhere, has worked to make them all.

SOPA (Stop Online Piracy Act) and its sister, PIPA (Protect Intellectual Property Act) have good intentions, all

'We need protection for our intellectual output'

anchored on firm moral and economic grounds. They set out to strengthen existing intellectual property laws which are manifestly failing to do their job (see 'free-tv-video-online.me').

Well aware that they are legislating an area that develops far faster than law can be written, Congress has been deliberately vague with its language. Ambiguous does not make for good law – and indeed, the potential breadth of action SOPA permits is frightening. Wikipedia did itself proud in drawing your attention to potential mischief.

Other, service-based approaches might better tackle the problem, and should be encouraged. But that doesn't change the underlying issue – intellectual property needs better, faster, more efficient protection. Or it won't just be music executives who'll be looking for jobs, but us. *Felix Danczak*

Ladylike

FREYA BERRY



In the beginning the Universe was created. This has made a lot of people very angry and been widely regarded as a bad move.

Thus writes the late great Douglas Adams, and as usual, he has a point. Beginnings are tricksome blighters. You think you've got them pinned down – the moment the universe was created, the inventor of maths, the point at which you knew you were going to be dragged to Cindy's – and yet there's always that little niggling voice saying you haven't quite got it yet.

Religion is good at getting rid of the uncertainty about our origins. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". You can't fault that for confidence.

Most religions have utterly different ideas about how it all started: if you're a Scientologist, you're equally sure that human beings are alien pariahs chucked out of the Galactic Confederacy. If we're going for a certain Christian perspective, however, we can be utterly sure that it was Woman's Fault.

I've always been a little uneasy about the idea of millions of people blaming the woes of the world on one girl's hankering for a tasty Granny Smith. No wonder that, in this day and age, women turn to chocolate. Who wants to risk that palaver again?

But it is remarkable that women, the producers of life, manage to get so severely punished for doing so. Chastity belts were funny in Robin Hood: Men In Tights. But in medieval times they saved women's lives, serving as proof that they hadn't been shagging the nice squire from the castle down the road while their husband was away crusading.

Even when it was definitely their husband's baby, the travails didn't end. In the 1500s, one mother was blamed for her daughter being born 'all hairy and bristly', because in the 'act of creation' she'd been busy staring at a picture of bearded John the Baptist that hung over the bed.

And now, in modern-day Utah, that State whose legislation is always good for a laugh/weep, they've been trying for the last two years to make miscarriage illegal, after a young woman paid someone to beat her up until she miscarried.

Unfortunately, there isn't room to go into the gross misunderstanding that underlies the attempts of these (laughably named) 'pro-lifers', or the ethics of effectively turning women into incubators, or why, on a federal scale, Obama has just cut access to the pill. We in England managed to see off Nadine Dorries's recent attempt to hand abortion counselling over to pro-life institutions – a potential first step along the dangerous path of restricting abortion access.

Beginnings are absolutely vital, because it is only by catching them in their genesis that we can ever really have a say on how the rest of an event turns out.

These rough notes

January blues? It's all relative. To mark the centenary of Captain Scott's doomed final expedition, **Katy Browse** revisits his legacy

He knew that the race to the South Pole would be a hard one to win. What Captain Scott didn't know when as he set sail in 1910 was just how close it would be. He arrived at the Antarctic's McMurdo Sound (the ice-clogged waters that are only accessible in summer temperatures) already aware that the Norwegian team led by Roald Amundsen was also heading south.

Amundsen and his team of Norwegians would claim the prize. Yet Scott's team earned a reputation as the brave, ambitious and ultimately tragic faces of polar exploration. Reaching the Pole but falling victim to the cold on their return, many miles from home, he was recognized as a British Hero. Memorial donations for Captain Scott showed his country's appreciation for the pioneer. It mattered less that he didn't succeed than that he died with dignity, as he says of his comrade, Captain Oates.

'He did not – would not – give up hope to the very end. He was a brave soul. This was the end....'

He said, "I am just going outside and I might be some time." He went out into the blizzard and we went out into the blizzard and we have not seen him since.'

These quotations would not have survived without Scott's diary. The Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge, founded with the remainder of the funds raised on his death, is now retelling the story of these last fateful months in their exhibition: 'These Rough Notes'. It is well worth a look, if not just for its McMurdo miscellanies. Scott's base camp, built to house the men for winter, was complete with stables for the arctic ponies as well as a dark room for its photographer. The

**'Scott's day-by-day diaries are blogged...
...they even tweet them'**

work of this photographer, Herbert Ponting, deserves its own exhibition. Scott recognised a commercial opportunity and commissioned him to feature brands such as Lyle's Syrup and Colman's Mustard in his photographs, to put their products next to that most exotic of creatures, the penguin. Although most of the photos are of the expedition itself, there appear among them some of the earliest examples of product placement.

Ponting was not present on the trip to the Pole. Although nineteen set

out with Scott, the supporting parties returned in stages and only four men went with Scott on the last leg of the journey, reaching their goal on 17th January. It is Scott's diary that tells the story up to last, with its final entry on 29th March 1912. The last volume of the diary is in the display, on loan from the British Library. SPRI has also put the text online.

If you visit their website, Scott's day-by-day entries are blogged, and if you need a reminder that things could be a whole lot worse as you start term, they even tweet them.

Today we find the team fresh from defeat. Signs of bitterness in Scott's diary? Perhaps. They have found signs of the Norwegians.

Amundsen, however, will be the least of Scott's worries as he sets out on the return journey where they will meet with misfortunes that Scott names as individual 'tragedies'. These will unfold all the way through February and March until the end of term.

Scott was found just eleven miles from the next depot of food and fuel; the account of these months is emotional and poignant. He would see one of his team severely concussed after a fall, another fighting frostbite, until the point that he and his men could only write letters to friends and loved

1. With their motorized sledges failing as well as their ponies proving unfit for the job, the men of Scott's final Polar expedition resorted to hauling the sledges themselves: Think about that next time you have moan about the trek back from the UL.
2. 'Beanz meanz Heinz', an advertisement for Heinz baked beans.
3. Penguin with a tin of 'Lyle's Golden Syrup'.

Friday, January 19th, T -22.6

Early in the march we picked up a Norwegian cairn and our outward tracks. We followed these to the ominous black flag which has first apprised us of our predecessors' success. We have picked this flag up, using the staff for our sail, and are now camped about 1½ miles further back in our tracks. So that is the last of the Norwegians for the present.

ones and hope for the best.

The Antarctic expedition had been advertised to potential officers as the chance 'to reach the South Pole, and to secure for the British Empire the honour of this achievement' and they failed to be the first to do so by just over a month.

As the Tate & Lyle anecdote shows though, there was more to the expedition than glory-hunting. Scott's ambitions went beyond Amundsen's. The 65 strong British team also included photographers, scientists and naturalists such as Edward Wilson, who died with him on the return journey.

This, too, shows in the diary entries that are to come. On the hard trip back, Scott will honour Wilson's request for a scientific detour despite awful weather and dwindling supplies. Wilson wanted to look among glacial debris in the shadow of Mount Erebus. It



1

UP THE CAM

WITH DAVID MITCHELL

This week we talk to one of the cows behind King's.

"It was a dark night at the beginning of an Easter Term many years ago and I had decided, with a few friends, to go on a latenight punting trip. It was a stupid thing to do; the wind was wild and the rapids which in those days existed between Trinity Hall and John's were white with rushing water and the smashed bones of luckless undergraduates. Still, we'd had a few drinks and it seemed like a laugh.

"Initially the trip went well; the wine continued to flow and the only hitch was having to stop briefly underneath Clare bridge to avoid the strange man throwing polystyrene balls at Japanese tourists (I heard later that he had been sent down). We were all possessed with a tremendous sense of excitement and adventure and, when we had safely negotiated the rapids sustaining no more than a snapped punt pole and some splintered planking, we were on a real high. The moon came out and we envisaged breakfast in Grantchester.

"Unfortunately the night's adventures were to take a bitter turn. Perhaps I should have suspected it; the Mill was strangely quiet and there was no traffic on Silver Street; the shadows were playing strangely on the water and there were inexplicable rustlings behind Queens'. Also one of the ducks which swam past the punt had a distinctly plastic sheen to its coat. Of course I brushed it all off as paranoia but little did I know that the Cambridge I had lived in for two years had become, on this fateful night, a town of terror and secrecy, of black leather and Kalashnikovs.

"They ambushed us as we dragged the punt up the rollers. They were ruthlessly efficient; I was gagged and trussed up before I could open my mouth. I never saw the others again but I heard that their bodies were found months later in the cast of the CULES Panto. They threw me into the back of a van where two heavies were instructed to beat me up while watching television; their half-hearted interest in my disabling was humiliating. We drove for a long time.

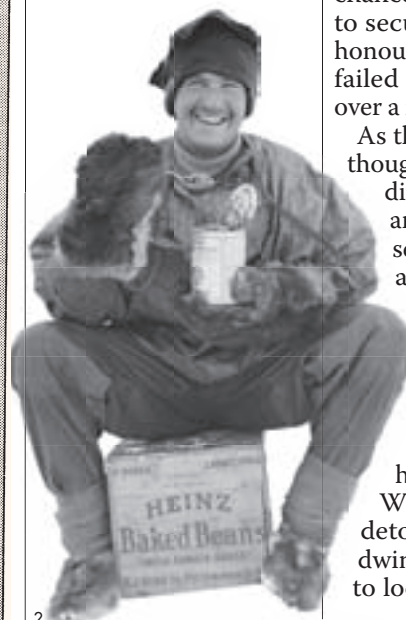
"When I woke up I was chained to the underside of a tall bar stool and being questioned by a faceless man in a suit. He was the first faceless man I'd seen and I was terrified; he spoke through a hole in his lapel. He wanted to know everything I knew and more. Of course I didn't know more than everything I knew so he tortured me. Terrible torture. Months of it - so long you got to wishing it would stop.

"But when the torture stopped, the experiments started: burning magnesium, making copper sulphate, the works. And then came the experiments on me. I became part of the dreaded 'Bovine Development Plan' which aimed to develop a breed of Siberian peasant who could chew his cud. The hideous side-effect of these experiments was that I became a cow. Or rather I became a man trapped in a cow's body.

"Years later, after thousands of experiments, when I was no longer any use to them, I was released into the meadow behind King's where I live now, among the real cows; I was left to try and make my way in the cow world.

"It's hell. I don't even speak cow."

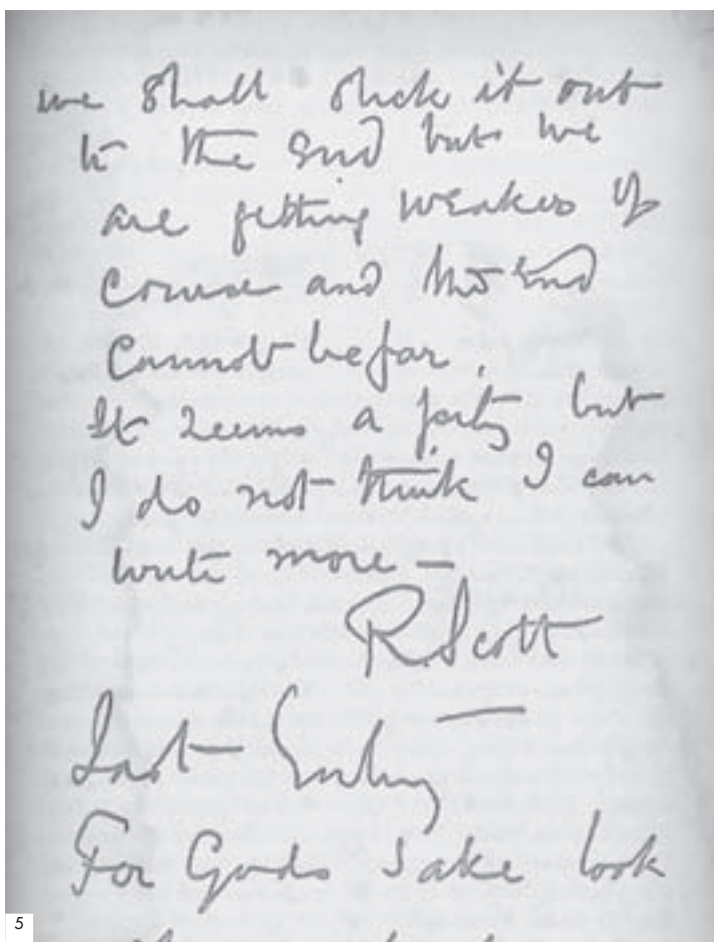
"Help me."



2



SCOTT POLAR RESEARCH INSTITUTE



5

Thursday, March 27th
We shall stick it out to the end but we are getting weaker, of course, and the end cannot be far. It seems a pity, but I do not think I can write more.

R. SCOTT.
For God's sake look after our people.

4. The team that reached the pole. From left: Oates, Bowers, Scott, Wilson and Evans.
5. Scott's final diary entry.
6. Penguin eggs: Why not try the Varsity egg hunt? See if you can spot the third egg cunningly concealed in the very pages you hold before you.
All images courtesy of the Scott Polar Research Institute. Image of diary courtesy of the Scott Estate.

With thanks to the Scott Polar Research Institute for help in developing this article. A review of The Worst Journey of the World can be found in the Literature Section.

6



meant that, found alongside the diaries of the pole parties was a prize fossil, the hitherto unknown plant *Glossopteris Indica*.

It was Wilson that had led a trip from the base camp that has gone down in history in its own right. Named 'The Worst Journey in the World', Cherry Garrard's account is recommended if you want another insight into this expedition.

Current evolutionary theories, in which Wilson was absorbed, held the emperor penguin as vital. It was thought of as a missing link between reptiles and birds, and that the embryo passed through all previous evolutionary stages during the course of its development.

Getting hold of its eggs then, "was the greatest biological quest of the

day," according to the polar historian David Wilson, the explorer's great-nephew.

You can imagine that it took a lot of these statements at the Cape Evans base camp to coax his fellow officers into the trip. It meant that three men travelled into the Antarctic winter, during which no sun shines, trying to track down the breeding birds. The eggs were gold dust. They were successful (although the theory, unluckily, was not).

From an advertising campaign to scientific ambitions that outlive him in the Institute named for him, Scott's story is not just one of heroism. The diaries and letters show that he and his team had that which the Norwegians did not; a truly British grit, humour and eccentricity.

The Comic Strip
LEWIS WYNN



The Little Gem

LETTICE FRANKLIN



The First and Last
(formerly 'The Cricketers')
18 Melbourne Place

All-week Sunday roast:
£8.50

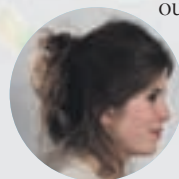
Cheapest Pint:
£3.20

I write this, a new column, on the train returning to Cambridge for a new term, in a new year; wearing a new coat, and with a new diary full of empty pages to fill with new, exciting events, but I am thinking about nothing but endings. I return, after all, to a Cambridge that is no longer Cambridge, or at least is no longer Kambar-idge. Like Adam and Eve, we must make our solitary, un-tequila-fuelled way, hand in hand perhaps, but those hands will never again be marked with that enigmatic P (...for Paradise Lost?).

Otherwise hard-hearted cynics and I have had tearful conversations: "And you queued, gazing at the weirdest window display known to man, that toy Michelin man, that fake money... or you didn't because it was totally empty" (sigh) "and then you went up the stairs and then you saw it" (gaze into distance) "and then, and then, you got the tequila, or occasionally didn't because you haven't said "tequila...PLEASE" and then you leant against the inexplicable barrels" (voice rising with remembered joy) "and then you went into Cambridge's largest girls' loo" (sniff) and so on.

But we must, just, get, a, grip, and remember that every ending is a new beginning. So, to fulfil my pretty loose but ca-learly far too prescriptive brief to talk about restaurants and beginnings, I draw your attention to a pub previously known as The Cricketers in Melbourne Place – mysteriously the location of more nice pubs than the whole of central Cambridge. It reopened last term as The First and Last, a name which nicely ties up the mind-blowingly complex conceptual threads running through this article, and is the name the pub was given when it first opened its doors in 1838.

Maybe one day in 2186, naive undergraduates will stumble upon a refurbished club, previous butchers, tea-shop, private house, restaurant, club and... champagne bar called Kambar. And until then let's comfort ourselves with The First and Last's delicious Sunday roast.





My Cambridge Week

ROWAN EVANS
2ND YEAR, EMMANUEL

LISTINGS

Pull out and pin up on your board

	Friday 20 th	Saturday 21 st	Sunday 22 nd	Monday 23 rd
MUSIC	 Tubelord PORTLAND ARMS 8PM, £6 Post-rock, math-rock - whatever bizarre category you use to describe their sound, this Kingston trio are definitely doing it well. Go and listen to their fascinating mix of jangly pop and full-throttle riffs in a cosy Cambridge pub...	 Sinfonia of Cambridge WEST ROAD CONCERT HALL 7.45PM, £15/£13 Feeling highly strung? Relax as you hear Andrew Watkinson conducting Tchaikovsky's Serenade For Strings, Bruch's Violin Concerto In G Minor and Beethoven's Symphony No 7 In A. with violinist Victoria Sayles.		
FILM	Shame CAMBRIDGE ARTS PICTUREHOUSE Telling the story of a 30-something man who is unable to sort out his sex life, director Steve McQueen (Hunger) examines here the nature of need, the ways we live our lives and the experiences that shape us. Check website for times.	 The Artist CAMBRIDGE ARTS PICTUREHOUSE This Cannes Festival favourite takes us back to 1920s Hollywood, where movie icon George Valentin (Dujardin, LITTLE WHITE LIES) faces a career crisis as the advent of the talkies effectively signals the end of the silent era. Check website for times.	 ArcSoc Film ARCHITECTURE DEPARTMENT ArcSoc film kick-off with a gross-out comedy starring John Benjamin Lee as a cum-thief of the free, and other...	
TALKS	From Genomes to The Diversity of Life LADY MITCHELL HALL 5.30 - 6.30PM Professor Michael Akam will be giving a fascinating lecture discussing genome development in living organisms.	Varsity Drinks THE MAYPOLE 9PM Today Cambridge's conversational scene is as barren as the surface of Pluto. Come and join the Varsity team at The Maypole instead. Theatre editor will buy the first one there a drink, and word on the street is that there will be talking involved.	 The Lost Letter WOLFSON COLLEGE, SEMINAR ROOM 4-7PM The London Ukrainian Theatre Group dedicates itself to reviving neglected classics of Ukraine in the UK. Cambridge's Ukrainian society presents Nikolay Gogol's play with an English synopsis. Admission free of charge.	
VIEW	King Lear ADC THEATRE 7.45PM The much-appraised European Theatre Group brings its international tour-show back to Cambridge. Set in an alternative 21st century Britain, the production aims to shed new light on Shakespeare's most poignant tragedy.	Downing RAG Smoker HOWARD THEATRE, DOWNING COLLEGE 9PM In this one-off comedy event in aid of RAG, Footlights members including Phil Wang, Pierre Novellie and Ahir Shah will be taking the stage alongside other up and coming student acts. Stand up comedy and sketches abound.	 Corpus Soma CORPUS PLAYBOY Footlights Vice-Evening featuring comedians. Hear the now tradition of the audience.	
STAY IN	 READ: It Chooses You MIRANDA JULY Rather than completing her second screenplay, Miranda July went out to interview thirteen strangers selling items listed in the Pennysaver. The experience, recorded in this book, ought to comfort and inspire fellow procrastinators.	 They Draw THEYDRAWING The recipes on sister Nate Padgett's beautifully illustrated world. Get out Adam's Apple for a dinner party to...		
GO OUT	New Year Ceilidh THE GUILDHALL 7.30PM, £12 Swing your partner round and round while the University Ceilidh Band call the steps. The bar, run by the Devonshire Arms, will be selling award-winning beer from Cambridge's own Milton brewery. Ticket price also includes a hot supper.	 Klubnacht @ Fez FEZ, £3 BEFORE 11PM/ £4 THEREAFTER Klubnacht is back for a late-night shakedown. HOUSE AND DISCO RECORDS deftly blended from dusk 'til dawn. Presented by Body Shop, a project shaping Sunday Night Fez into a venue for student-run parties and events.		

MIND MAPS

Cast Gallery, Classics Faculty (Sidgwick Site):
If you can overcome the strange juxtaposition of Aphrodite and the 'modern' architecture - "I actually really like the concrete breeze-blocks" said one supervisor - then the cast sculpture gallery at the Classics Fac is the perfect place to while away half an hour between lectures.

Sam Smiley's:
Sam Smiley's has been satisfying the hungry passerby since my mother was a kid. She remembers going there after school, satchel in one hand, bacon roll

in the other. Now they throw in a free cup of tea before 10.30am: how kind!
Market Square Flower Stall:
Any room looks better with flowers. If you've got a girl you want to impress, a friend who's feeling down, or just have an empty vase hanging around, go to the flower stall on Market Square - it's surprisingly cheap.

Benet's, King's Parade:
SUCH good ice-cream. They make every flavour under the sun - even 'Cambridge Blue' (a glorified vanilla, plus food-dye).

In the summer they're open as late as 10pm, perfect for a sneaky post-dinner (or mid-essay) treat, sitting on King's Parade. And their scoops are enormous.
Cindies:
Wednesday night. Now that Kambar has gone, there's no excuse. Yes, it's a little squished sometimes, and I agree, it smells of VK, but it's got to be done. It's tradition.

Helen Hugh-Jones, St. Catherine's College, 3rd year





MIXED UP
ADAM'S APPLE
MARTINI



From Adam to Snow White, apples have been tempting mankind since the beginning of time.

Godly fear needn't put off those aspiring towards a more virtuous start to the term, however. The forbidden fruit does keep the doctor away, after all.

■ INGREDIENTS
1 part vodka
1 part Sour Apple Schnapps
1 part apple juice
1 slice green apple (to garnish)

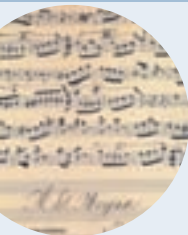
■ YOU WILL NEED
Cocktail shaker
Martini glass

■ METHOD
1. Pour the Vodka, Sour Apple Schnapps and apple juice into a cocktail shaker.

2. Shake well, strain, and pour into a martini glass.

3. To finish, garnish the rim of the martini glass with the slice of green apple.

Monday 23rd Tuesday 24th Wednesday 25th Thursday 26th



AVOID: Jay-Z's 'Glory'

Having a kid fills many with unbridled joy, but most parents can't inflict it on everyone with a wide-release single. Jay-Z can. Jay-Z did. He lovingly provides a near-four-minute display of inept rhyming, devoid of any flow and substance, complete with some bastardized "melodic" production. God knows why.

Thin Lizzy

CORN EXCHANGE 19.00PM £27.50

The boys are back in town! It may have been a good thirty years since their heyday, but heavy metal aficionados will rejoice to hear that the renowned live performers still have it in them. Hopefully they've lost the afros.



Film

DEPT. 7PM

Check off the term with John Landis' comedy Animal House (1978), starring Rush as brain-damaged slob in Baghdad. Screenings are often accompanied by popcorn.



Chris Langham Q&A

CAMBRIDGE ARTS PICTUREHOUSE 6.30PM

After the first Cambridge screening of Black Pond (see right), two-time BAFTA award-winner Chris Langham will be accompanied by directors Will Sharpe and Tom Kingsley in a public question and answer section.

Black Pond

CAMBRIDGE ARTS PICTUREHOUSE 3PM

Your last chance to see this new British comedy in its short Cambridge run (starting from the 24th Jan). Simon Amstell makes his film debut as a sinister psychotherapist. Read more in Varsity's interview with the directors on p.16.



Sir Crispin Tickell

PETERHOUSE POLITICS SOCIETY 8.45PM

A leading diplomat, Sir Crispin Tickell was a recipient of some 23 honorary doctorates between 1990 and 2006. He is a man of strong environmental convictions, talking here about his influential environmental policies.

Visual Storytelling

HEFFERS, 20 TRINITY STREET 6.30PM

What does it take to create a successful picture book for children? Find out the answer at this talk by local authors Martin Salisbury and Morag Styles (Professor of Children's Literature at the University of Cambridge).

Debate: Female Ambition

CAMBRIDGE UNION 7.30PM

This House Believes the Only Limit to Female Success is Female Ambition. Rachel Moxon, Steve Moxon and Liz Jones proposing, Margaret Hodge and Katie Price oppose.

Smoker

ROOMS 9.30PM

President Pierre Novellie hosts this evening of some of Cambridge's finest comedians. Will, of course, be handing out annual Smoker prizes and awards to the winners.

Footlights and Friends

ADC THEATRE 11PM £7/£6

Cambridge Footlights get together with the Leeds Tealights and the Bristol Revunions for one night only. All the usual songs, stand up and sketches you can expect from a Smoker, from people you won't see in Cambridge any other time this year.

Pick Me Up

ADC THEATRE 11PM

Featuring writers and performers from Broody, Now, Now, the Footlights Spring Revue and the ADC/Footlights Pantomime, PICK ME UP promises to change your entire life for about an hour.



Law and Cook

COOK.COM

This blog, made by brother and sister, is a mix of law and food. Hosted by artists from around the world, the posh plates, prepare some cocktails (see above) and have a drink to celebrate the start of term.

Cinevault

CINEVAULT.COM

Just want to curl up and watch a movie? Your wish is our command. This (legal!) website is offering high quality versions of over 1000 classic films, completely free of charge. We recommend Herk Harvey's haunting Carnival of Souls (1962).



POD: Wolfgang Tillmans

FRIEZEARTFAIR.COM/PODCASTS

Tillmans' photography, left, offers a sustained meditation on observation and perception, politics and abstraction. The London-based artist talks about his work in this Podcast from Frieze Art Fair magazine.



Bob Crack at Kings Art Center

WOLFSON HALL, CHURCHILL COLLEGE 7.30PM

Having lived and painted in Cambridgeshire all his life, Bob Crack now puts his portraits on show. His works are full of realism, but have a stark, somewhat menacing undercurrent.

Captain Scott's Notes

SCOTT POLAR RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The story of the Terra Nova expedition, explored through the letters, diaries and photographs of its members, is being told in this once-in-a-lifetime exhibition at the Polar Museum. See p10-11 for more details.



BRIGHT SIDE OF THE ROAD

OLIVER REES

I've never been a massive fan of reading or writing. This is unfortunate, really, given that I'm studying an arts subject. It's just that ever since I was forced to read a book about two gerbils who fell in love and then write my own gerbil related romance for homework, reading and writing for pleasure has not been a big priority. This year, however, everything is going to change. Here I am writing my own column for Varsity, for a start.



Many Cambridge students are taking advantage of the new term's beginning as a similarly clean slate. They're already vowing to do more work, take more trips to the gym and eat more vegetables. But the New Year is the perfect excuse to start making even bigger changes; to begin deciding who you want to be, and what is important in your life.



It's heartbreaking when people let their passions gather dust and die, but the phenomenon is all too rife in Cambridge. Perhaps it's because we have such limited time to pursue what we believe in, but that ought to make us even more determined to take every chance we get. If you believe in something, then please do anything you can to keep doing it. And if you need to make changes in your life, then do so now. This week, Varsity went out and asked you what changes you wanted to make in your life. Are the things that are most important to you getting the highest priorities? If not, then I'm begging you, change, change, change!



Pick of the Week

Klubnacht @ Fez

Presented by Body Shop

Sun 22nd 11pm,

Body Shop is a project shaping Sunday Night Fez into a venue for student-run parties and events. If you want to put on your very own night, contact bodyshopfez@gmail.com
Tweet @bodyshopfez

MUSIC EDITOR

Casiokids

Wed 25th 8:00pm,
The Portland Arms £7

Casiokids, renowned for their theatrical spectacles, bring their eclectic brand of frenetic electronic pop to Cambridge. *Rory Williamson*

THEATRE EDITOR

The Dumb Waiter

Tues 24th - Sat 28th 7:00pm
Corpus Playrooms £6/ £5

Taut dialogue and shifting dynamics; the Corpus Playroom presents Pinter's acclaimed black comedy, The Dumb Waiter. *Helen Cahill*

SENIOR ARTS

La Nativité du Seigneur

Wed 25th 8.45pm
St John's Chapel Free

Messiaen's iconic organ cycle (nine meditations on the birth of Christ) performed in darkness, with readings. *Zoe Large*

Want to see your event listed on these pages? Send the details to listings@varsity.co.uk



Listen

RORY WILLIAMSON

The beginning of the year is often a particularly stagnant time for music; the press is still full of 2011 after having gorged on end-of-year lists and no-one seems to know how to anticipate what the coming year will bring.

That doesn't stop people from trying, of course; the predictably disappointing BBC Sound of 2012 list being the most publicised example of this arbitrary guesswork. Their inclusion of Skrillex at number four, who sounds at best like the excretion of the worst aspects of dubstep from three years ago, highlights not only the Sound of 2012's lack of imagination, but also exposes its guide to contemporary, original sounds as a masquerade.

Lists of this ilk are often counterproductive. Their vision of new sounds acts only as a reminder that popular music is a recycling process.

Artists have always complained about the impossibility of creating anything entirely new. The most important question to ask at this stage is perhaps not how to solve this, but whether it really matters?

A case against this rule is Destroyer's *Kaputt*; though released only last year, its sound is an amalgamation of 80s influences that coalesce into music that criticises its own excess. This album solves this kind of cultural stagnation by analysing it from within.

Recycling does not always hinder creativity; quality is not determined by originality.



Trust me, I'm a music critic...

Are music critics better than the untrained ear of the Average Joe? Or are they irrelevant? **Dominic Kelly** muses on his role as tastemaker, and questions his own credentials

Just like your weird uncle overstaying his welcome on Boxing Day, "Albums of 2011" lists are an inevitable part of the end of the year. It's every critic's annual sabbatical from the boring job of actually forming eloquent arguments, allowing them instead to turn an entire art form into a giant game

of Top Trumps. Last month, The Independent publicly lamented the fact that not one of the albums that appeared in HMV's List of Lists, an agglomeration of all the critics' lists, was one of 2011's best-selling albums.

Where was Michael Bublé, one of British Columbia's most successful non-pot exports? Jessie J? That ginger lad? Who was the true victor in 2011: the critics' darling, PJ Harvey, or the voice of the people, Adele? Who's right: the masses or the critics?

Besides the obvious truth that in 2011 the list of top-selling albums in no way equates to what people are actually listening to, when has quality ever equated with record sales?

What would you expect The Beach Boys' best-selling single to be? The cerebral classic that is 'Good Vibrations'? The star-crossed serenade of 'God Only Knows'? It's neither of these. It's bloody 'Kokomo.' Or to give it its alternate title, 'that song you heard at a school disco that even then made you realise how the band suffered from the lack of Brian Wilson's creative control.'

But who knows, maybe there's an enamoured couple in Selwyn for whom 'Kokomo' is their song. Maybe he was gazing out from under a prosthetic palm tree at Lola Lo's and lo and behold, there was his perfect girl. That song will always remind them of that décor and that night and they have since accepted it as The Greatest Song Ever Which Wasn't Written By Nickelback™. Anyway, why are they wrong and this

Valencian is right?

The answer is: I'm not. Although no doubt tempted, no music critic has ever dissolved a Radiohead album in hydrochloric acid to determine its value

'No music critic has ever dissolved a Radiohead album in hydrochloric acid to determine its value'

empirically. It's an opinion.

Music critics are merely folks who have a way with words and have probably listened to a lot of records. I happen to own all three of the Spice Girls' albums and in low lighting, if you squint, I look a bit like the singer in The Cribbs. Similarly, if you knew someone who indeed 'ate all the pies', they'd probably be a great place to start if you were looking for an excellent steak and kidney.

But even critics can get it wrong. Music oracle Q once awarded Oasis's *Be Here Now*, an album generally agreed to be as enjoyable as being probed by a CrossCountry train, five stars. We make mistakes. See, music critics are exactly like you, only better looking.

Reviews are perspectives; reflections that hopefully the reader can empathise with. They are ultimately self-indulgent: the only person's opinion I understand is my own, and even then it's iffy. They

exist to inform, to entertain, to critique, to be critiqued themselves and are a part of the conversation. The argument of whether mass appeal or critical success is more golden is one that is meant to continue for the ages. There is no right and wrong. Even if your favourite song is 'Kokomo'.



Adele: Voice of the People



PJ Harvey: won the Mercury Prize, but nobody cares



It's a fitting end to a journey that establishes him as one of the most exciting artists working today'

●●● In 2008 Kanye West released *808s & Heartbreak*, the prototype for a new genre of rap: introspective and insecure, down-tempo and dissatisfied. It paved the way for Torontonian Abel Tesfaye, better known as The Weeknd, and his free trilogy of mixtapes which concludes with *Echoes of Silence*.

The album opens with a complete curve-ball: a relatively faithful rendition of 'Dirty Diana' bolstered by blistering drums and crooning vocals. It's Tesfaye's boyband R&B voice that makes the occasionally lecherous lyrics so shocking. During 'XO/The Host' he begs a girl to let him film her when she's at her best, when "you're filled with regret."

On tracks like the excellent 'Next' he muses about hedonism and excess like most rappers, but these are cautionary tales told during the sticky morning-after: a disembodied voice walking us

powerlessly through his mistakes.

Each part of Tesfaye's trilogy has a distinctive hue. If the hook-filled *House of Balloons* felt like a fading sepia Polaroid and the noisy *Thursday* was acidic, obnoxious Technicolor, then *Echoes of Silence* is between these contrasts; it manages to be more mainstream than its predecessor while retaining its bile. This is the sound of one mixing with the other: lipstick staining, mascara bleeding, lines blurring.

The album finally fades to black with its stripped-back title track and highlight. "Don't leave me all behind, don't you leave my little life"; we're just not sure whose life he's referring to anymore.

The Weeknd concludes his ambitious project with a predator praying for forgiveness. Challenging and cathartic, it's a fitting end to a journey that establishes him as one of the most exciting acts working today. *Dominic Kelly*



The band is capable of moving between several unique styles; they just don't commit to anything'

●●● Many of our near-pristine digital libraries are plagued with little imperfections. We've seen them all: songs inexplicably without artists, bizarre misspellings, albums labeled 'Track 1', 'Track 2', etc. My personal favorite: the hugely popular Various Artists.

It's a nice symbol of the angry confusion our computers must feel when we upload some trashy compilation album, complete with the humorous, inconsistent mess of styles they carry with them.

My strongest impression from *Let's Go Eat the Factory* was simple: this "Guided By Voices" thing is a great big hoax. Just a crafty pseudonym for Various Artists to release even more albums. The record makes a lot more sense if you subscribe to this conspiracy.

To elaborate: just over a minute after the lo-fi post-punk opening 'Laundry with Lasers', the nonsensical happy-go-lucky acoustic pop of 'Doughnut for a Snowman' comes across as quite the shock.

These surprises don't stop. The string-adorned drama of 'Hang Mr. Kite': some bizarre Peter Gabriel tribute. 'The Big Hat and Toy Show': a strange blues mockery, complete with a maddening wah pedal guitar solo in the background. 'Waves': essentially a Pixies song.

This chronic attention deficit for genre, combined with their long-standing love of very short tracks, leaves a final product that sounds

more like a collection of interludes than a fully realised album. It's also very annoying.

This haphazard style is by no means an accident. Guided By Voices did, after all, help spearhead the lo-fi indie rock movement of the early-to-mid nineties, with an impressively dense output of records similarly fragmented in influences and style.

You could argue this album is a strong return to form for a group that spent much of the past decade in limbo; I'm not convinced. It comes across as a wasted opportunity.

Their 'broken aesthetic' approach to music strikes me as lazy but, ironically, paves the way for the few successful tracks. Of note in particular are the dense synthesiser-driven "Old Bones" and the sparse, surreal "My Europa".

They serve as frustrating evidence the band is capable of moving between several unique styles; they simply just don't commit to anything. Hell, they actively don't want to.

Instead, we get a ramshackle hodge-podge and are tasked with finding the good bits ourselves. In all honesty, I'm way too bloody lazy for that.

Ultimately it's an uphill battle to engage with this glorified playlist, even with its occasional hints of brilliance.

Recommending this album feels a lot like buying someone a mass-produced compilation. It's easy and essentially vapid. Plus, I'm really not sure I want to keep funding those Various Artists. Surely they must have enough money as it is. *Theo Evan*

Anthem
CHRISTIAN SCOTT (2007)

Through distorted guitars and droning pianos, powerful drumming and Scott's wispy, lonely trumpet struggling for air emerges an album as tragic as it is impressive. For a musician so young, Scott impressively incorporates influences from wide-ranging sources including indie rock, hip-hop and soul into an aesthetic that is both surprisingly consistent and potentially far more widely appealing than more traditional jazz. *Theo Evan*



You Can't Hide Your Love Forever
ORANGE JUICE (1982)

This album can be seen as a blueprint for the majority of fey indie pop around today, but that would be missing the point entirely; the Glasgow band's debut is an exuberant, jangly mess of perfect funk-inflected pop songs to be savoured entirely on their own merits. Ingeniously constructed guitar riffs bounce off of a muscular rhythm section with occasional bursts of joyous brass, creating a lasting monument to the power of pure pop melodies. *Rory Williamson*

From reading History to writing it

Debut novelist and recent graduate James Aitcheson talks to *Varsity* about why Normans weren't so bad

I've written stories since a very young age, and, for as long as I can remember, I've harboured ambitions of becoming a professional writer. But I didn't really think about writing historical fiction before coming to study History at Cambridge, and it was only while putting the finishing touches to my dissertation on King Harold Godwinson that I had the idea for a novel set in post-Conquest England.

From an early stage, I decided I wanted to tell the story of the Conquest from the point of view of one of the Norman invaders, a knight serving in William the Conqueror's army. As far as I could see this was an angle that few authors had taken before, which made it ripe for exploration. In reality the Conquest was a complicated and morally messy affair. It's too easy to paint the Normans with a broad brush and say they were universally a bad lot: some did come to these shores for purely self-serving reasons, and a few were responsible for inflicting great suffering upon the vanquished English, but I also think that many, like my protagonist Tancred, were complex human beings who genuinely believed in the righteousness of their cause.

With a background in studying History, I do feel a certain responsibility not to mislead readers, but to offer as accurate and authentic a representation of the past as possible.

JAMES' TOP 5 HISTORICAL NOVELS

"each in its own way captures the spirit of the age it's set in"

- 1 Dissolution – C J Sansom
- 2 The Last Kingdom – Bernard Cornwell
- 3 Imperium – Robert Harris
- 4 The Ruby in Her Navel – Barry Unsworth
- 5 The Seeing Stone – Kevin Crossley-Holland

As all medieval historians know well, however, in many cases the sources don't give us all the information we would like to know. At other times the 'facts' are disputed or else open to interpretation, and on those occasions I allow myself to take a bit of licence in imagining what might have been. As I

'You can have talent, but to get published you also need persistence'

was reminded when starting out: you're writing a story, not a textbook, and the narrative is what matters above all else. I think historical accuracy is most important in recreating the fine details of eleventh-century life: from the food people ate to the clothes they wore; from

how they built their houses to how they viewed the world around them. These sorts of details are what help to give a setting its credibility, and the same applies to my characters. It's crucial to me that their attitudes towards religion, family and society are as authentic as I can make them, so that they don't come across as twenty-first century people dressed in medieval garb, but as believable products of their own age.

Most aspiring novelists dream of eventually getting their work published, but submitting it to editors' scrutiny can be a daunting process. When you know how much time and effort you've put into a manuscript, it's tough to see it get turned down – not necessarily because the prose isn't good enough but simply because it doesn't fit a particular publisher's list at that time, or because they can't see a market for it. The best piece of advice I could offer to any aspiring writer is simply

to practise, and then to practise some more. Whether it's prose or poetry or scriptwriting, the more you produce the better it'll get. You can have talent, but to get published you also need persistence.

I've almost finished writing the sequel to *Sworn Sword*, which is set one year later and will see my protagonist Tancred in action on the Welsh Marches, before facing a Danish invasion. I can confirm there will be at least one further volume in the series, and possibly more to come beyond that. Novel-writing is about as far from a nine-to-five job as it's possible to get, and I can't say that I have much of a routine in terms of my daily working hours. Still, it's important to be disciplined. Every day I try to write at least one thousand words, and I'll just keep going until I reach that target. Sometimes that will take only a few hours, while other days I'll still be writing late into the evening. I have so many ideas; the difficulty is finding enough time in which to write them all.



● *Sworn Sword*, Preface Publishing, £12.99, jamesaitcheson.com



Read

CHARLOTTE KEITH



Book reviews: the scourge of our years at primary school. 'I liked this book because...'; 'I did not like this book because...'. Book reviews in the mainstream press tend to continue reviewing in this vein, replacing those stock phrases with some of their own: 'tour de force', 'gritty', 'unputdownable'. Book reviewing today is all too often bland, noncommittal waffle; another example of 'the new beige'. But book critics now have their own prize, the 'Hatchet Job of the Year Award' organized by digested-review website *The Omnivore*. The reward? A year's supply of potted shrimp. The criteria for success? Integrity, wit, and 'artful demolition'. *The Omnivore* noted that many of the reviews they sifted through were "plot summaries with just a couple of sentences of clichéd opinion tucked in at the end": alarmingly similar to the schoolchild's fail-safe book review tactic, perhaps? If professional criticism – as distinct from the (often remarkably astute) *Amazon.com* review post – is to remain relevant, reviewers need to be a lot braver. I hope you enjoy reading what our critics have to say each week. We'll aim to be honest, insightful, and scathing where necessary – I can't promise shrimp, though.



"An exercise in watching and waiting, a subtle assault on the kinetic"

●●● Esther Morgan's third collection, shortlisted for the T.S Eliot prize for poetry, will not suit all palates. Centred on what the poet calls, "our desire for revelation and the difficulties of learning to watch and wait" the collection itself becomes an exercise in watching and waiting, a subtle assault on the kinetic.

Through portraits of people poised "on the edge of a moment", but never actually in it, Morgan asks how we cope with this potentiality, "waiting without hunger in the near dark/for what you may be about to receive". Some can't cope with it at all: one critic compares reading *Grace* to "watching a dull art film in which the promise of a jolting denouement never comes".

Yet this very inaction is what gives the poems their force. They compel because they confront people, places and times that seem to amount to nothing, daring us to see meaning in the meaningless, to find grace in the least expected places.

The title poem evokes with elegant simplicity the opportunities to be found in empty moments, "In the stillness, everything becomes itself".

'The Dew Artist' movingly confronts uninhabited time, the gulf between thought and action; "Perhaps it's enough that someone thought of it: /of rising in the gap between night workers coming home/and the first dawn commuters".

And 'This Morning' explores the significance, or insignificance – it's up to us – of the simple sight of "the sun moving round the kitchen" using perhaps the most beautiful analogy in the

collection: "the light moved on,/letting go each chair and coffee cup without regret//the way my grandmother, in her final year received me:/neither surprised by my presence, nor distressed by my leaving,/content, though, while I was there".

As with the experience of watching a good art film, we feel constantly on the cusp of something, exhilarated without fully understanding why. Admittedly, some poems achieve this effect better than others.

Tellingly, it is in her attempts to come closer to depicting solid action, for instance in 'Five Easy Pieces' or the strangely ineffective 'News', that Morgan falls flat. Thankfully, though, such misfires are few and far between dwarfed by the achievement of others such as 'Harvest', 'Garbo Among Us', and the poignantly sad 'I want to go back to the Angel'.

There is a strong religiosity to the poems, expressed both overtly – "angels and infants/robes and raiment/a haloed revelation" – and allusively in the recurring imagery of bread and light.

Yet Morgan takes great pains to avoid slipping into portentousness with a deliberate lack of detail and unadorned language. Holy but not ominous, simple but not plain, unspecific but not vague; we may occasionally feel that her efforts to find the balance are rather forced, but in the end the poet pulls it off.

This is in general a highly successful collection, which challenges us to revel in what makes us most uncomfortable, drawing the reader in with insight and, yes, with grace.

Emma Greensmith
● *Bloodaxe Books, £8.95, paperback*

"A poetry reading has to justify itself as preferable to private reading: it is a dramatic form"

●●● A good poetry reading depends on atmosphere, setting, and refreshments. And all of these boxes were satisfactorily ticked by the first *Foule Readings* of term. It started half an hour later than advertised and the free wine had run out by the time we reached the half-time interval, but these were small glitches in an otherwise well-organised evening. And there was free wine in the first place! So I can't moan.

The Nihon Room, in Pembroke – despite a carpet patterned like a yellow cow – was perfect for this sort of gathering: intimate, and, importantly, packed. Andrea Brady, John DeWitt and Lisa Jeschke were a mixed bag. Don't get me wrong: they are all incredible poets, but a poetry reading has to justify itself as

preferable to private reading. It is a dramatic form.

Andrea Brady's speaking about her children and insomnia added an extra dimension to her poems. She was clear and expressive, but John DeWitt was not as able to keep his audience from fidgeting. Opening with the grand statement that he wasn't reading from his first collection, *Ends*, because he didn't know how, I expected him to at least be able to read the poems he supposedly could. Yet he was monotonous and hesitant. Fortunately, however, Lisa Jeschke counteracted anything bad. In a 24 part poem, Jeschke sang, spoke, read and, equally, knew the value of silence. It was a performance poem, performed by a performance writer in a setting which demands performance. She was perfect. Joe Harper

● *The next Foule Reading: March 16th*

The Foule Readings

Saturday
January 14th,
7.30pm
★★★★★

POET'S CORNER

In the Shower

This is getting to be quite a problem, I should, call for help or try to move but I can't. So I am just sitting in the shower and at least it is still warm.

Do not think this was sudden illness (cardiac or otherwise), I was just

taken by surprise by a hand pressing in on the shower curtain from the outside which I matched— a flawless match—with mine. It was you, though I couldn't quite make-out your face— But when I went to whip back the curtain to greet you with this naked, wet-armed embrace— you— were not there.

James Coghill


Watch
INDIA ROSS

Art is the new black, Mr Cameron; in 2011, art was decidedly 'in'. Sight and Sound's Review of the Year is littered with the opulent and the philosophically bold, from Malick's masterpiece, *The Tree of Life*, to the staggering – and staggeringly controversial – *Melancholia*. The remarkable Steve McQueen, clutching a Turner Prize in one hand and a Caméra d'Or in the other, is a lone figure in a sea of mannequin stars and lame novel adaptations in British film, alas selling the much-lauded *Shame* to Fox Searchlight for a meagre \$400,000, which will earn it only limited distribution. Thus, a ripple of annoyance spreads among the increasingly avante-garde Netflix demographic, no longer satiated by bullets and bromance, as David Cameron proclaims that government funding will be channelled towards "mainstream and commercially promising" films. The paradox lies in distribution. British cinema cannot continue to sell its soul to gross-out comedies and easy billboard-fillers, but an indie confined to a few picturehouses will only sell a few tickets. It is the role of the artist, not the financier, to characterise and influence the zeitgeist. Only when government and industry giants put their faith in new British talent will we find ourselves on the world stage again.



The graduates: hidden depths

Tom Kingsley and Will Sharpe talk success, *Footlights* and *Black Pond* to India Ross

Your finals were five years ago, and, birthed from the Cambridge crucible with nothing but reckless ambition, the clothes on your back and Daddy's card, nowadays you're probably slumming it as a countercultural poet or killing yourself in the City. Actually, yeah, you're probably a banker – bad luck.

Interviewing the indie filmmakers, Tom Kingsley and Will Sharpe, (preceded by their 'shit-hot', 'next-big-

thing' blogosphere reputations) who did indeed evacuate Cambridge just five years ago, I'm irked by the feeling that I really should get the hell on with my life.

From *Footlights* smokers to a British Independent Film Award nomination, this has been some graduation, but on the subject of success, they remain reticent: "We're still using the office stationery account to make DVDs". Sharpe and Kingsley are in the midst of a self-made promotional campaign for their debut feature, *Black Pond*, a development of an ADC Lateshow written when they were freshers, which has garnered significant critical acclaim.

Inspired by an obscure blog story of "a man who secretly crept into people's gardens", the film is an unsettling account of loneliness and mortality, in which comic dexterity rubs alongside the genuinely chilling.

The much-admired Chris Langham makes a storming but controversial return to form after a lengthy and ignominious absence from the industry, as a laconic fifty-something with deadpan delivery of which Leslie Nielsen would be proud. Simon Amstell (another Cambridge grad) also ventures into films for the first time, and is – to quote the Telegraph – "solid gold" as a disturbed therapist, turning his Buzzcocks wit to a piece of sinister absurdism which could have been plucked straight out of *A Clockwork Orange*.

With a background in music video direction for the likes of Fatboy Slim



Tom Kingsley and Will Sharpe's debut feature has received widespread critical acclaim

and Darwin Deez, one would expect Sharpe and Kingsley's cinematography to be fairly slick, and with cutaway interviews and animated montages, *Black Pond* feels fresh; more art school than film school. "I don't know if it's changed now, but few people were making films at Cambridge – the most exciting stuff was happening with theatre and comedy," recalls Kingsley. No, things haven't changed much. Film is still a token creative artform among Cambridge students; in terms of production, it is almost untouched terrain outside of the Campus Moviefest.

Whether budgeting concerns, or a touch of theatrical snobbery, are to blame, opportunities are evidently being missed.

As independent cinema emerges from the shadows, Sharpe and Kingsley are right on the pulse, negotiating the pre-production of a follow-up project they sheepishly describe as "quite ambitious". "Basically, it might look very glamorous to have nice reviews of your film, but the pay-off's a way away," they say. Still, could be worse.

● *Black Pond* is showing at The Arts Picturehouse from January 24

"A tragic portrait of a life plagued by sexual obsession"

●●● Unlike addiction to drugs, alcohol and gambling, sex addiction has long sat beside 'manflu' as one of those laughable ailments we rarely recognise as a serious medical condition. *Shame* dispels such attitudes; the film, a tragic portrait of a life plagued by sexual obsession.

Rare moments of comic release and scatterings of warm golden hues – around his sister as she sings at a show, and in the film's final orgiastic montage – provide respite from the blues, whilst serving further to reinforce the captivating melancholy that pervades the film.

Long close-ups of Fassbender's solemn face against a desolate patchwork of blues, whites and greys intensify the despondent tone of McQueen's minimalist yet stunning mise-en-scene.

Shame is driven less by narrative than by the exposition of a man's incapacity for personal relationships beyond sex. Fassbender's inability to connect with the women in his life – anonymous sexual partners, the fellow employee he dates, his equally troubled sister – finds an ingenious echo in our own inability to connect with our protagonist.

Upon leaving the cinema, it is hard to fully understand our own detachment. We are aware of the striking absence of details about his past, his parents and his job, yet our disconnection lies more in the very cause of his pain, the wall between him and anyone who seeks to understand him.

McQueen further throws us into the shoes of the protagonist with his artistic usage of the medium, often verging on the voyeuristic. We are treated to frequent close-ups of eyes, lips and thighs as though seen through Fassbender's predatory gaze.

As integral to the film as its use of colour is its richly symbolic soundtrack. A series of jazz standards express the pain and complexity of love and loneliness, while slow-moving, ordered renditions of Bach heighten the pathos of many emotive scenes.

Sombre and often chilling, *Shame* still delights the viewer with its sensational camerawork, tense and erotic sex scenes and gripping, unique insight into the reality of sex addiction. Not one to be missed.

Tom Belger

● *Shame* is currently showing at Cineworld Cambridge and the Arts Picturehouse

GOING GLOBAL JAPAN

FILM: *Grave of Fireflies*
DIRECTOR: Isao Takahata
YEAR: 1988

Studio Ghibli, the company behind such beloved classics as *Princess Mononoke* and *Spirited Away*, is one of the foremost animation studios in the world. Yet this little gem is sadly one of the lesser-known of the collection, which now reaches almost 20 films.

Essentially a war film, *Grave of Fireflies* is one of the more solemn of the collection, but also the most moving. The story is set in Japan at the end of World War II, and presents a shockingly realistic image of a war-torn nation. The

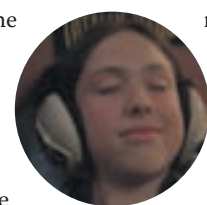
film centres around recently orphaned Seita, a 14-year-old boy, and his little sister Setsuko, whom he must protect from the ravages of war. For me, this is one of the most affecting war films ever made, in spite of (or perhaps because of) the limitations of animation. A harrowing film, and not one I would recommend if you're looking for a distraction in the midst of an essay crisis. For a more upbeat Ghibli film try *Kiki's Delivery Service* or *Howl's Moving Castle*.
Alice Bolland

Cine-file

NEW BEGINNINGS

So New Year has come and gone and we're all back for Lent 2012, which seems a good time to remind myself what I'm doing here, and what I don't want to regret when I throw on my gown at the end of my time here. This leads me to my love of American 'College' movies, a reminder of all the 'wild things' university can be. My number one has to be John Landis' 1978 *National Lampoon's Animal House* (pictured).

This comedy launched the 'gross-out genre' and plays off the squeaky clean members of the Omega frat house, who are so tightly wound they can't get it up, against the naughty Delta boys who are too busy throwing toga parties (which became a phenomena after the film's



release) to notice the Dean trying to evict them from the University. Secondly, though not so much a 'college film' as a 'high-school' one is *Dazed and Confused*. Everyone's heard of the magazine. This is the '93 film by Richard Linklater with a great soundtrack to brilliant early performances from Ben Affleck, Mila Jovovich and Matthew McConaughey.

It's these sorts of films that remind me you don't want to regret spending your whole university life behind a desk. Here's to hoping 2012 is more 'frat' than 'pap'!
Tom Hart

ARCSOC WILL BE SHOWING *ANIMAL HOUSE* FOR FREE ON JANUARY 23 AT 7PM IN THE ARCHITECTURE DEPARTMENT

Other 'college/high-school' films that might make you laugh: *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* (Amy Heckerling, 1982), *The Breakfast Club* (John Hughes, 1985), *The Graduate* (Mike Nichols, 1967), *Heathers* (Michael Lehmann, 1988), *The Unbelievable Truth* (Hal Hartley, 1989).



Shame

Steve McQueen
★★★★★



The hyphen between two names

Agnes Poitevin-Navarre tells **Aliya Ram** about cultural identity and being a late bloomer

Despite France's seeming political progression to an anti-colonial nationalism that is blind to ugly questions about race and ethnicity, there survives beneath the surface an unsolved tangle of ethno-racial confusion.

For Agnes Poitevin-Navarre, this confusion has been an inspiration, artistically stimulating in as many ways as it is problematic. From it has been born her plethora of culturally concerned photograms, maps and multimedia installations.

Her most recent work was created for Cambridge residents and consisted of pieces such as the *Proustian Map of Cambridge* for which locals answered select questions from Proust's model questionnaire. It seems appropriate now, a few months after her exhibition at the Kings' art room, to ask the artist about her work and where it might take her next.

Since cultural identity plays such a large part in your work, it feels appropriate to start by asking you how you identify yourself culturally.

As you can deduce from my name, I am French, but have lived in England for 22 years. I am the hyphen between the two names. 'Poitevin' means people who live in the Poitou region, and 'Navarre' was a kingdom between France and Spain.

My late father was black and came from Guyane Française, a French colony in South America, famous for the Ariane rockets programme, the European version of NASA. He migrated to France in the early sixties.

My mother is French French (she is white). When people ask where I am



Navigating the map room in King's College Art Centre

from, they are never satisfied when I say I am French. The 'from' question is always loaded, it is not about nationality, it is about ethnicity or about class.

What part has this cultural background played in your work?

In France, we have an expression "Français de souche", which means an indigenous white Frenchman. The expression is used to differentiate the gaulois [think Asterix & Obelix!] from successive waves of immigrants. The phrase has a political subtext that betrays a lot of colonial baggage.

So how did you get to where you are now in England?

I am a late bloomer. Indeed, I get comfort knowing that Louise Bourgeois was a "peripheral figure in art whose work was more admired than acclaimed", and found success very late in her art career. She was experimental and had integrity.

Getting a First Class (Hons.) Degree in Fine Art at Canterbury, equipped with my French-English dictionary, and then going to the Slade for my MA has undeniably opened doors. If you are good, aim for the best school!

By the end of my MA, my work was mildly admired but not acclaimed and the myths about curators and collectors picking artists didn't apply to me. They have agendas for which sometimes you fit and sometimes you don't. So nurture your belief and carry on making good work.

How has your work changed with time?

My earlier work was totally autobiographical and then with time it became a platform through which to engage with my fellows humans. Hence the maps and the *Fellow Artists, Fellow Muses* piece. My work used to be really opaque. It took having my kids to kick-



start my making art again, this time with clarity and enjoyment.

Where do you think you're going next?

America is calling me! Still, my next commission is another version of the Proustian map for the London Transport Museum, to be shown in May 2012. I am also exploring the idea of representing a codified body language in a photographic and wood-cut series, although it's early days yet.

But that's the future... the Cambridge show has been great on many levels. I should thank the curator Natalie McIntyre for the opportunity to exhibit there, and also all the Proustians for making the exhibit very special indeed.

● *'Fellow Artists Fellow Muses' ran at the Art Centre of King's College, Cambridge, from 11th November to 26th November*

Look
HOLLY GUPTA



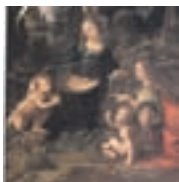
If you were really that interested in art, you probably wouldn't be reading this. This isn't meant as a criticism. The fact is that people who are passionate about art are not that likely to go to the University of Cambridge because, to put it simply, it isn't an art college.

I'm not saying that everyone who likes art studies art at degree level. Many of them study History of Art, MML or, dare I say it, Natural Sciences. Equally, it is possible to quite like art, in the same way that I quite like tennis: I'll watch the Wimbledon final; you just won't see me in the park with a tennis racket. There's no absolute rule, but it's fair to say there's a general one.

If you go with my hypothesis, it appears that the probability of there being very many true art lovers in Cambridge is fairly low. But then why do people seem surprised when they find it hard to find a great deal of visual art here?

I am going to venture the opinion that there are actually a surprising amount of life drawing classes, exhibitions, publications of student art etc. all things considered. Our galleries continue to put on exhibitions as good as any. The Mays showcases excellent student artwork year after year and individuals run their own projects. And for the first time in many years Varsity has its own page solely on the subject.

That has to count for something. It is more interesting to look for beginnings than dead ends.



Leonardo da Vinci:
Painter at the Court
of Milan

National Gallery
until 5 February

★★★★★

for 17 years – a period regarded as possibly the making of him.

"This lack in quantity is eclipsed by the magnificence of his work and it quickly becomes obvious why today, 500 years since his death, we still flock to it."

●●● Artists are often confined to the periphery of society, or made outsiders altogether. Few are said to have god given qualities by their contemporaries. Not Leonardo da Vinci though. In his lifetime his talents were worshipped. None less so than by Ludovico Sforza, the ruler of Milan, who employed da Vinci as the court painter

The exhibition focuses on this definitive period, gathering together more of his paintings than has ever been displayed. But despite being styled as a 'blockbuster', it remains modest. Not least because da Vinci was not particularly prolific: he left fewer than 20 paintings, many of which remain uncompleted. This lack in quantity is eclipsed by the magnificence of his work and it quickly becomes obvious why today, 500 years since his death, we still flock to it.

His work possesses a quality that is difficult to summarise: faces that are famously hard to read, emotions that are indecipherable and mystical symbolism.

One such mystery lies in the arms of a portrait of Cecilia Gallerani, Sforza's mistress. Resting calmly is a white ermine, muscular and majestic its meaning remains contested. Out of the handful of his paintings on display *The Musician* was especially captivating. With such a serene and delicate face, the portrait is beautiful yet haunting.

Drawings accompany the finished paintings, allowing us to enter the meticulous process behind each piece. While painting *The Last Supper*, a feat which lasted three years, da Vinci frequently observed Milanese citizens to perfect the facial expressions of the disciples.

The work of some of his pupils, most notably Giovanni Boltraffio, is also displayed in the exhibition. There to represent the talents to emerge from da Vinci's studio, but also to 'bulk out' da Vinci's paintings which are few and far between.

This truly is a once-in-a-lifetime exhibition; it is unlikely that these paintings will ever be exhibited together again. Unfortunately, advance tickets have now sold out, though a limited number are made available each morning. *Hector Manthorpe*



"...started my art year with a pleasant surprise."

●●● The pictures of Keira Knightly and Peter Crouch advertising the exhibition were not a cause for excitement. I could only foster the expectation for a room full of celebrity portraits attempting to be intimate, yet only showing the faces I see every day plastered on magazine covers. Thankfully I was surprised. The exhibition perfectly arranged the

The Taylor Wessing
Photographic Portrait
Prize

National Portrait
Gallery
until 12 February

★★★★★

best of the 6,033 entries in an expression of true photographic finesse. Faces like Julian Assange, photographed by Kate Peters, although beautifully shot, demanded less attention than the subjects less used to the camera flash. The piece "Bibi Aisha" by

Jodi Bieber showed a young woman, brutally mutilated by members of the Taliban in punishment for fleeing from her violent husband, sat allowing her scars to tell her story.

The positioning of the pieces created moving contrasts, between a group mourning the fatal attack on fifteen-year-old Antonio Olmos in April 2010, photographed by Negus McClean, and a small crowd of students all waiting for a cheap haircut in David Stewart's *The Shepherdess*.

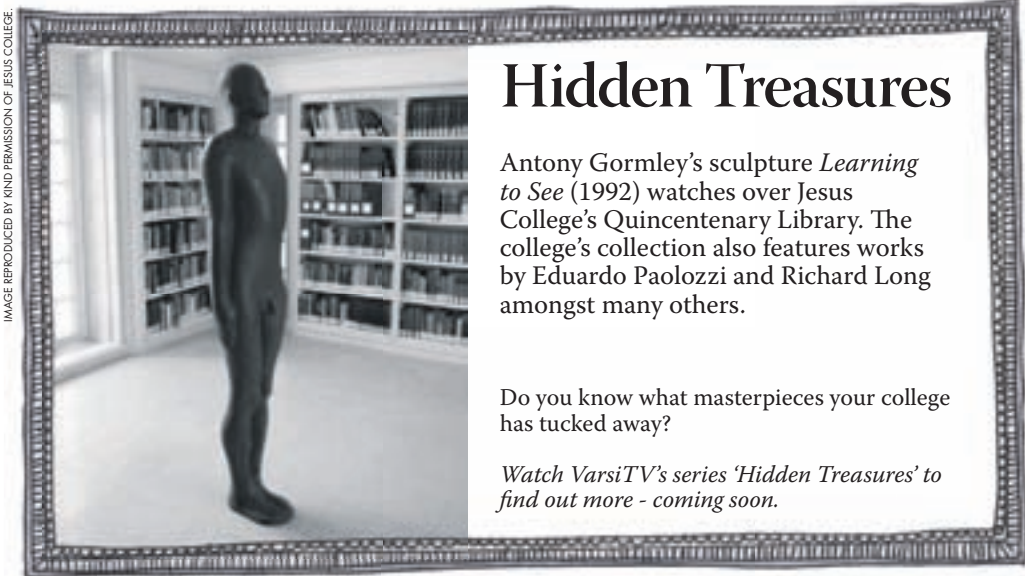
The Taylor Wessing exhibition started my art year with a pleasant surprise, and a vow to appreciate photography and portraiture, and maybe even Keira Knightly, a little more. *Sam Hunt*

Hidden Treasures

Antony Gormley's sculpture *Learning to See* (1992) watches over Jesus College's Quincentenary Library. The college's collection also features works by Eduardo Paolozzi and Richard Long amongst many others.

Do you know what masterpieces your college has tucked away?

Watch VarsiTV's series 'Hidden Treasures' to find out more - coming soon.



Playground

HELEN CAHILL

If you ever feel you want to congratulate me on the excellence of this double-page spread, please email theatre@varsity.co.uk with your comments. I know how important this section is and I've often wanted to praise its editor in a gushing email myself.

Theatre touches us all, and I hope to do justice to all the directors, producers and performers for their dedication and commitment to perfecting the Art. Hopefully you won't see many references to the technical people; they don't really matter and I'll avoid highlighting their 'work' in any way. Don't worry about them dear Thespians; *Varsity's* spotlight is reserved exclusively for you.

Most of the joy of the Cambridge theatre scene comes from the fact that we all know at least some of the people involved will be famous one day. Frankly, I'm sure I'm one of them. You won't be hearing about Jamie The Set Builder in the future though, will you? If they only have vision in the literal sense (which is hardly unique), I feel I'm justified in claiming they're disposable. I could build a set – it can't involve more skill than the construction of my Ikea bed. I gather they actively seek to place petty prohibitions on our theatrical ambitions wherever they can, using the council's restrictions as a scape-goat. Surely such invasive actions are pathetic attempts to convince us they call the shots? Such shameless self-importance has no place at the ADC.

I do not anticipate receiving complaints, but feel free to email editor@varsity.co.uk if you have any. They will forward me those emails, but I should inform you in advance that I won't be replying.

They may well fire me as a result, but as your perusal of these pages will make transparent, it'll be their loss.



Feeling low? Sometimes all you need is a

The cast of the next week's ADC lateshow talk to **Richard Stockwell** about redemption, pressure and priesthood

This is my first visit backstage at the ADC, but I am more interested than nervous to meet a high calibre cast without the fourth wall between us.

The common room is an absolute tip but full of character, and while some cast members mill around and others wander in, it is clear that George Potts, the stand-out actor in all his shows last term, particularly as Captain Hook in the Footlights Panto, is on another level.

'I wonder how they find time to balance theatre with their degrees, 'We don't' is the universal response'

He has his producer in fits with an anecdote about his false economy of buying a self-assemble bike from Toys 'R' Us. Jason Forbes arrives last and is the only one not to take his lead from George throughout the interview.

With the addition of Ryan O'Sullivan, the others were all involved in *Now Now*, which sold out the Corpus Playrooms as the hottest comedy ticket of Michaelmas 2010. Being back together is "kind of a treat really" for George but inevitable according to director Ahir Shah: "We've never really left each other's company".

I ask whether to expect more of the same and get a strong shake of the head from Jason: "We've all developed our own styles now." *Pick Me Up* is "more whole", says Ahir. While I am promised a sketch show above all, some links have developed naturally through

writing and drafting; but these "happened by accident", so will hopefully be funny rather than stilted.

Will the venue also make a difference? Ahir denies that Corpus and the ADC require different writing styles, but the two offer contrasting experiences: there is an intimacy to the Playrooms, says Lowell Belfield, but safety at the ADC in the invisible blob of an audience.

Now Now was funny. *Odd's*, the Footlights Spring Revue, was not, and George is the only cast member not to have sullied himself with it. Jason sees *Pick Me Up* as a chance for "redemption": the writing team tried to fit the previous project around many others, resulting in a script hastily thrown together and only redrafted during rehearsals. "We've spent so long writing this," Jason assures me, "it's going to be much better".

Despite their varied portfolio, comedy appeals most to the cast. Still, the pressure of comic acting is greater they claim, as the audience "knows you want to make them laugh". Even in the run-up to *Now Now*, they admit to a sense of despondency when final rehearsals no longer felt funny. I ask whether performing in week one, so early in the term, adds to the challenge, but Ryan claims that it is actually "quite exciting". They hope to start on a high without extended pressure looming over them: "We'll get it out of the way – then we'll be able to sleep again," explains Ahir.

I wonder how they find time to balance theatre with their degrees. "We don't," is the universal response, and George concedes that he may therefore have to be an actor: "I've got no choice really, that or the priesthood".

Pick Me Up is the Week 1 ADC lateshow, 11pm, Wednesday 25th – Saturday 28th January.



2 The *Pick Me Up* cast (and some guy with a pair of plyers...): 1. Jason and Lowell's teddy bears meant the world to them. Heaven forbid anything should happen to them... 2. "How about we throw a Teddy Bear's tea party?" George Suggested. 3. Shit! No! Who let this maniac into the ADC?

The Varsity Star Guide ★★★★★ Aaaaahhhh! ★★★★★ Christ, No! ★★★★★ Unbearable ★★★★★ Appalling ★★★★★ Bad



"While there were admirable moments, by the end I found myself wondering whether a little more attention, a more concentrated gaze into the abyss that is at the heart of the play, might not have produced a more rewarding result"

King Lear

ADC Mainshow
★★★★★

●●● "Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave my heart into my mouth" snaps Cordelia at us as she rips up her abandoned speech. Then Arcade Fire's 'My body is a Cage' begins to blare while she and two men in suits and masks launch into a slow, balletic dance. It's an odd prologue to Shakespeare's original opening; at this point, King Lear looks for all the world like a vaguely maudlin musical about a love triangle. Yes, lyrics like "it's a hollow play / But they'll clap anyway" do fit with Cordelia's farcical predicament in the next scene and with other moments in the play when reticence and staginess are set in opposition, and this boded intriguingly.

But the frustrating thing about this production is the frequency with which such promising ideas or moments fail to carry through or reconcile with the language: instead they just hang around the edges of the play like glorified window-dressing. Such is the fate of the strobe lights and sound effects that indicate the flashing of paparazzi

cameras before a few scenes in the first half. This surveillance could have been an inventive, unobtrusive reminder of political scrutiny, a side of the play that often gets forgotten; but, because nothing is really made of it, it is just bewildering.

In his programme notes, director Charlie Parham writes compellingly about the preoccupation the play has with testing the limits of language and with discovering whether words can ever hold or articulate anything of value. But many of the actors' quick, often seemingly careless garbling of densely pictorial passages – particularly those set on the heath – made it difficult to appreciate this. Indeed it sometimes feels as if the actors aren't as clued up on the nuances of what they are saying as they ought to be in order to communicate them to an audience.

On a more practical level, the projection was often not strong enough for audience members towards the back, and the excessive speed of delivery only exacerbated this. It was the notable exceptions to this however, that made



Oi, you in the front row – you're bard!

the show worth seeing.

As for Theo Hughes-Morgan, who played Lear, simply taking on such a role at this age, or at any age really, is an extraordinary feat. I'm pretty jealous that he gets to say for the rest of his life that he played King Lear in his twenties, and I hope he'll play him again one day in 50 or 60 years time.

Ultimately though, I felt that the trajectory of Lear's experience in the play as a whole needed more discernible movement. His depiction of the physicality of old age was convincing though, and I felt that his performance improved immensely in the second act.

Edmund's (Tom Russell) performance was my favourite of the night; the contrast between his character in public and in the soliloquy wherein he swears "I should have been that I am, / had the maidenliest star in the firmament / twinkled on my bastardizing" was genuinely disturbing, more like Ezra Miller's Kevin Katchadourian than the pantomime villain rut Edmund is usually stuck in.

little *Pick Me Up*



4. "It was terrible; who knew a pair of plyers could be used so creatively ... and wreak such devastation. Life will never be the same again without *Old Bear* by my side." Both degraded shortly afterwards.



Liam Williams' Stand Up Show

★★★★★

●●● Despite having graduated from Cambridge three years ago, Liam Williams still has a lot of friends, as his sold out gig at the ADC proved. Dubbed "one to watch" by *Varsity* exactly a year ago, anticipation had clearly been building for the ex-Footlights comic's return. Same show, same date – new sidekick.

Henry Staples, a specky wisp of hilarity, provided a sharp warm-up for Williams, somehow managing to garner affection from the audience without looking up from his feet. Despite a couple of lukewarm jokes about Ghanaians and bus drivers, the audience clicked with Staples' fumbling, coltish demeanour, and a soft-spokenness that only thinly veiled some searing comedy.

Liam Williams is Staples, but 30 years more cynical and a smidgen more psychotic. A "weird, pallid, anaemic Wolverine lookalike" (his words), Williams is dishevelled bordering on hermit, with hair so greasy it holds itself upright with Jedward-esque ferocity. He spoke with such candour about his depression he made Staples look like the Milky Bar Kid. Whereas Staples' comedy was offbeat, though still oozing dewy eyed charm, Williams' was caustic and biting (his cool

annihilation of The Tab Theatre Guide Dog was a definite highlight). After the initial sting, however, his grumpiness became avuncular: when the audience didn't provide the response he'd expected, he'd retort cantankerously, 'Fine'.

There was a compelling tragicomedy to Williams's set, with gags about his grandparents' imminent death sat next to the odd bit of ghetto speak. It came as no surprise that, as an English graduate, Williams couldn't resist incorporating a few lines of poetry into his set, though funnily, these fragments of verse didn't just parade his ponciness, but offered a refreshing and welcome change of tone, and proved that Williams possessed substance as well as style.

Maybe I'm falling prey to a sense of humour failure, but the fact that Williams managed to pull off such experimental voltes-face was, I felt, a tribute to his comic talent. Most impressively, Williams carried the audience with him wherever he went, be it to Charybdis or Clapham.

The gig was a ramshackle but quietly confident, left-field but slick. And as it came to a triumphant finish with the brilliantly meta- 'May Ball Show Reel', I didn't doubt we'd be seeing a lot more of Liam Williams come summer.

Rivkah Brown



A self-identifying "weird, pallid, anaemic Wolverine lookalike"

The decision that Charlotte Hamblin should do a double turn as both Cordelia and the Fool was fascinating to watch; at first I was a little disappointed at a fairly straight up and down ingenue reading of Cordelia (her in innocent pastels, the other sisters in dastardly red and black, of course) but the Fool as a foil worked, perhaps due to the fact that the pair are not meant to be synonymous. Or perhaps it's like Mr. Darling playing Captain Hook.

Once more, the European Theatre Group has done what it does every year: bundled lots of Cambridge acting talent into one troupe, and sold out every seat. While there were admirable moments, by the end I found myself wondering whether a little more attention, a more concentrated gaze into the abyss at the heart of the play, might not have produced a more rewarding result.

If, somehow, the various striking elements this staging threw out at us, one after the other, had been drawn together into some kind of examination of the production's one truly unusual aspect and the elephant in the room – the youthful nature of the cast and the way in which this highlighted or threw into relief the theme of ageing – the result might have been a more satisfying whole.

Lucinda Higgie



Royal rumble



'Now you Lear-sten to me, young lady'



The dance troop(s) bust their moves

What's the most interesting space you've worked in?

The Tristan Bates Theatre, London. Fiendish re-blocking required.

Do you prefer touring?

My mind says yes, but my back, legs, arms say no.

What do you look for in reviews?

Cambridge must remember that reviewers are learning how to write, as I am learning how to direct. Subjectivity is key.



Chalie Parham
The Director

Critique

FRED MAYNARD

I have been involved in twelve productions at Cambridge thus far, according to Camdram (actually inaccurate, but I prefer having a computer system record my life to my own memory; it feels more official and thus real. It's about that number, anyway). No one would call me the greatest actor in the world, nor the best at remembering lines, or picking the right entrances, or indeed not falling over when carrying other actors onstage. This has not stopped me, however, from having a lot to say about the plays I see, or am in, or didn't see but would like people to think I did.

Part of the joy of the Cambridge theatre scene is the amount to say about it – there are so many productions going on at one time that there is endless fodder for conversation; whether about last week's production and its interesting use of Craigian aesthetics, or next week's show being the shameless result of nepotistic casting. Hopefully this column can be an extension of those conversations, without the bitchy gossip parts. I want to celebrate Cambridge theatre and discuss how it could do better, and talk about issues of the stage that we might not normally consider.

There is no one more hated than the critic. We can do massive emotional hurt to people who have strived for months on something, all in 30 minutes at 1 am following a relaxing pint in the ADC bar, and without putting as much effort into the review as into a weekly essay. Which is not to say I'm against negative reviews. I am, however against negative reviews that do not take a production seriously. 'Constructive criticism' is not some insipid creation of the primary school teacher – it should be the lifeblood of all amateur criticism. My New Year's resolution? To find something at least interesting, if not necessarily nice, to say about everything I see.

Now, what lies ahead for you lucky audiences this term? I've had a look at Camdram, and, with all my theatrical wisdom, have thought of a few predictions.

FRED PREDICTS THE FUTURE

- Everyone coming out of The Seventh Seal is heard to remark: "I'll never be able to watch Monty Python and the Holy Grail with a straight face again"
- The setting of The Tempest in isolated Newnham Old Labs garners lost-island related wisecrack from the Tab
- James Swanton develops a back problem
- The Improvised Musical grinds to a crashing and ignominious halt when no one can think of a rhyme for "plankton"
- Bereavement the Musical, meanwhile, unexpectedly turns out to actually be a serious in-depth character study of a bereaved widow
- Max Upton is crowned King of Everything Ever
- Every male watching Dealer's Choice assures everyone afterwards they knew exactly what was going on during the poker scenes.

Kick habit

Niloufar Haidari is in the grip of an addiction – to trainers. She discusses her highs and lows

For my last birthday, I asked my dad for the light bone/speed yellow Air Max 1s. There was only one size 3 left in stock and I hadn't bought a pair of AM1s for at least three months. Obviously, I needed them. Right now, before they sold out. He ingeniously answered my request with "You've got enough trainers to last you a lifetime".

Usually I wouldn't have even bothered getting a third party involved in my mission to build the world's highest Jenga tower out of brown Nike shoeboxes, but it was the end of September and I had approximately 17p left in my bank account. 'Step on my kicks and I will hurt you'

Dipping into my savings account to fund my kick habit – for the fourth time that summer – was a far less appealing Plan B. Luckily my dad finally saw the light (read: I ordered them using his credit card) and my post-Cambridge penthouse suite in Soho was spared a further blow to its actualisation.

I love trainers. I love that my Air Max 90's give me a spring in my step no matter how shitty I'm feeling. I love how my Nike x Liberty blazers are the perfect combination of floral and fresh. I love every subtly different panel texture on my all black Ripstops – the Ripstops are my latest purchase, justified because I

needed some trainers for in da club. They're all black so it doesn't matter if people step on them! Yes! Except it does. Step on my kicks and I will hurt you. Contrary to the beliefs of the people who wear those department store own-brand brown Velcro 'trainers', I don't wear trainers for practicality. If they're suede or a light colourway, I don't even wear them when it's raining.

When the day is done, each pair is carefully wrapped up in tissue paper and put to sleep in their little shoe-box beds. They are definitely not festival footwear; anyone who has lusted over the Nike Air Max 1 Patta x Parra Cherrywood's (RRP £650) can testify to that.

Every once in a while I try and branch out into the wider world of footwear; you know: heels, ballet pumps, boots – the more refined members of the shoe sorority.

I worry that at the ripe old age of 22, I might be getting too old for streetwear. Existential questions such as 'How old is too old to be rocking SB Janoski's?' rear their ugly heads.

Sometimes I let my mind wander and I see visions of myself in six-inch Louboutin's strutting around LAX, but until Pharrell wakes up and realises he needs to wifey me, the Air Max are gonna win every time.

The £650 Air Max 1s!



SHOE BOX

Where did you get them?

They came out a year ago so I had to trawl through the internet. They're Jeremy Scott designing for Adidas. You can get them in gold, leopard skin and holigram. I got them on sale for £120.

Why do you like them?

They make me feel powerful.

What are you going to do if they get dirty?

I'll take them to the dry cleaners. They can sort this stuff out. It's silk, right?

Can you confirm rumours that you can fly to the top of Senate House in them?

No, but they make you feel like you have the power to do so.

Amrou Al-Kadhi (3rd Year, Corpus) spoke to *Varsity*

She's sexy! She's cute!
She's popular to boot!

Hot stuff!

From wearing your food instead of eating it, to hot sportswear to get your heart racing – get fit and healthy without breaking a sweat



'Kick The Habit' socks, \$12, shop ashidashi.com



Ashish Hoodie, On Sale at £30, Topshop



Campbells' Soup Flask, £12, urbanoutfitters.co.uk

Haul your ass to the mall this weekend to stock up on monochrome sportswear a la the **Clueless** chicks – you'll be a **total** Betty on the courts





CORALIE WEARS (L-R Clockwise)
1 Dress *Vintage*. Stockings *M&S*. Shoes *Buffalo*.
2 T-Shirt *Vintage*. Scarf *Stylist's Own*. Socks *M&S*. Scrunchie *American Apparel*.
3 Nappa wears Jumper and Tracksuit Bottoms *Nike*. Cap *Thoroughbred*. Coralie wears Hoodie *Nike*. Crop Top *Urban Outfitters*. Tracksuit Bottoms *Adidas*.
4 Hoodie, Shorts and Sports Bra *American Apparel*. Suspenders *House of Holland*. Hat *H&M*. Gloves *Model's Own*.
5 Skirt and Coat *Vintage*. Vest *Topshop*. Scrunchie *American Apparel*.
6 Nappa wears Top *Stylists Own*. Tracksuit Bottoms *Adidas*. Trainers *Puma*. Cap *Thoroughbred*. Socks *Models Own*. Coralie wears Top *Stylists Own*. Skirt *Versace*. Socks *Stylists Own*. Shoes *Buffalo*.

PHOTOGRAPHS
Claire Healy
STYLING
Naomi Pallas &
Claire Healy
MODELS
Coralie
Malissard &
Napper Tandy

Taste

CLAIRE HEALY & NAOMI PALLAS

So you'd be forgiven for thinking that you've come across the Sports pages already, but you'd be wrong! Despite the balls, sticks and pom-poms on show, these are indeed the new look Fashion pages, intending to inject a little fashion fun into your weekly Varsity read. A new year has dawned, and you may - like us - have harboured ambitions to get fit, get healthy and get a little bit more work done. If, however - also like us - these ambitions have fallen by the wayside, resulting in abandoned trainers and unshaken pom-poms, then you have come to the right place to get yourself back on track.

This is because we think fashion should be smiley, approachable and up for a laugh. Just because we're all a bunch of smarty pants doesn't mean we want to read a dissertation on the merits of the changing attitudes of the twentieth-century female in relation to the varying aesthetics of under garments - a.k.a. a bit pants. Instead, each week we'll be bringing you the customary shoot alongside some other fashiony tid-bits and bobs. In coming weeks expect to see cute animals, tropical fun and possibly a banana phone, but for now content yourselves with the sexy Coralie and her playground antics; shot on a frosty Friday morning, the cheerleading outfit certainly made a few Dads' weeks. She's sexy, she's cute, she's popular to boot, and we love her - Bring it on!

Unisex Pepperoni
Pizza T-Shirt,
\$39.99 (£26),
pizzashirt.net



Supreme - The "Definitive
Monograph" of the 16-
Year Story, **£27.50**,
goodhoodstore.com

'Princess' Hoops,
£1.99, Cambridge
Market

Washington
Cheerleader
Varsity
Jacket, **£55**,
rockit.co.uk

'Get Fucked'
Beanie, **£20**,
indcsn.com



Blues battle Coventry to win 4-2



Blues captain Paul Hartley sets up the play as he leads his team to a hard-fought win

by Matthew Dickinson
Football Correspondent

The Blues came twice from behind to secure a confident victory over Coventry in what was an explosive end to end game of football. The win marks a continuation of Cambridge's impressive Michelmas run of form, and puts them four points clear of second-place Coventry at the top of the table with five league fixtures remaining.

In the early stages of the game the Blues were comfortable, with the back four moving the ball around well and delivering threatening direct passes; Captain Paul Hartley was unlucky not to give his side the lead with an attempt from the edge of the box early on.

Coventry began to play more positively as the game progressed, however, denied only by the crossbar from a freekick, before going 1-0 up after a throw-in near the Cambridge by-line was cutback into the path of a marauding Coventry forward.

The Blues piled on the pressure having conceded, with centre-back James Day's strong header from a corner narrowly cleared off the line by the Coventry defence.

It wasn't until the 30th minute that the home side finally capitalised on their dominance, when a sharp cross was met by a powerful Danny Kerrigan diving header.

The visitors were quick to reply. A near goal-scoring opportunity from a Blues corner was converted without hesitation into a rapid counter-attack by Coventry, resulting in a neat finish and Cambridge again having to recover a deficit.

For a second time, a response was provided without hesitation by the Blues, Haitham Sherif shrugging off his man on the left-flank before driving the ball low into the area where it found a clinical Kerrigan finish to level the score before half-time.

Cambridge looked increasingly strong going forward after their return to the field, aided by the introduction of striker Daniel Forde.

The finest team goal of the game was supplied five minutes into the second

half, after central-midfielder James May made a surging run to the edge of his opponents' box, played a neat one-two off Forde to his right, before distributing the ball left for the arriving Kerrigan who duly claimed his hat-trick and put the Blues ahead for the first time.

The fourth goal was the result of a threaded George Baxter pass to an unmarked Forde who, having calmly brought the ball under control on the edge of the area, put the game securely beyond Coventry's reach.

The free-flowing attacking football which typified Cambridge going forward was present till the close, and substitute George Hill was unlucky not to capitalise ten-minutes before the end.

The Blues will play Coventry again in a week's time away from home, and will surely be hoping to build on this strong team performance.



Tennis Blues on to a winner

by Cameron Johnston
Tennis Correspondent

The Men's Tennis Blues are hoping to kick-start their 2012 BUCS campaign with a win against their nearest rivals, Nottingham University. The Blues showed true grit in Michaelmas, and were unbeaten in six league matches to be top at Christmas, on thirteen points.

2011/12 is an important year for the men's Blues. The sudden departure of several older players threatened to leave the team short of talent and vulnerable to defeat at the hands of bitter

rivals Oxford.

But such fears have proved unfounded as recruits from Cyprus, Jersey and Repton adjusted and excelled on the tennis court. They have all learned much from our coach, Nick Brown, who beat Goran Ivanisevich in 1991.

After a nervy start against Nottingham University, the Blues won against Leicester, Coventry, Birmingham and Warwick. They also put in a spirited display against overwhelming favourites, Bath, in the Cup. Constantine Markides's strength and endurance have been on show, Jamie Muirhead

has been sensational at the net, Charlie Cohen has impressed with his groundstrokes and Sam Ashcroft has matured on court.

Cambridge have opened up a three point lead at the top of the Midlands 1a division. If they win against Nottingham next week, they will go four points clear. They would be in pole position to win the Midlands division and set up a play-off match for promotion to the Premier division.

Irrespective of the result next Wednesday, the Men's Tennis Blues can look back with satisfaction and forward with confidence.

Kickabout

TIM KENNETT



The FA: guilty of injustice

I must confess to not having followed the recent racist furore with anything other than peripheral attention. Plenty of column inches told us two things we already know: racism is bad, and football should abolish racism. And, obviously, I strongly support both statements.

What put me off was the vagueness of Suárez's prosecution. As far as I can tell, the case was essentially the word of one man against the word of another, supported by lip-reading 'experts' (it may as well be supported by palmistry for all the faith I put in lip-reading).

Suárez admits to one derogatory use of the word 'negro', the commission's report accuses him of seven, and Evra states that it happened 'at least ten times'. The whole affair was seemingly decided on the basis that Evra was deemed a credible witness and Suárez was considered to be "unreliable".

Add in some fairly tawdry Luis Suárez t-shirts, and I was ready to ignore the damn thing completely.

But then I realised that the very vagueness of the case makes it fascinating, because it reveals the FA's philosophy. With a lack of convincing evidence, they decided to convict. In this they make a clear statement that racism will not be tolerated. They also risk the punishment of an innocent man (I am not asserting that Suárez is innocent, merely that

his guilt is not provable, although my gut says he probably did abuse Evra).

There is a trade off here: the FA wishes to deter further unsavoury incidents of this nature, so they are punishing Suárez. They consider it justifiable to punish a man for a crime he may not have committed in order to issue a warning. Suárez has become a scapegoat.

The other motivation for the FA is to avoid looking complicit in racist behaviour. In other words: they would rather punish an innocent man than risk letting a guilty man go free.

What is worse than the apparent injustice of a conviction along these principles is that the case was misrepresented to the, football-loving public. Suárez is being punished because he is guilty, we are told. In this deception the FA acknowledges that a utilitarian justification is not one that we find particularly convincing.

The harm done to Suárez by libel is trivial compared to the harm done by racism to society. But part of resisting racism is upholding justice.

Citizens are innocent until proven guilty, and the innocent should never be punished. One viewing of Twelve Angry Men is enough to have ingrained that into me; perhaps the FA should re-watch it.



Lacrosse Blues lose

The Blues put up a fight but fall to 11-8 defeat against Spencer 2nds

by Josh Findlay
Lacrosse Correspondent

Following the Christmas break, the men's lacrosse team returned to Cambridge last weekend for their second fixture against a tough Spencer side 2nds this year.

The match started with the Spencer side being able to put away a couple of early goals against the home defence. Cambridge were able to respond however, with captain Carl Tilbury feeding attackman Jeremy McCarron after receiving a pass off a textbook clear started by Josh Findlay breaking from his defender to receive the ball from goalkeeper Nick Evans.

The second quarter saw Cambridge playing catch up to level the score. In the attacking half, Cambridge managed to convert a high percentage of their shots into goals, including a rebounded ball off the goalkeeper being caught and put into the back of the net by midfielder Jaco Conradie. At the other end of the pitch, Nick Evans made some spectacular saves to deny Spencer many of their chances.

The second half began with the score at 4 each. Attackman Alistair Norton was able to dodge and outrun his defender, claiming a third goal to his name, whilst midfielder Matthew Halliday also contributed to the Cambridge tally with a well placed shot in the third quarter.

Strong efforts were also seen in the defensive half by Sohaib Chaudhry, Chris Cavanagh and James Thorne, though Spencer were able to exploit the

occasional gaps in the Cambridge formation and claim goals of their own.

The final quarter started with the two teams with 6 goals each and Cambridge had everything to play for. Unfortunately, a couple of goals for the away side early on in the quarter gave them the momentum they needed to win the game, which ended at 8-11.

Looking ahead, the Cambridge side have the most important fixture of the season, the Varsity match, taking place this term on February 25th. With Cambridge victors in 2010 and 2011 they will be doing everything to continue the streak into 2012.

JAMES CORCUT



The Fab *Varsity* Quiz

- Who made the first ever transatlantic flight?
- What was the original purpose of the Monopoly board game?
- Where is Prince Philip worshipped as a God?
- What does what word 'avuncular' mean?
- Terrence Malick's illustrious and lengthy directorial career began back in 1973. What was the film?
- How much does the CERN project cost?
- What is the first astrological sign of the zodiac?
- Which author has their 200th birthday this year?
- What is CFRP?
- PJ Harvey won this year's Mercury prize, but who won it the first time it was awarded, in 1992?
- What was the name of the first dog in space?
- 'Expands' is an anagram of which sportswear material? (Clue: The making of many a fashion faux pas...)
- Which UK university has the most ducks per square metre?
- Michael Fassbender has stormed into cinema's elite this week in Steve McQueen's *Shame*, but in which much-acclaimed TV series did he make his screen debut?
- Which Cambridge academic has been shortlisted for the 'Hatchet Job of the Year' award after warning readers to skip the first 200 pages of the book being reviewed?
- Kanye West found a new calling with his own fashion line last S/S season. What was the main criticism of the collection?
- What was Blur's band name before they signed to Food records?
- Q: What famous play begins with the words 'Who's there?'
- What's the email address of the theatre editor?
- What is the opening song to Bob Dylan's *Highway 61 Revisited*?

ANSWERS: 1. John Alcock and Arthur Whitten Brown 2. Monopoly was originally invented as an anti-capitalist boardgame by Elizabeth Magie Phillips called The Landlord's Game 3. Prince Philip is hailed as God in the southern island of Tanna in Vanuatu 4. Of or pertaining to an uncle 5. Baldrick 6. £2.5bn 7. Arles 8. Dickens 9. Carbon fibre reinforced plastic 10. Primal Scream, for Screamsadelica 11. Laila 12. Spandex 13. The University of York 14. Band of Brothers 15. Mary Beard, Professor of Classics at Newnham 16. A: Showing furs in a Spring/Summer collection 17. Seymour 18. Hamlet 19. theatre@varsity.co.uk 20. Like a Rolling Stone

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SPORT

22 Football: Blues came twice from behind to secure a confident victory over Coventry



Dark Blues take the glory

Sport in Brief

All the headlines from this week's sport

Downing take on Homerton in title clash

COLLEGE Downing and Homerton will battle it out on Saturday as both sides look to take pole position in the Division 1 football league.

The two teams will be looking to hold off fierce competition for the rest of the term from the teams coming up just behind them and will take note of the other title clash between Jesus and a confident Christ's outfit, which also takes place this weekend.

Water Polo Blues looking to make a splash in Lent term

UNIVERSITY The Blues are looking to make their hard work in training pay off in a busy Lent schedule.

Having returned from their winter tour of Mallorca, they will be seeking to make the most of all the hard work they have put in over the past few weeks to give themselves a strong platform for success in the coming months.

Captain Dan Woolcott believes that "If Cambridge can tighten their game up, and get the squad training and playing together on a more regular basis this team has great potential, it's just not quite there yet."

Read more online about their season so far, as well as their thoughts on their upcoming fixtures.

Goals in Gibraltar give Blues a lift

UNIVERSITY The Blues football team made the most of the winter break to head for sunnier climes and slot home the goals overseas.

Managing to take two wins against the Gibraltar U21s and Cartagena, the Blues feel they have put themselves in the perfect position from which to try and achieve promotion this year.

"The encouraging performances and great results that came on tour have given the Blues the perfect build up for the BUCS football to be played this term."



Oxford captain John Carter holds off the Cambridge defence as he inspires his team to an emphatic victory against the Light Blues in the biggest game of the university rugby calendar

by Michael Taylor
Rugby Correspondent

Cambridge lost. If truth be told, they did not threaten victory. For all but a few of these eighty minutes, the Light Blues trailed; Oxford, with more adventure, more directness, and more possession, deserved their triumph. Fifteen unanswered points in the second half confirmed superiority, and so these seasons are defined.

Nerves were settled when Downing's Steve Townend – the fourth fly-half to start for the Blues in Michaelmas – converted a simple chance when Oxford openside Louis Mather failed to roll away. Three minutes gone, 3-0.

Oxford responded immediately: stolen line-out ball was shipped wide and Will Kane was bundled over from close range. Oxford converted and scored a penalty to lead to 10-3.

Cambridge responded as full back Tom O'Toole countered and thought he had touched down but the TMO decided the Oxford full- had got there first. He had – but it did not matter: the ensuing scrum was demolished and, dragging it down on their own

line, the Oxford pack was appropriately penalized.

Parity regained, then. Well, for a while – Scott Annett then tripped Oxford scrum-half in front of ref Dave Pearson and Bramham-Law knocked over the penalty to give Oxford a lead of 13-10 at the interval.

In the second half, Oxford strode away. First, Karl Outen was driven over as Cambridge failed to defend against the maul which they had so often used themselves this term. Bramham-Law then added another penalty before Tom Mitchell, the England Sevens player and Oxford fly-half, jinked through the second channel. The margin, 28-10, was not unkind to either side.

The most contentious issue of the match involved Oxford captain John Carter and Cambridge's Dave Allen. Allen threw a punch at Carter who received a cut eye and had to go off for a blood injury, but the referee did not see and so Allen went unpunished.

The Oxford scores were more the consequence of Cambridge indiscipline than just reward for creative brilliance. Penalties in front of the posts were conceded when Townend dropped a

straightforward pass from Blake and when Scott Annett tripped Oxford scrum-half Sam Edgerton in front of referee Pearson.

The final score – Mitchell's sojourn through a tiring midfield – was prepared by a loose turnover as Cushing's clearance was charged down. Perhaps, and simply, these Cambridge errors were punished more clinically and fatally than any of Oxford's.

If pressure told, or if form ran out, then neither was the first time. Each captain, though, told his own story. Carter cited the cohesion of his side: 'Our work, our emotional togetherness were crucial. This [elation] is a group feeling, which makes it more magnificent.' From the other corner, Guinness-King reflected on a victory wrought from a full match's worth of excellence: 'They sustained their effort for eighty minutes. We competed well early on, but we just couldn't get the ball. Their discipline and commitment were exceptional.'

The 21's too, could not inflict defeat on their Dark Blues rivals. Defending champions Cambridge initially kept pace with Oxford after early scores

from both sides, but once Oxford no.8 Ben Girling snuck over from the line-out just inside half-time, they never looked back. The final score 19-11 in the Dark Blues' favour, but it was far from close.

In truth, Cambridge were shambolic. Only last year's match winner and Blues prospect Will Smith did himself justice, but even he was guilty of running infield too often where the dominant Oxford pack turned over ball all too easily.

The Oxford side, ably stewarded by lock Will Fell, had learnt their lessons from last year's defeat it seemed. Winger Sam Wareham stuck like glue to Smith throughout, whilst outside centre Oscar Vallance had far too much pace for his opposite number, Cambridge's Andy Murdoch, marauding through the midfield unchecked.

Light Blues captain Tommy Palacios, it must be said, carried the ball well and made the yards that his pack could not. However, he was bizarrely subbed off early into the second half without - it appeared - injury. The Cambridge comeback was never on and but for better hands from Oxford, the score would have been embarrassing.

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