

Number 771  
Friday 18th October 2013

# VARSITY

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## News

Author and academic Heidi Mirza addressed students on the vindication of rights for black women at a Girton panel debate.



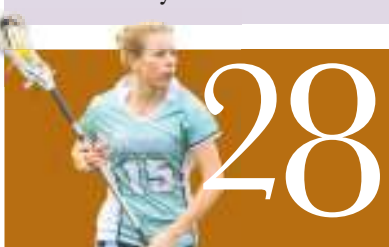
## Comment

China's silent war on bloggers. Freddie Green looks at the increased online censorship being pursued by the Chinese government.



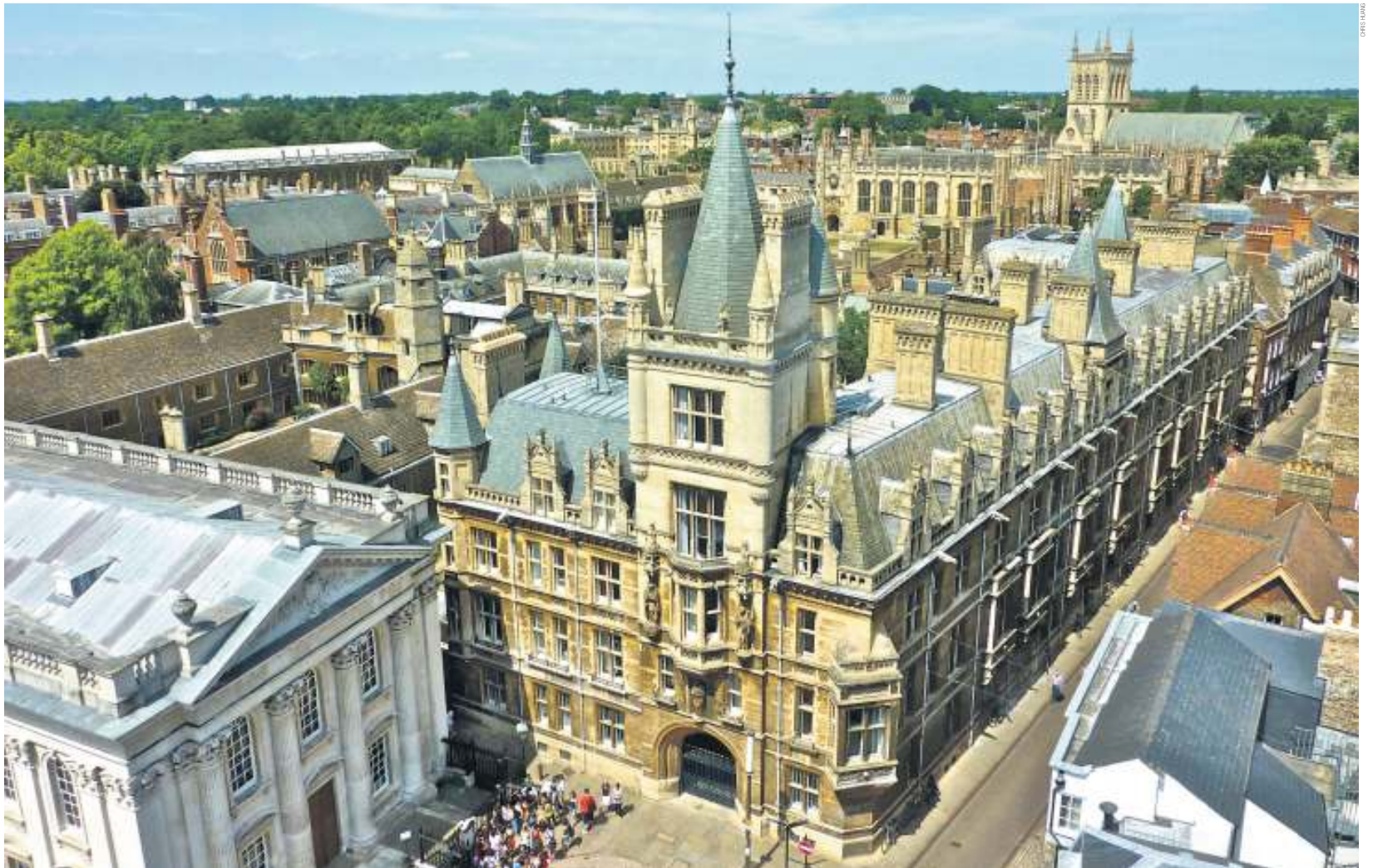
## Vulture

It's a kind of music magic. Sabina Dewfield takes you behind the scenes of the ADC's first opera performance in ten years.



## Sport

Cambridge dominance on display in both mixed lacrosse and golf, as the Blues teams have a successful week of fixtures.



**CAIUS RENT PRICES:** A sharp increase in rents at Caius has left many students outraged. Senior Bursar Dr David Secher told *Varsity*: "This was a difficult decision and we knew that some students would experience hardship as a result." He added that it was a necessary step "to restore the endowment to its former value".

# Concern over University silence on rights abuse

Martha Elwell  
NEWS EDITOR

Cambridge is one of six British universities to have established links with higher education institutions in Uzbekistan, a country whose human rights record is described by Human Rights Watch as "atrocious."

The collaborative project, entitled Continuity and Modernity on the Great Silk Road, is now in its third year. The Cambridge Centre for Development Studies is running the project together with the Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies, Uzbekistan.

The project is financed by the British Council INSPIRE grant project, which funds partnerships between universities in the UK and Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. The University declined to provide details

of the size of the grant.

A spokesperson for the University said that the collaborative project is "an entirely academic research project," and as such the University's involvement should not be construed as tacit support for the Uzbek state. Dr Siddharth Saxena, who is involved with the project, told *Varsity*: "Our long standing links are with the fellow academics, not with the state."

However, some commentators have expressed doubts about the University's ability to separate the academic from the political. Robert Chenciner of St Antony's College Oxford, an expert on Uzbekistan, condemned the University's links with the country. He said: "You can't get an academic job if you are an oppositionist."

According to the *Guardian*, partnerships with Uzbek institutions were

carefully managed in the years following 9/11 as Britain sought to strengthen its relationship with the strategically crucial Central Asian state. Uzbekistan remains an important point of transit in Nato's supply lines to Afghanistan.

During the period in which these links were established and developed, however, there have been serious questions over Uzbekistan's worsening human rights record.

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch say that the abuse of human rights has increased in severity since 2001. In 2002, there were reports of two men belonging to an outlawed Islamist party being boiled alive. In 2005 in the city of Andijan the Uzbek militia shot several hundred protesters.

Human rights abuses continue to take place on a daily basis as the state places drastic and violent restrictions

on freedoms of religion, speech, assembly and the press. There are established reports of forced labour.

Craig Murray, former British Ambassador in Tashkent, suggested that there is "no academic freedom of any kind" in the country. He heavily criticised the University's engagement with Uzbek institutions: "Involvement which taught young Uzbeks under conditions of genuine academic freedom would be great. Unfortunately, what we rather see is academics legitimising the regime, for cash. That stinks."

A US State Department report from 2011 highlights extensive restrictive measures placed on higher education institutions: "Authorities occasionally required department head approval for university lectures or lecture notes, and university professors generally practiced self-censorship." CONTINUED P.6

**Interview:** *New York Times* Executive Editor Jill Abramson speaks to *Varsity* (p. 8)



# What's in a name?

Last week Cambridge news was dominated by stories about freshers and finances, and this week there has been a reappearance of the third of Cambridge's favourite Fs: feminism. From the panel discussion on black feminism at Girton, to the launch of the new glossy magazine, *Ladybeard*, and Jill Abramson's talk at the Union, Cambridge is (like much of the rest of the world) fascinated by the new forms of feminism that are emerging.

With such a range of feminist material available to us in academic, literary and everyday life, it is easy to forget that for many people the term 'feminist' still has negative connotations. Even in Cambridge I, astonished, have listened to a female friend say, "Oh she was one of those crazy feminist types" about somebody she'd seen on TV.

When quizzed, however, as to what her beliefs were on a number of typically 'feminist' issues, it soon emerged that this same friend's position was almost identical to my own. Yet she refused to acknowledge

that her positions were 'feminist' ones, instead arguing that they were just common sense, human positions – that all but the most misogynistic of people must surely already believe.

Thus the only problem was that she would not describe her position as a feminist and I would. But is this really such a problem? Isn't what you believe more important than the name you give to those beliefs?

In an ideal world there would be no need for feminism. So why should it bother us if many ideas and positions that were originally seen as feminist no longer need to be linked to that term, as they are fast becoming an integral part of our belief system, at least in the Western World.

I would argue that the fact that people can be 'feminists' – at least in the sense I understand it – without being aware of this fact themselves, or wishing to define themselves as such, is actually a sign of how far feminism has come. This could be compared to the fact that I no longer have to call myself a civil rights

activist in order to clarify the fact that I believe that all people should be treated equally regardless of race. It is a position that we all, hopefully, take as read.

In recent years people who would not call themselves feminists have started to employ the term 'equalitist' to describe their position on a range of issues of discrimination, rather than just those related to gender.

New student societies dedicated to addressing issues of gender equality from all sides are beginning to crop up. At the School of Oriental Studies, London, a new society called Agender aims to "promote gender equality by encouraging participation of all genders". In such a society the term feminist might seem a little, dare I say it, outdated?

Despite this, I still do call myself a feminist. Why? Because, as the Girton panel debate and launch of *Ladybeard* show, there are many areas where we still need to close the gap.

So, until we get there completely, being known as a feminist is no bad thing.

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*Bob Dolby, President of the  
Cambridge University Rugby  
Fives Club (online)*

#### TEN QUESTIONS WITH DAVID RATTIGAN

This guy is one to watch (especially because he looks just like Joseph Gordon-Levitt.)

*Thomas Howarth (online)*

#### NEW ISSUE OF VARSITY

I've just had a flick through Varsity online, and it looks fantastic - well done! A really great first edition (always very tricky, I remember ours well... Keep up the good work: Michaelmas is the best term to be at the helm, so enjoy it while it lasts.)

*Laurie Martin  
Editor, Michaelmas 2011*

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# Raise tuition fees, says Oxford Vice-Chancellor

## Professor Andrew Hamilton has caused controversy by calling for the cap on tuition fees to be removed

Rebecca Alldridge  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

The Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University suggested last week that elite British universities should be allowed to charge substantially more than the current £9,000 limit on tuition fees to their students.

Professor Andrew Hamilton argued that the recent increase in fees has been unsuccessful in creating a competitive market within the higher education system, since the vast majority of universities have opted to charge the maximum £9,000.

*“There should be greater correspondence between tuition costs and the quality of teaching and facilities offered”*

He pointed out that “given the great diversity in institutions in our higher education system, the notion of different universities charging significantly different amounts, doesn’t feel inherently unnatural.”

He also stated: “There should be greater correspondence between tuition costs and the level and quality of teaching and facilities offered.” Professor Hamilton explained that whilst many

universities are able to comfortably cover their costs with the current cap on tuition, the average student costs Oxford £16,000 per year. This leaves a shortfall of £7,000 per student to be covered by the university, amounting to a £70 million annual deficit.

His comments found support from the Russell Group, with Director General Dr Wendy Piatt warning: “Our leading institutions cannot continue to be internationally competitive, provide a first rate teaching experience and offer generous support to disadvantaged students without access to increased funding.”

Only 1.4 per cent of the United Kingdom’s GDP is spent on higher education, in comparison to the international average of 1.7 per cent. Although Cambridge remains part of the ‘golden triangle’ of Oxbridge and London, and consistently sits at the top of the QS World University Rankings, many respected British universities are slipping down the table. This year, Warwick fell to 64 (down 6 places), and Southampton to 86 (down 13 places), a worrying trend for the other UK universities to observe.

Sally Hunt, General Secretary of University and College Union, praised Professor Hamilton for “going after one of the rarest nerves in politics to try and get higher education back in the spotlight.”

However, Hunt also warned: “He is wrong to argue that students should pick up the tab when we already have



An Oxford education costs £16,000 per year, claims Professor Hamilton

the most expensive fees in Europe.”

2012 saw 60 leading academics, including one from Oxford and one from Cambridge, sign a letter to Education Secretary Michael Gove expressing their “continued opposition to a system which increasingly excludes working class students and others from non-traditional backgrounds.”

This fear was echoed by Jess Fullman, a student at Trinity Hall, who said: “Although increased funding may be important to ensure Cambridge maintains its reputation as a top university, alternate forms of funding should be considered rather than automatically raising fees, [as] to do so would potentially affect a large majority of students in a very negative way, particularly those from more disadvantaged backgrounds.”

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# Cambridge University launches sustainable investment initiative

Amy Hawkins  
SENIOR NEWS EDITOR

The University of Cambridge, in collaboration with leading investment firms, is set to launch an initiative to explore and promote sustainable investment. The aim is to investigate ways in which institutions can continue to maximise financial returns on investments, while still considering their social and environmental implications.

The Cambridge Judge Business School will be working with the Investment Leaders Group (ILG) on the three-year programme. The ILG is comprised of twelve high profile investment firms, including Aviva Investors and Zurich Insurance Group.

*"In this day and age any sensible university ought to be addressing such issues openly"*

The announcement of this initiative comes ahead of National Ethical Investment Week and follows the revelations of a *Varsity* investigation into the investments of the Cambridge colleges. *Varsity* found that most do not operate any kind of ethical investment



The Cambridge Judge Business School will investigate ethical investment

policy and often make morally dubious investments as a result. For example, the investment fund owned and used by Trinity College is run on the Morgan Stanley International Capital index, which makes investment decisions purely on market performance, regardless of ethical concerns.

Several studies have suggested that businesses which take into account social and environmental concerns when making investment decisions see their investments perform better over time. However the investment funds used by these firms still form only a minority of the global investment market.

Carlos Joly of the Cambridge Programme for Sustainability Leadership (CPSL) said: "Pursuing environmental and social goods does not have to preclude robust returns on investments. On the contrary, we can create a virtuous circle, whereby considering environmental and social factors in investment decisions can drive both economic prosperity and societal wellbeing."

"That is the only secure basis on which business and long-term investment can flourish."

However, the University, in line with most of the colleges, is yet to institute

an explicit ethical investment policy, something that other universities such as UCL, St. Andrews and Oxford have all had in place for many years. The University of Edinburgh also recently divested itself of investments in Ultra Electronics, a company that manufactures navigation parts for drones, after pressure from a student campaign that the University invest ethically.

Philippe Sands QC, Professor of Law at UCL said: "It's a matter of legitimate and reasonable concern that the University, and some of the colleges, appear to have no formal ethical investment policy, or a body charged with overseeing its application. UCL has had an ethical investment policy for several years, and although reasonable people might differ as to the standard to be applied, the fact it exists and operates transparently is important."

"In this day and age any sensible university ought to be addressing such issues openly and transparently, in accordance with guidelines that are properly debated, adopted and applied".

Lucy Cavendish and St Catharine's are two of the few exceptions to this rule – both colleges are regarded as having particularly stringent ethical investment policies. St Edmund's College and Selwyn College have also been commended by the CUSU ethical investment campaign for banning arms companies from their investment portfolios.

## News from the Dark Blues

Richard Foord  
THE OXFORD STUDENT

Freshers' week has finished, and a whole new cohort of undergraduates has been washed up on Oxford's sandstone shores, carried by a foaming wave of vomit, reproductive fluids and Everyday Value Vodka: our cousins at Brookes are certainly having a good time. But Oxford students can throw a party too, as illustrated by last week's revelations of a defenestrated portrait at Jesus and an impromptu party across the roofs of Ship Street.

Meanwhile, George Galloway resumed his masochistic affair with Oxford debaters by gracing the Union with his incendiary presence. One plucky student set the cat amongst the pigeons by pulling an Israeli flag from under his jumper and calling Galloway a racist, at which point everyone started having kittens.

All this pales into insignificance however, with the news that the Corpus tortoise 'Oldham' has died. The small college has been veiled by the shade of death, its students aimlessly wandering their cobbled quad offering cries of 'WHY?' to the firmament above. But the sky is silent. All that remains for them to contemplate is the emptiness of mortality.

Furthermore, the Wadham tortoise has also 'run away', an explanation that feels distinctly like college authorities trying to let their students down gently.



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# What does black feminism mean today, and why do we need it?

A Vindication of the Rights of Black Women event took place at Girton this week

Sarah Lusack  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

The Vindication of the Rights of Black Women, the first event of its kind in Cambridge, was held at Girton College by the undergraduate Women's Movement on Tuesday evening. Described by one of the speakers, Professor Heidi Mirza, as a "historical event," A Vindication was a panel discussion concerning the distinctiveness and dynamism of black feminism today.

The discussion largely centered on black British feminism as opposed to black feminism overall. Priscilla Mensah, organiser of the event and Girton student, said that the panel discussion was "an event about identity, or rather, the pursuit of black women to find their own, unbound by racist, sexist stereotypes".

Issues concerning the lack of women of colour at the forefront of academia, politics, the media and within scientific circles, as well as the importance of dispelling the myth of the "Angry Black Woman", were addressed by three eminent speakers.

Professor Joan Anim-Addo of Goldsmiths University, stressed the importance of overcoming the muted voice of black British feminists, one theme common to all speakers.

Anim-Addo spoke about the importance of speaking out, especially in powerful, predominantly white, institutions such as Cambridge.

The second speaker, Heidi Mirza,



Guest speakers: Nydia Swaby, Professor Heidi Mirza, Professor Joan Anim-Addo and organiser Priscilla Mensah

Emeritus professor at the Institute of Education, focused on the subjugated

*"An event about identity, or rather, the pursuit of black women to find their own, unbound by racist, sexist stereotypes"*

experience of black women.

She argued that a distinctive space must be reserved for black feminism in order for there to be accurate accounts of the stories of black women themselves.

Though mainstream feminism shares

common themes with black feminism, Mirza argued that it lacks this distinctive feature which illustrates why black feminism, as its own strand, is essential in the wider debate.

Nydia Swaby offered a frank and personal account of the role black feminism has played in her life, namely its role in liberating her from white male hegemony and opening her up to the wider debate.

The discussion stressed that black feminism is an inclusive concept applicable to many women of colour. Women from the diaspora, Latinos, Indians and Africans are united by a common colonial past, Mirza explained.

Speakers spoke about the historical background of black feminism, making reference to the Indian suffragettes of 1911, to Jayaben Desai of the Grunwick

Dispute, to the *Feminist Review* and to the Southhall Black Sisters.

The concept of intersectionality – that at any one time we fit into more than one category – was another key theme of the discussion. The inclusivity of black feminism was raised: it was noted that since race, gender and class are accessible to all women, and men, we can all understand our identities in these terms.

Black feminism, it was argued, has an important role in the counter hegemonic discourse, being at the fringes of the mainstream debate, which can be expressed as effective activism and giving a voice to black women.

Fly, the first Cambridge University society for self-defining ethnic women, meets regularly at 1.15pm on Fridays at the Waterstone's Cafe.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"Numerous students reported that universities taught mandatory courses on books and speeches of the president and that missing any of these seminars constituted grounds for expulsion." The report also notes that there is a government decree in place that prohibits co-operation between Uzbek universities and foreign bodies without the explicit prior approval of the government.

Further doubts are cast over claims of the purely academic nature of the project by apparent diplomatic links. On 27th March this year, the British Ambassador to Uzbekistan George Edgar gave a speech at an international conference for the Cambridge-Tashkent project, where he spoke of President Karimov's interest in bolstering relations with neighboring states.

He also talked about the positive role that Uzbekistan is playing in the stabilisation of Afghanistan, helping to rebuild infrastructure. This came one month before a treaty was signed between the UK and Uzbekistan governments about the transit of military vehicles out of Afghanistan and through Uzbek territory, an agreement that demonstrates the ongoing strategic significance of Uzbekistan to British interests.

In response to criticisms, the Director of Education at the British Council Dr Jo Beall wrote a letter to *The Guardian*, published Monday, which stated: "At the British Council, we make no apology for working to build greater understanding – and ultimately trust – between young people in the UK and other countries."

She added that the British universities involved "deserve praise, not condemnation, for their commitment to creating international opportunity in less open societies."

What is clear however is that British universities that partake in such programmes are liable to become enmeshed in the complicated world of Central Asian diplomacy.

## Eco-queen is first female honorary fellow at Tit Hall

VARSITY NEWS TEAM

Harriet Lamb, Chief Executive of Fairtrade International, has been awarded an honorary fellowship at Trinity Hall.

Lamb, who studied political science at the college between 1979 and 1981, started working at Fairtrade International in 1997. She was made Chief Executive in 2012.

Professor Martin Daunton, Master of Trinity Hall said: "As executive director and subsequently chief executive, she has raised the profile of the organisation, an organisation that Trinity Hall is committed to support. We support her commitment to social justice."

Speaking about the appointment, Lamb said: "I am delighted to accept this honour on behalf of all those women farmers and workers who are the backbone of Fairtrade across the world."

"In the UK, it is the hard work of local campaigners, including people among the Cambridge University staff and students and in the local Cambridge group, who have helped put fairtrade on the shop shelves. I very much hope that this award will help open the door to other women in the future."

Lamb was voted the *Cosmopolitan* Eco-Queen 2008 and Orange Businesswoman of the Year 2008.

Trinity Hall College now has 37 honorary fellows.

# Calls to free Pussy Riot step up

Letter written by member of activist group raises concern over Russian prisons

Sophie Rust  
RUSSIAN CORRESPONDENT

When three members of Russian punk-rock band Pussy Riot were sentenced to two years in penal colonies in October 2012 for staging an anti-Putin protest, the group received a great deal of international support.

The recent news of Nadezhda Tolokonnikova's hunger strike in protest against the insupportable conditions at the penal colony IK-14 in Mordovia, which she explained in her open letter published in *The Guardian* last month, has refocused the world's attention on the group.

Many have been horrified by the descriptions in Tolokonnikova's letter of unbearable conditions endured by female prisoners in penal colonies such as IK-14.

Tolokonnikova, who works as a seamstress making police uniforms, describes hellish seventeen-hour working days and getting "four hours sleep a night." She writes that the women have one day off every six weeks.

Tolokonnikova says that prisoners are fed "stale bread, heavily watered-down milk... and rotten potatoes." She adds that the inmates are forced to discipline each other, enacting punishments in place of the supervisors. If one person slips up, everyone gets punished.

In a recent Russian article in *Bolshe Gorod* on the prison system, an ex-inmate describes the horror of stepping out of line and having to watch as elderly women must stand with you in the yard in the sweltering heat in summer or in minus-forty degrees winter for seven hours, visibly suffering and collapsing.

*"I will do this until they start treating us like humans"*

By all accounts Russia's prisons for men are much worse. Tolokonnikova also claims that the deputy head of the colony threatened to kill her, though this has been denied by the administration as an attempt to manipulate the colony to move Tolokonnikova from the sewing position to an art workshop.

Tolokonnikova says that she followed fellow Pussy Riot member Maria Alyokhina in going on hunger strike because the "penal colony administration refuses to hear me." However, she was forced to stop the nine-day strike after being hospitalised with medical complications.

On Friday 11th October, after two

weeks of confinement without the possibility of seeing family or lawyers, *The Guardian* reported that Tolokonnikova, although recovered, was extremely unhappy with the confinement, which was no way in the interest of her medical health.

She said: "If you think that without contact with my friends I will become amenable and open to compromise, and go back on the views I have formed about Mordovia's camps during my time in jail, then you are horribly mistaken".

These claims of human rights abuses and death threats have provoked the Kremlin to say that they will inspect the colony, but whether anything will be changed remains to be seen.

Tolokonnikova concludes her open letter by saying: "I will do this until the administration starts obeying the law and stops treating incarcerated women like cattle ejected from the realm of justice for the purpose of stoking the production of the sewing industry; until they start treating us like humans."

Tolokonnikova and Alyokhina are due to be released in March 2014. Yekaterina Samutsevich had her sentence suspended on appeal.

There have also been calls for the release of Greenpeace activists who were detained in Russia last month on piracy charges.



A protest in the name of Pussy Riot



# Professor John Dupré

The Diane Middlebrook and Carl Djerassi Visiting Professor



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## Legal aid protests come to Cambridge

**CAMBRIDGE** 5th October saw nationwide protests against government cuts to Legal aid come to Cambridge, although the Cambridge contingent only numbered a small group of around twelve people. The activist network UK Uncut is behind the protests and organised a number of protests around the UK at the same time. The Cambridge protest took place outside Cambridge Crown Court and the protestors attempted to block the road, a symbolic gesture to represent the lack of access to justice the organisation believes will result from the cuts. There was only a slight delay to a minimal number of motorists, however.

## Cambridge University backs Page Three ban

**CAMBRIDGE** Students at Cambridge University have voted to stop campus shops from selling The Sun until it stops including Page Three.

As part of a general campaign by No More Page Three, Cambridge is one of many universities including LSE, UCL, Edinburgh and Newcastle to have voted in such a way. The founder of No More Page Three, Lucy Ann Holmes, spoke at the Cambridge Union Society earlier in 2013 and expressed her delight at the time that so many students attended the panel discussion in which she spoke out against Page Three.

## Cambridge crashes out of Solar Race Challenge

**CAMBRIDGE** The Cambridge University Eco Racing team has been forced to pull out of the solar car race it was preparing for due to a vehicle crash just days before the start. The car, Resolution, was going to take part in the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge but was too badly damaged to be able to compete.

The team said: "We have not been able to reassure ourselves of the safety of our solar drivers. Unfortunately we did one unplanned test, of the structural integrity of the chassis. We had an accident." The car was built by sixty students in the engineering department and was designed to run at an average speed of 50 mph. A statement on the team's website reads: "The team is very disappointed but we are confident that we have made the right decision."

## Rowan Williams criticises Church's treatment of homosexuals

**CAMBRIDGE** In an interview this week, Rowan Williams, the Master of Magdalene College and former Archbishop of Canterbury, made a number of statements about the way in which the Church views gay people and the nature of Christianity in Cambridge today.

On the issue of Christianity amongst students he said: "When people encounter it there's often a sort of not unfriendly curiosity." He also said: "I think the Church has to put its hands up and say our attitude towards gay people has at times been appallingly violent. Even now it can be unconsciously patronising and demeaning and that really doesn't help. We have to face the fact that we've deeply failed a lot of gay and lesbian people, not only historically but recently as well."

# She's a sign of the *Times*

**Martha Elwell** talks to Jill Abramson, one of the world's most powerful women, about her role as the first ever female executive editor of the *New York Times*



Jill Abramson addresses the Cambridge Union

Sitting at the helm of the Union on Wednesday afternoon, Jill Abramson dared the floor to ask her "tough questions". She says that while at dinner last week with *Guardian* editor Alan Rusbridger, he advised that there might be some genuinely difficult questions from the floor. It seems an apt reflection of her character that she had been looking forward to these.

Abramson – who became the first female executive editor of the *New York Times* in September 2011 – is one tough cookie. She has risen efficiently through the ranks of elite American journalism to take on the most senior editorial position at the *Times*, a newspaper whose average daily circulation exceeds 1.8 million people. *The New Yorker's* Byken Auletta describes Abramson's manner

as "abrupt" yet empathic and kind.

On first impression the most striking thing about her is the way that she speaks. Her words all last a little longer than they should and the end of each sentence is elongated, so that to listen you have to slow down and concentrate. One might expect the monotonic quality of her drawl to bore, but Wednesday's Union audience was enraptured; it is easy to see how this woman has managed to command the attention of newsrooms and boardrooms throughout her career.

Taking Abramson up on her dare, the first question in our interview is a hard one: she is often called one of the most powerful women in the world, so does she feel responsible for the mess? She smiles. "I feel a responsibility to

truthfully show readers the dysfunction in government right now and explain to them why there's such a mess, and not just to say, 'Wow – it's a mess'... [but to] do stories that show who really has an interest in making the mess and perpetuating the mess."

Our interview takes place just hours before US Congress approves the budget deal, and Abramson talks about "mess" in the context of the government shutdown: her responsibility in this instance, she says, is to make sure that her newspaper thoroughly interrogates the motives of "rich contributors who are the backers of these extreme right-wing Republicans who have shut the government down."

*"I don't want to let the girls' team down. Like please God let me not fuck up!"*

If Abramson was one of the most powerful women in the world before this week, she is set to become even more powerful after it. She is in Europe for the launch of the *International New York Times* – a rebranding of the *International Herald Tribune* – which will put the journalism of the *Times* on a global platform.

It is perhaps surprising that the *Times* is making such a move in the current climate of print decline. But Abramson points out that even as many of the *Times's* competitors have closed or shrunk drastically, her newspaper

"hasn't retreated at all." The newsroom is the same size as ten years ago and the paper's average circulation has increased by over 15 per cent in the last year.

The *Times* leads all other major American newspapers in its distribution of digital content. In March of this year around 1.1 million people per day accessed the paper online. Its success, then, must lie partially in its growing emphasis on multimedia platforms. Earlier this year the Pulitzer Prize for feature writing was awarded to *Times* journalist John Branch for his article 'Snow Fall' which used videos, photos and maps to tell the story of an avalanche.

Abramson's dedication to engaging with digital media is apparent in many of her decisions as editor. For her, social media has changed the scope of journalism for the better: "Even with the worry that some of what's on social media isn't true and that people may not really be who they say they are, you still have this pool of real-time information from people who are putting their name against something."

She says that she is proud to be the first female executive editor, but that the title comes with a weight of expectation. When she was appointed she had "a palpable sense – and I still do – that I don't want to let the girls' team down. Like please God let me not fuck up!"

She adds: "The important thing in the end isn't that I'm the first woman, it's whether by the time I leave this job it's completely viable that there would be the second woman and even the third woman. That will be the ultimate test of whether it means anything that I've been the first."

# An Amazonian mission

Cambridge rowers approaching the end of their month-long row of the Amazon

Eddie Reynolds  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Cambridge academic Mark de Rond and Cambridge rower Anton Wright are coming to the end of a month-long adventure down the Amazon River as they prepare to reach the Brazilian coast. Having been rowing approximately 100km per day, the daredevil travellers are now two days away from completing their 2,077 mile journey along the Amazon River.

Although they were due to complete the trip on 13th October, a storm has stalled them for a few extra days.

de Rond, a researcher and academic in organisational behaviour at Cambridge Judge Business School, describes himself as a "carnal sociologist" – he uses his own body and mind as a one-man laboratory to test theories in extreme or unusual situations. He then brings what he learns back into the classroom, providing his students with real-world insight into how teams and individuals react in different situations. Previous 'live' experiments have included observing combat surgeons in Afghanistan and elite rowers, and working with stand-up comedians.

Wright, Head Coach and boatman

at Clare College, Cambridge, is an experienced adventure challenge oarsman with a row across the Irish Sea, The Great River Amazon Raft Race and an Atlantic sailing crossing under his belt.

The pair aims not only to conduct

*"You learn a lot about yourself that you can't learn from just observing others"*

research, but also to raise funds for the Leonard Cheshire Disability charity, setting a Guinness World Record for long-distance rowing unaided as they do so.

Their adventure so far has by no means proved plain sailing. Challenges along the way included negotiating Pirate Alley (a section of the river notorious for hostage taking) and combatting a three-hour storm that destroyed the rudder and carried off their bucket-toilet.

Although rowing a boat with two holes in two-hour stints of rowing and



Anton Wright (left) and Mark de Rond with their boat

resting has proved arduous, de Rond spoke positively of his adventure: "It's been tough and we're really looking forward to finishing. You learn a lot about yourself and a lot that you can't learn from just observing others. That can be hard but you experience the subtleties more powerfully if you go through something like this yourself."

Director of the Judge Business School, Christoph Loch, speaking on behalf of the School said: "We're

delighted and relieved that Mark and Anton have made it safely to the end and are looking forward to welcoming them home... Mark wanted to go beyond watching other people as part of ethnography and put himself into a team under challenging circumstances and that is what he has done!"

"It will be fascinating to see what insights he brings back into our classrooms to share with the business leaders of the future."



# CUP urged to abandon lawsuit

Christina Sweeney-Baird  
NEWS EDITOR

On 1st October the Delhi High Court heard a case brought by Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press claiming copyright infringement against Delhi University.

Delhi University and Rameshwari Photocopy service, the other named party in the lawsuit, photocopy CUP and OUP textbooks in order to create course packs for students. Many

students cannot afford original textbooks and so rely on course packs.

The court case is unprecedented; if Delhi University loses it will have far reaching effects on many students in India as it will create a legal precedent for schools and universities to face copyright challenges for all illegal reproduction of materials.

Leki Thungon, student representative of the Association of Students for Equitable Access for Knowledge, has said: "India is a country that has vast economic disparities. Saying students

can afford to buy these books is absolutely unjust and ridiculous." When the case was first filed more than 300 academics, including Nobel Laureate and former Master of Trinity College, Amartya Sen, spoke out on the issue, saying in a collective statement: "As authors and educators we would like to place on record our distress at this act of the publishers, as we recognise the fact that in a country like India marked by sharp economic inequalities, it is often not possible for every student to obtain a personal copy of a book."

However CUP have defended their actions. A spokesperson from the company said to *Varsity*: "We are in full support of the creation of course packs, which can provide relevant segments of copyrighted works for students at affordable prices. Nor have we ever disputed the relevance or application of a fair dealing exception to copyright laws in certain circumstances. Publishers cannot, however, support the unlawful copying of work for wide dissemination and without remuneration, in breach of mandatory licensing schemes."

## Oxford academics vote to strike over 'miserly' pay increase offer

**OXFORD** Staff at Oxford and Oxford Brookes Universities have threatened strikes over their declining salaries. In a national ballot of the University and College Union 66 per cent of lecturers voted in favour of strike action.

On 10th October the Universities' offer to increase pay by 1 per cent was rejected. The UCU described this rise as 'miserly' and pointed out that lecturers' salaries have fallen by 13 per cent in real terms in the last four years.

Other complaints include the Universities' use of zero-hour contracts for junior academics. Top staff pay increased by an average of £5,000 between 2011 and 2012.

## Cambridge establishes business to support new startups financially

**CAMBRIDGE** A new organisation, Cambridge Innovation Capital (CIC) has been established, with the support of the University, in order to support companies in the middle stage of development. CIC will invest £50 million in a broad range of firms to remove the pressure to deliver the early exits which are often associated with the traditional capital venture model.

The University's Vice Chancellor said in a statement: "With the launch of CIC, the University and our co-investors are taking an important step in supporting the continued economic growth of the region and the country."

## Thatcher papers released from Churchill archives

**CAMBRIDGE** A huge deposit of papers about the life of Thatcher has been left to the Churchill Archives Centre, constituting one of the largest and most significant twentieth century political archives.

The archive ranges from Thatcher's selection as a candidate for Dartford in 1949 and her brief career as a backbencher to her campaign for party leadership in 1974-75. The archives have been with Churchill for a number of years but are only now being released to the public.

The archive contains over one million documents and currently occupies around 300 metres of shelving. There are also photos and mementos from her childhood as well as a vast collection of press cuttings. These are particularly interesting as Thatcher famously never kept a diary.

The papers are owned by the Margaret Thatcher Archive Trust.

## Cambridge Arts Picturehouse may have to go

**CAMBRIDGE** The Competition Commission has come to the conclusion that either the Cambridge Arts Picturehouse or Cineworld must be sold in order to avoid a monopoly on the cinema market in Cambridge. Cineworld must also sell cinemas in Aberdeen and Bury St. Edmund's.

There was huge opposition to the enforced sale. 13,773 people signed a petition opposing the sale including MP Julian Huppert.

He said: "I am very disappointed about this decision by the Competition Commission. I and many others wrote to them to point out how different the Arts Picturehouse is from the existing Cineworld."

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<sup>†</sup>The discount is approximately 18% depending upon the membership option taken.





# Rent controversy chez Caius

Students at Gonville and Caius are outraged by unexpected 10 per cent increase in the price of rooms

Amy Hawkins  
SENIOR NEWS EDITOR

Gonville and Caius College has caused controversy by raising rent prices by 9.5 per cent in one year and food prices by 6 per cent. Students have complained that they were not adequately consulted during the decision making process.

The average rate for accommodation at Gonville and Caius, where students are expected to live for the entirety of their undergraduate degree, is now around £130 per week. The average rent across the other colleges is £100 per week, or £115 for en suite, while the national average rate for un-catered rooms is £111 per week.

The decision was passed at a JCR-MCR meeting in June, which students complain was ill-attended because it was in May Week. Senior Bursar Dr David Secher cited "severe financial hardships," and told students that "We're all in this together." However, he also warned that: "The more we spend on [the] current generation, less is available for future students."

Secher pointed out that Caius rooms were still cheaper than at other universities, citing UCL as an example. This was reportedly met with laughter. Students argued that UCL is in London, where all living costs are considerably higher than the norm.

Many students at Gonville and Caius have complained about the poor quality of food in college, which now costs £8.50 per meal. A student present at the meeting challenged Dr Secher, saying: "If we're all in this together then maybe as a token of respect for what students are going through, the faculty

can eat what we eat, just for a term." However, Dr Secher argued that this would prevent Caius from attracting the best faculty. Disgruntled students have also been suggesting that the wine budget for fellows has been increased.

The mood at Caius is said to be one of defeat. The Accommodation Licence states that the College can increase rents at any point and to any price. When asked if this was fair, Dr Secher is said to have called it a "ridiculous

*"The students are being punished for what has been poor investment management by the college"*

suggestion." Dr Secher emphasised the fact that he was a tutor for 10 years and therefore understands the financial concerns that students face. However, some students have questioned the financial priorities of the college, which hands out hundreds of pounds in academic awards every year to students who gain a First. Dr Secher maintained that academic and pastoral life were separate issues.

Both the college and the University have bursary schemes to support students from low-income families, but there is concern that the most hard hit will be students who just miss out on bursary support.

The wealth of Gonville and Caius has declined in recent years: the college has fallen from third to seventh richest

in Cambridge.

Dr Secher told *Varsity* that the rent increase was part of "a series of measures ...to stem the decline and to restore the endowment to its former value in real terms. This was a difficult decision and we knew that some students would experience hardship as a result." He reiterated the assurance that students would be supported: "Our tutors will continue to work with students to tackle cases of genuine hardship."

However this defence does not convince Pranjal Arya, a third year at Caius: "The college seems to have weathered the economic downturn really badly compared to other colleges...it seems like the students are being punished for what has been poor investment management by the college."

"The college are [sic] fucking us over," he added.

An anonymous source from the Gonville and Caius Students' Union (GCSU) said: "It seems college have little regard either for the welfare of its current students...or for the message this sends to the wider world."

Olivia Brogan, a first year English student at Caius, expressed concerns that the sudden price hike could have taken incoming freshers by surprise: "I think it is unfair for students on a very tight budget who would have factored rent prices into their college [choice]."

Karthik Chandrasekharan, president of GCSU, told *Varsity* that students' concerns had been "heavily voiced." "There is the worry that...possible future students will be less inclined to apply to Caius...the recent uproar has clearly shown how everyone feels about the rise."



  
**Cambridge Spy**  
*Rumour has it...*

Boys at one august college are rumoured to have been experimenting with each other behind closed doors. Just friends? The thin walls suggest otherwise...

A certain college bop descended into farce as its usual policy of freshers only ended with a drunken rabble of second years chanting outside the bar...

One college drinking society has an annual competition to see who can get with the most freshers. Points are awarded duly....Freshers: be warned.

Discovered mid-coitus in a rather public location, by students returning from a night of frivolities at Cindies, one young lady took the only available course of action left to preserve her modesty, and rolled into the college pond.

Miss Vx

# Rules for freshers: no football and no gossip

A 1660 rulebook for freshers, written by a fellow of Trinity, presents hopes of a far more sober and pious Cambridge life than students might recognise today

Christina Sweeney-Baird  
NEWS EDITOR

As Cambridge freshers get into the swing of university life and leave freshers' week behind, a rulebook written in 1660 shows the changes in how the University has offered guidance over time to its new students outside of academic life.

James Duport, a fellow at Trinity College at a time when Isaac Newton was a student, wrote rules for the freshers of the 17th Century in 1660. While today's freshers' guides might focus on how to make friends, become a BNOC and maybe even get a First, Duport's rules are more subdued.

Duport's priority was instilling "proper behaviour" in the scholars starting their university career.

The freshers of the 17th century were normally younger than their modern counterparts, often matriculating at the age of 16.

Religion was a significant focus, with

new students told to attend prayers promptly and "come not dropping in (after the uncouth and ungodly manner of some) when almost all is done..."

Duport also advised against "gading and gossiping from chamber to chamber" or "picking your nose," deeming both habits to be "uncouth and unseemly."

Sport was also, perhaps surprisingly,

*"Write frequently to your parents and friends, to the former especially"*

something he didn't encourage. Duport states that football is a "rude" exercise. He was also not a fan of tennis but considers it to be marginally less offensive: "Use tennis sparingly," he warns, "and never immediately after rules, it being then too violent and too

stirring," he writes.

Current Cambridge students (except perhaps those at Girton) might consider the centre of town to be an integral part of university life, passing through it every day.

However Duport prefers to tell his students to avoid the town due to its danger and dirt. "Never go into the town, except to ye church or schools or book-seller or book-binder's shop," he warns.

Whilst the vast majority of the rules are obviously not applicable to Cambridge life in 2013, there are nevertheless some words of wisdom that are still relevant today within Duport's tome. "Write frequently to your parents and friends, to ye former especially if you know they desire you and expect it."

Similarly, many a director of studies will be familiar with Duport's encouragement to avoid excessive drinking and partying: "Beware of riot, excess & intemperance, which hath drown'd

& devoured ye most pregnant parts & choicest of witts," Duport warns his students.

The rules were researched by C.D. Preston and P.H. Oswald, two Cambridge alumni who published them in the Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society.

The two researchers have said that Duport's "exuberant language" shows his "understanding of the natural slothfulness and waywardness of youth enjoying a first taste of freedom away from the parental home."

There is an original copy of the rules in the Wren Library at Trinity College, as well as a manuscript that outlines even more regulations housed in Cambridge University Library.

Likening Duport to current college welfare officers or tutors, Preston and Oswald have described the manuscript as painting a "portrait of an energetic fatherly figure cajoling a group of feckless younger men to work hard and keep safe."



# Cambridge's Nobel pursuit

Thomas Evans  
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

A former University of Cambridge scientist is among the three winners of this year's Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

Michael Levitt, who is currently Professor of Structural Biology at Stanford University, California, shares the 8 million Swedish Kronor (£775,000) prize with chemists Martin Karplus and Arieh Warshel "for the development of multiscale models for complex chemical systems."

Levitt, aged 66, pioneered the use of computer models and simulations in order to unravel the fundamental molecular processes that govern chemical reactions. By using computer analyses, he was able to identify the precise molecular structures of enzymes and other biological molecules responsible for life.

His computer programs made it possible to simulate how proteins change shape and bind ligands during a reaction and it now enables scientists to elucidate the step-by-step events that take place during complex chemical processes.

Much of his groundbreaking research was achieved whilst a PhD student in computational biology at Peterhouse and as a research fellow at Gonville and Caius. From 1968 to 1972, he was based at the Laboratory of Molecular Biology (LMB) on the Addenbrooke's Site. Levitt is the tenth Nobel laureate to have worked at the LMB and the fifth Chemistry Laureate from Peterhouse.

Professor Adrian Dixon, Master of Peterhouse, said: "The College is very proud of this wonderful achievement. Michael's research studentship brought him into very close contact with three other Petrean Nobel Chemistry Laureates (Max Perutz, Sir John Kendrew and Sir Aaron Klug)."

As widely predicted, the Nobel



Peterhouse claims its fifth Nobel Chemist

Prize in Physics went to Peter Higgs, 84, for his theoretical discovery of the Higgs Boson – also known as the "God particle" – in 1964. Sharing the prize with co-discoverer Francois Englert, the award comes just a year after the Large Hadron Collider at CERN in Switzerland confirmed the elementary particle's existence.

Cambridge's own Stephen Hawking famously lost a \$100 bet that CERN would never successfully discover the elusive subatomic particle. Since then, he has become a leading figure in publicly voicing his support for the highest accolade in science to be bestowed upon Higgs, in spite of his criticism of Hawking's celebrity status.

Bookmakers are now expecting Higgs to be honoured with a knighthood, with Ladbrokes slashing the odds of him receiving the title by the end of 2014 to 1/5.

A close favourite for this year's prize was Didier Queloz, recently appointed Professor of Physics at the Cavendish Laboratory, who was one of the first people to discover exoplanets, planets that exist outside our solar system.

The Karolinska Institute handed the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine to James Rothman, Randy Schekman and Thomas Sudöf for "their discoveries of machinery regulating vesicle traffic, a major transport system in our cells." Vesicles are tiny bubbles of fat used by cells to move hormones, enzymes and other chemicals around the cell and to other cells. Their work has helped us understand how neurons communicate.

The Swedish King, Carl XVI Gustaf, will present this year's Nobel Laureates with their awards on 10th December.

## RESEARCHER OF THE WEEK

featuring Dr Nik Cunniffe  
of the Department of Plant Sciences & Girton College



### What's a brief summary of your research?

I use mathematical models to try and understand how plant diseases spread and how they can be controlled. A lot of my recent work has focused on tree diseases as these have been made a priority by the Government. However, the techniques I use can be applied to all plant diseases.

In fact, many are broadly applicable in the sense that they also apply to animal pathogens. Recently, I worked with a team including Chris Gilligan, Matt Castle, Richard Stutt, James Cox and Franco Neri on modelling ash dieback.

### Do you think Ash Dieback has caught the public's attention?

Definitely; a lot of older people experienced the epidemic of Dutch elm disease in the 1970s; at the time this led to a huge number of landscape trees dying. A number of other tree diseases have appeared more recently, arguably as important as ash dieback, including sudden oak death, although people haven't engaged with these to the same extent. But, Ash Dieback really caught public attention. It was all over the news; it was a very big deal.

Recently there's been a push towards citizen science and for ash dieback this has been useful. At the time of the outbreak an app was released called AshTag; members of the public would go out into forests and take photos of infected trees. These can then be used for tracking the spread.

### What is Ash Dieback?

Ash dieback is a disease caused by a fungus. It first appeared in Europe in 1992 in Poland but we think its centre of origin is somewhere in Asia. It affects the crown of the tree and causes it to dieback, although it does not necessarily kill the tree for a number of years. It has only one infection cycle per year and spreads via dropped leaf litter. Often it's not the fungus that kills the tree but instead an opportunistic infection; it really weakens the tree.

I suspect it's going to be quite devastating as our models predict that within 10-20 years the majority of UK ash trees will be infected, if not dead. Scotland has a number of species that have no other habitat than ash trees; if the fungus spreads there the ecological effects will be particularly serious.

### Do you think that there is a divide between mathematicians and biologists?

Possibly; to an extent mathematicians and biologists talk a different language and this can cause difficulties. A lot of my time is spent teaching maths to biologists and I hope this helps to show that maths can be useful and goes some way to bridging that divide.

Currently, many of those in my field, including myself, were trained as mathematicians but I hope they will increasingly begin to come from a biological background.

## In defence of... Legal highs

Rebecca Murphy  
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

First it was MCat. Then it was Spice and Benzo Fury. Now AMT, 2-MK and ethylphenidate are marketed online as legal substitutes for cannabis, ecstasy and other banned substances. These compounds are part of the new phenomenon of legal highs: synthetic substances that mimic the properties of illegal drugs but whose chemical structures have been carefully crafted to fall outside the scope of existing drug laws.

And demand is growing. In addition to the unpalatable risk of arrest associated with illegal drugs, two factors favouring legal highs are price and purity. Compared with banned substances, which can contain as little as 10 per cent of the active compound, legal highs are close to pure and can be bought for less than a quarter of the price of their illegal counterparts.

While the increased use of designer drugs has consequently led to an increase in related deaths, the government's line on legal highs has been disappointingly reactionary. In 2010, MCat and other synthetic amphetamines were banned. Further complexity was introduced in June 2013, when a Temporary Class Drug Order outlawed two further designer drugs for a period of 12 months. The strategy of "adding

inexorably to the list of illicit substances" is a serious overreaction and unpopular with many political advisors and medical professionals. A more level-headed solution comes from the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Drug Policy Reform. Their regulated approach puts "the onus... on the supplier of a new drug to demonstrate a low risk of harm," and would allow restricted distribution of "low risk" substances.

Like any psychoactive substance, legal highs clearly require careful evaluation to determine possible risks to health. However, hysterical prohibition of all compounds should not be favoured over a rational, evidence-based approach. The growth in the use of legal highs presents a unique opportunity to reform our clunky and outdated drugs legislation.

When many legal highs can be considered less dangerous than substances used daily in our society, such as alcohol, an outright ban can never be more than an attempt to curtail freedom of choice and individual liberty.

## SCI ART

*I wrote this poem upon beholding the true horror that was Chemistry B practical and wishing I'd done something arty like HPS.*

### A PART IB CHEMIST'S PRAYER BY LOUIS LONGLEY

Our Chemical in beaker,  
Long-winded be thy name,  
Your synthesis done,  
Your analysis come,  
On Earth as it is in theory,  
Give us this day our infra-red,  
And forgive us our solvent choice,  
As we also have forgiven your impurity,  
And lead us not into mis-assignment,  
But deliver us from our Labs,

Amen.

## In defence of... Nobel Prizes

Thomas Evans  
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

Since its inception in 1901, the Nobel Prize has operated under a harsh, self-imposed rule that many are now challenging: no more than three people may share an award.

This year's prize in physics went to Peter Higgs and François Englert for the theoretical discovery of the Higgs boson, a subatomic particle which explains why things have mass. Undoubtedly, the two octogenarians deserve science's highest accolade. Their work in 1964 led to a 48-year long hunt for the infamously elusive boson and it culminated earlier this year with its headline-grabbing discovery by researchers at CERN.

But awarding the Nobel Prize to just two men, critics claim, is to present a seemingly dishonest public image of science. Science proceeds through teamwork and collaboration, not lone geniuses in ivory towers.

Higgs and Englert were not the sole creators of their theories; Gerald Guralnik, Carl Hagen, and Tom Kibble published a highly

influential paper on the boson shortly after Higgs and Englert, and their exclusion is seen as a consequence of the rule that no more than three people may be a laureate.

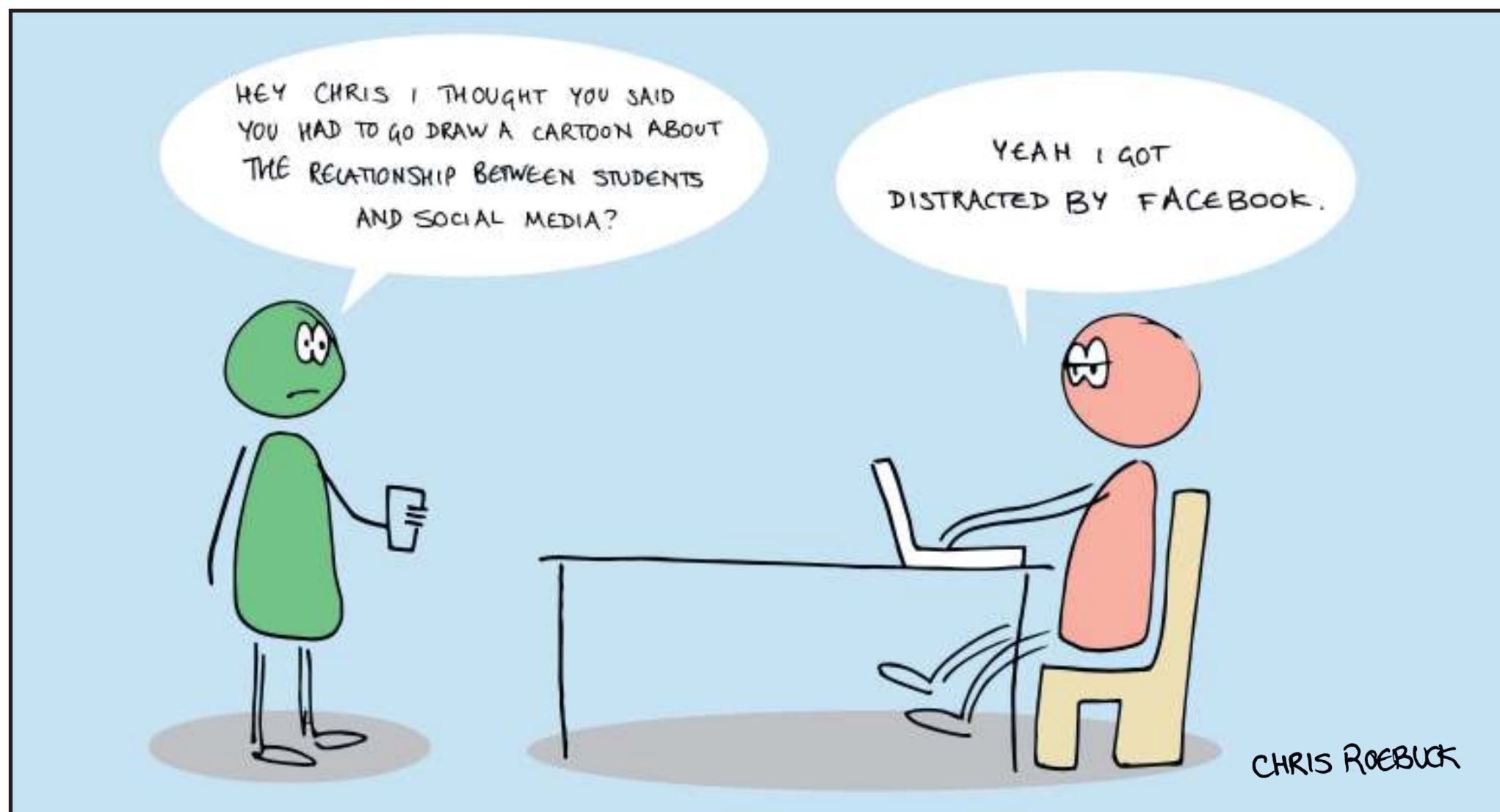
Furthermore, the 6,000 scientists at CERN responsible for confirming Higgs and Englert's theory also go largely unrecognised because of this rule. Is it unfair to reward just two people? Is the rule anachronistic, reflecting how science was conducted at the start of the 20th century and not in tune with the collaborative nature of modern research?

These are valid criticisms. But there is a greater cause that the Nobel Prizes are able to address: science needs celebrities. Fame in science is rare, but this should change. Scientists need to embrace stardom because it is a powerful tool for informing the public.

A scientifically illiterate and misinformed public is dangerous. With issues such as food security, climate change, and mass extinction all facing us within the next few decades, we need a society that understands the science in order to tackle these problems.

The Nobel Prize may deify certain scientists at the expense of others, but in a world dominated by celebrity culture, we need these living heroes to drive public awareness as we approach our precarious future on Earth.





# Comment

## China's silent war on bloggers

Is China's increased internet censorship a return to Tiananmen-style authoritarian crackdowns?



Frederick Green

For many in China, the deep rumble of tanks at Tiananmen Square doesn't seem so long ago. There, students held up stark red banners, chanted, cooked and marched together, all in the name of reform. A threatened Communist leadership, fearful for its grip on power, would not accede, and troops were called in.

The only thing more terrifying than the events at Tiananmen is the notion that it could happen again. A new change in law, permitting the direct arrest of controversial internet bloggers, has uneasy parallels. What's more, while images of a protestor defying a row of tanks circulated on TV screens around the world in 1989, this blow to freedom of speech has received alarmingly little international coverage.

An existing law has been expanded to give authorities the power to arrest microbloggers who spread malicious online "rumours". *The New York Times* anonymously quotes an official who claims that the government's purpose is "draining toxic lies from the internet." Needless to say, such ambiguous terminology gives the internet police free reign.

Supposedly, if an individual's post is seen more than 5000 times, or is re-posted more than 500 times, police may come knocking on their door, and maybe even invite them for a "cup of tea" (an idiomatic prelude for detention). Cells that should be filled with rapists, murderers, and corrupt politicians are instead being crowded with Netizens, sometimes in their teens. In September, sixteen-year-old middle school student Yang Hui was interred in Gansu province for questioning local police's political motivations online.

Yang is part of a new generation of students forged in an explosion in the Chinese middle class. They are often well-informed, well-educated (sometimes in the West) and hungry for change. They bear resemblance to the students of 1989, who grew up in a time of increasing economic prosperity, and of increasing exchange

with the West.

The '89 students took pride in their university organizations, which called for reform and criticised those aspects of Communist rule that remained draconian. Those of today are technologically competent, and have taken to the internet to voice their grievances. They are a demographic that have grown up with, and understand, the internet's potency as a force for change.

*"If an individual's post is seen more than 5000 times police may come knocking on their door"*

And they have used it skillfully. For the last few years, young Netizens and journalists have been the downfall of various corrupt politicians. Take the recent case of Liu Tienan, a high-ranking economic official known for demanding substantial bribes. A formal allegation of corruption levelled against him by a journalist on microblogging site Weibo was reposted by thousands of enraged internet users.

The government responded by sacking Liu in August. For the government to cede to the *vox populi* is a breath of fresh air, even in the toxic cauldron of Beijing.

So it's wrong to think that the Chinese government is working on a different wavelength to its people. The '89 government's ears were much more attuned to student voices than those of previous regimes. Similarly, today's government is willing to make the occasional concession. Sacking a corrupt high official over here might seem like a natural state of affairs, but for a Chinese government obsessed with "saving face" and looking like a genuine superpower, this is monumental.

For a while, it seemed as though President Xi Jinping would remain faithful to his early promise to "always listen to the voice of the people" and root out corruption. His inaugural speech to the 2013 National People's Congress in Beijing, albeit robotic, was stern and sincere, and instilled some observers with genuine hope. Yet politicians rarely keep all their promises, and last month's change in legislation stands testament to that.

But if only this was a simple case of broken promises, as in Western governments. Sadly, the problem runs far

deeper. Both the regime of the late '80s and that of today will only condone reform for so long. Sometimes, simple concessions and changes won't suffice. Tiananmen Square proved to the authorities that largely independent protests, with various different goals, can quickly mould into one.

For the same to happen today is not wholly impossible. The potential of the internet is as remarkable as it is unpredictable. The influence of social media on the Arab Spring shows us that much. No Chinese blogger would be reckless enough to mount a direct challenge to the government on Weibo. But cases of corrupt officials, pollution scares and police scandals circulating online can quickly transform into something much more coherent. They can unite people, often against the government.

The Tiananmen Square crackdown was a terrifyingly public affair, and the violence of that period will, hopefully, never be repeated. The government's newfound hegemony over the internet, while ominous, cannot be considered on the same level. Nonetheless, parallels exist, and the consequences we have so far witnessed are unsettling. The crackdown we are witnessing today is subtle, precise, and vicious.



# Keeping it up on the internet

As ways to connect online increase, are long distance relationships getting easier?



## Stockwell Says

RICHARD STOCKWELL

Social media is a notoriously effective form of procrastination. Whether you are checking if that photo from last night has got its first like, or if you've got any new followers on Twitter, there is always something to take you away from that essay that is due in two hours.

But it's not as if procrastination is anything new. For the Cambridge students of yester-year, toasting muffins over an open fire and wondering what women were like would have been considerable time-killers. Social media provides a solution to the urge to put things off, not the urge itself.

What social media has changed is the way we do this. But are we conversing with real people through social media, or just interacting with online profiles? We have people as Facebook friends who we wouldn't even give an acknowledging nod on passing them in the street.

We have access to their photos, their histories and what they posted as a status aged fifteen – and they have the same on you. Social media allows people to construct an online persona of experiences and attitudes that is, at best, an indirect representation of who they really are.

This online world of indirectness and self-presentation is looking to expand into education. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are growing in the US, and are being explored by the Open University's FutureLearn initiative.

MOOCs have some obvious advantages. Unlike a lecturer, a recording can be paused and rewound, and won't be obscured by the clacking of keyboards or the sniffles and fidgets of the person sitting next to you. All reading materials are available online rather than in stack 902, sixth floor, North Wing, University Library – if your lecturer doesn't have it out on a two month loan.

And it would be considerably cheaper, demanding less of academics' time and saving on the costs of living away from home.

But what kind of education can a MOOC provide? I don't see how it could go far beyond the swallowing of some unquestioned knowledge and a signal to potential employers that you are of the hard-working, employable type. If education is aimed at developing individuals and cultivating a critical style of thought, then MOOCs cannot educate.

Some argue that interactive seminars and even supervisions could be replaced by online forums and video calls. But there is only one way to be sure that you are getting behind people's constructed online personas and hearing what they really think, and that is to see the whites of their eyes.

This applies to lecturers and supervisors, but also all the other people we interact with and bounce ideas off at university, from fellow students to prominent guest speakers. Development of critical thinking requires real people to critique and question.



## Ben Jackson

FOR

Can a long distance relationship last? The question has at last been resolved. Durex has developed 'Fundawear', the vibrating underwear that can be controlled with a flick of your partner's finger from iPhones around the world. Amazing! Astonishing! Simply made for misuse.

Unfortunately, this pulsating, gyrating, dilating experience is currently unavailable to the public. So we must do without. Like many others, I'm currently buried in a relationship maintained by Skype. This is a largely wretched experience, made worse by the fact that I'm a hardcore long-distancer, separated by land as well the rather large Atlantic Ocean.

It's hard to avoid thinking about whether this can last. The obvious answer is 'yes' – many relationships last a year or more of long-distance. Perhaps the better questions are: can they last in as strong a form? And how?

I sank to seeking guidance from Google. The internet is filled with facile advice: remember why you're in the

relationship, maintain trust by openly expressing your feelings, and rely on the support of close friends. This rhapsody of emptiness almost invariably leaves me in a state of despair. Give me Fundawear. You can keep the support of friends.

Let's be honest. Between missing the way her concentration-face is the same as her something-terrible-is-happening-face or the way she always falls asleep before I do, there is an enormous mammoth in the room. There will be no sex. No foreplay. No mornings after, no showers together, NO NAKED SATURDAYS.

At the heart of all this lurks a deep fear. Skype can give you the words, but it can't give you the presence. Fundawear can give you good vibrations, but it can't give you the sex. Where else might I look for relief? Perhaps counting down the days? Until about the last three, that's about as exciting as watching a stump decay. Is there nothing that can save us?

I think there is one thing. At the risk of simultaneously sinking to the level of trite advice and belittling the process of plodding through the day-to-day difficulties of a long-distance relationship, one of the most important things is deciding whether or not you really love this person. Long-distance relationships can work, but only once that decision has been made. After that it becomes much like donating an organ: no one likes it, but sometimes you just have to fucking do it. Think of it as donating an indispensable organ to your future self. Sort of.



## Finn Brewer

AGAINST

I don't think that anyone really believes that long distance relationships are ideal. You can now reach your long distance partner through a range of electronic media: texts, chat messages and email give us a feeling of instant intimacy. But this feeling is brief and illusive at best. In my experience long distance relationships, especially those that are web-based, will only worsen the longer that you are away from each other.

All good relationships are based on intimacy. We fall in love with someone because of their gorgeous eyes, because of how they make us laugh, and the *je ne sais quoi* that makes them like no-one else. Facebook messages are poor replacements for true intimacy. People can hide behind their words online, and it's also easy to misread a message in the heat of the moment. And we have all had that miserable feeling when someone has not replied to our text all day, regardless of the reason why. These hampered and stilted forms of communication are alienating and

potentially damaging to a relationship.

But what about those for who long distance relationships are a fact of life: soldiers, migrants working for their families, and so on? There is something very romantic about the idea of a soldier writing letters to a loved one; the love between a soldier and his wife or girlfriend has probably developed over a long time, and in spite of the possibility of his death.

Skype is another online solution for long distance relationships, but again it gives only a fleeting sense of intimacy: the connection is usually terrible, and I've never got through a single call without wanting to hug or hold hands. Relationships need physical face-to-face contact: without it you risk drifting apart and losing what you used to have.

Unlike the migrant worker, who likely has a responsibility to look after his family, we students can choose whether to stay with our far-away partners. And it's not an easy choice: if we stay with them, we have to make time to call them; when the holidays come around, we have to choose between them, our families, and the work experience we should probably be doing. And if we compromise, and prioritize work and our friends during term time, we risk hurting them, and hurting ourselves too: for what is a lover but a part of you?

Commitment for its own sake is worthless. Don't turn down the incredible people who may be all around you if your distant love can't offer you the happiness that you deserve.

# Is Facebook the new Playboy?



## Zoe Liu

'Girls are good at looking like they're having fun, aren't they?' a male friend once remarked while checking his Facebook news feed. And it's true. As women, we in particular know how to use social networking to our advantage. Upload a snap to Facebook, and everyone from your Aunt Muriel to that awful ex knows you're out having a good time. We constantly remove ourselves from the moment to document and display that moment online. In an age of uploads and updates, we switch from the observer to the observed in an instant. But more importantly, we are editors.

Platforms like Facebook and Instagram are tools for shaping how we are perceived, and women use them best. We're simply more aware of our Internet presence than men. How could you expect anything less when we're conditioned to fuss over our appearance and be attuned to every imperfection? Editing is the make-up for the virtual face. We provide our audience with a lens with which to

view us. Being both behind and in front of the camera, we are empowered to control how we are portrayed and perceived, and through which filters.

Yet that power exists within a framework that is ultimately reductive. Our capacity to edit and exhibit only reveals our insecurity under the cyberspace gaze. The female relationship with social media is therefore a rocky one. We get a buzz from connecting online, but there's the anxiety of the tagged photo notification, of wondering if you upped the contrast a little too much. Because we are aware of our online visibility, we touch up and crop out until we are happy with what we see – and what we want others to see. We distance our real and virtual selves, reduce 3D to 2D, and in doing so become defined by a profile picture and cover photo. The worst offender here is surely Tinder; a dating app that shows you singles currently near your location, and since its launch a year ago has generated over 250 million matches. I had a go at Tinder (purely for the purposes of this article, of course) and although to start with it's fun and exciting, this soon wears thin. Its dependence on the visual is exactly the cause of this. When you first begin to browse profiles, you might look at their age or even your number of mutual interests, but after a while you focus only on how attractive they are in their photo. In less than a second you pass judgement on whether or not you could connect with this person. The process becomes apathetic. All

that's left is our desire to be validated by our number of "likes"; we need to know that we are seen and appreciated. We therefore become complicit in our commodification, commodified in exhibiting and commodifying in observing. Tinder is ultimately a thinly-veiled meat market.

*"From models posing naked for men's magazines to the damsel-in-distress figure, women's commodification is widespread and historical"*

So if Tinder plays on our willingness to edit and exhibit, Snapchat is exactly the opposite. It removes the need for self-consciousness. The photo you send is temporary and seen only by those you select, so appearing as an idealised version of yourself is no longer a concern. The effect is liberating and refreshing. It celebrates the ugly and doesn't take itself too seriously. And perhaps these are the reasons for the app's phenomenal success. But as liberating as it may seem, we remain under surveillance. Snapchat is just another means to display ourselves – only the aim is not to appear attractive but fun.

But aren't men also commodified by social media? Why is it an issue for

women in particular? From models posing naked for men's magazines to the damsel-in-distress we see time and time again in literature and in film, women's commodification is widespread and historical. Male commodification is not. By playing to our objectification as editor then exhibitor, we send the message that it's okay to treat us as objects for someone else's gratification. When we ourselves are preoccupied with our image above all else, why should others treat us any differently?

The obvious solution would be to look away. But this is easier said than done. For me at least, Facebook is key to my social interactions. We are constantly connected to social networking platforms by our smartphones and tablets. We are so entangled in the World Wide Web that any attempt to escape the cycle of observer and observed would be futile. While taste and touch involve choice, all we need to do to see is have our eyes open. The visual is unavoidable. Women especially are constantly bombarded by images of how we should look and behave. It is only natural that we attempt to recreate what we see, with Facebook and Instagram as our billboards and front covers.

We live life in the eye of the beholder, reduced to the images we display by those we connect with. Our commodification is inevitable. Our only power is in how we are commodified; we choose the role we play but can never exit the stage.



# Tuition boom, access gloom



Laurie Martin

Earlier this week, thousands of secondary school students across the country sent off their UCAS applications to Oxbridge. Come December, eight out of ten will be invited for interview. Those eight will then be whittled down to just two given an offer. Statistics tell us that one of those two students will have gone to a private school. But that's where our maths breaks down. Because just 0.001 of that original ten will be on free school meals.

Research by education charity the Sutton Trust found that private school students are 55 times more likely to get into Oxbridge than students on free school meals. That's particularly striking when you consider that pupils on free schools meals comprise about fifteen per cent of young people in the UK, double the proportion of

students educated privately.

What accounts for this startling discrepancy? Political orthodoxy has held for the last few decades that less advantaged students fare badly in university admissions because of a lack of aspiration. If we raise their motivation levels, it is thought, we will increase their chances of making a successful application.

Having worked in two London secondary schools, this commonplace fits uncomfortably with my own experience of young people who, I've found, are incredibly ambitious. I talk to students on a daily basis for whom going to a Russell Group university is a genuine goal. From where I'm standing, there's no shortage of aspiration.

Academic research corroborates my anecdotal impression. A survey conducted by the British Education Research Association concludes that aspiration levels amongst children of different socioeconomic background varies very little. Findings by think-tank the Joseph Rowntree Foundation similarly finds no causal relationship between aspiration and academic attainment. It's not poverty of aspiration which holds poorer students back. The fact is that these students just don't get the grades.

That's not to say, however, that we should give credence to the likes of Dominic Cummings, Michael Gove's policy advisor, whose recent association of intellect and genetics has been justly discredited in the last few days. Neither should we conclude that this has to do exclusively with the quality of teaching in our state secondary schools, or an institutional prejudice in our university admissions departments.

This is about educational opportunity. Students from less well-off families simply do not enjoy the same advantages as their wealthier peers. And nowhere is this problem becoming more significant, and more alarming, than in the world of private tuition.

Private tuition is booming. Though hard numbers are difficult to come by, the Sutton Trust indicates that one in four young people in London has received some form of tuition, up 6 per cent since 2005. The private tuition market was last year priced at £6bn, and it's likely that there are now more private tutors than employees of the NHS.

Given that some private tutors are reportedly charging up to £60 an hour, it's no wonder that poorer families are being priced out of the market. And for those of us who think educational

opportunity shouldn't be tied to family wealth, that's a concerning development.

One-to-one tuition is widely accepted as an effective means of improving grades, offering tailored support not usually available in the classroom. That this might be the preserve of children already at an advantage in terms of family wealth and educational outcomes should worry us.

So what can we do about it? We can't stop parents paying for private tuition (we wouldn't want to – more education is only ever a good thing). But we can extend the same service to families who can't afford it.

There are now a growing number of non-profit organisations delivering private tuition, free of service, to disadvantaged students. Some of these are on your doorstep: with Cambridge Student Community Action, for instance, you can give one-to-one homework help to primary school kids in the city.

I work for The Access Project, a London-based charity which matches volunteers with motivated state school students for one-to-one tutorials. These weekly academic sessions help our students achieve better grades and progress to top universities.

The impact has been remarkable. Just last week I was speaking to Cyan, who joined the programme in Year Ten. With no history of higher education in her family, Cyan didn't think she was special enough to go to a top university. But after four years of support from her volunteer tutors, Cyan secured a place at the University of Oxford to read Music.

There is no shortage of motivated and highly aspirational students, like Cyan, who would benefit from some degree of extra academic support. And, with that support, we can begin to address the inequitable intake at our top universities.

So I'm issuing a call to action. If you're graduating this summer and moving to London, consider volunteering an hour of your week to combat educational disadvantage. Whether it be with The Access Project or another volunteering organisation, you can have a transformative impact on the life chances of a young person.

There's no better way to utilise your academic skills to help others. Oh, and it's also great fun.

*Laurie Martin edited Varsity in Michaelmas 2011. He is now Programme and Communications co-ordinator at The Access Project.*

# Flogging fashionable feminism



Sadbh O'Sullivan

There's a form of feminism that is in vogue in the media. *Cosmo* is sex positive. *Grazia* counted the 2012 Delhi gang rape as one of its 'Top Ten Hot Stories This Week'. *Vogue* Editor-In-Chief Alexandra Schulman has made an 'educational' video about the artificiality of her magazine's photo shoots to be shown in schools. These are self-proclaimed feminist voices, not only respected but coveted for their style, sass and other sexy synonyms.

In a sense, this is cause for celebration. Exposure prompts questioning

of the media, and this will hopefully cause a shift in the attitudes of the magazine industry.

Yet, in these magazines, there is no actual analysis of how we as 'women' are supposed to be empowered. Nothing is said of the potentially harmful messages and attitudes being perpetuated all around us, and in the magazines themselves.

And if you are disabled, queer, not white, trans\* or anything other than a copy of the women portrayed in beauty product adverts, you don't even get a form of feminism to question. You are rarely featured, let alone given the opportunity to speak.

Last week on BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour, journalist Charlotte Raven called out this 'feminism' as a red herring. She argued that we cannot take seriously the claims of magazines to empowerment when a piece about sexual freedom is juxtaposed with the airbrushed photo of a 'woman' so abstracted from reality that she is disembodied. As well as being a com-

modity in herself, she is used to sell her own ideal so that the reader will buy the facewash she uses.

The media's current approach to feminism is not one that explores the problematic structure and content of women's magazines. It may acknowledge the problem, but it does not combine this with genuine engagement.

Even though I've been a self-proclaimed magazine junkie from the age of twelve, I haven't read a glossy magazine in years. I can't hack feeling so angry and sad whilst reading something supposedly for pleasure.

I am not alone in feeling angry at these magazines. Many blogs have taken a stand in criticising the absolute shit that some publications try to pass off as feminist.

Charlotte Raven has gone one step further, creating her own media space, the *Feminist Times*, which launched online earlier this week and will imminently release a limited print run to subscribers. Given the insidious nature of the magazine and advertising indus-

tries, however, there is only so much that the sort of much-needed criticism that Raven will offer can achieve.

Modernity is playing its part. The print industry looks to be dying a natural death as modern technology creates new, online media platforms. The online presence of women's media has opened a space where it is less likely a *Cosmo* girl will speak with authority.

The reaction to the sorry state of women's magazines has largely played out online, with even printed publications utilising the web to crowdfund their efforts. The internet is allowing people to push against dominant trends in a big way.

But I don't think that print media should be left by the wayside to fester. The very things that draw people to print are useful and should be preserved by feminist journalists: the physicality of paper; the freedom to really concentrate and take in a piece without hyperlinks beckoning you from every other line in the article;

good design; the shininess and covetability of a hard copy magazine. (I did say I'm a magazine junkie.)

These are the elements that should be combined into a new journalistic form, allowing self-identified women to speak with confidence and authority.

There is a need for a feminist-only print space, wherein the many faces of modern feminism can freely express themselves without being isolated in a solely academic context.

In order for feminism to really broaden our minds in an interesting and entertaining way, the understandings and definitions of 'woman' and indeed 'man' need to be completely reinterpreted.

The magazine can and should be recreated as a feminist space in order to confront the problem of media sexism. There is a fantastic opportunity to go beyond preaching to the converted, and allow more to question what the media says to and for them.

*Sadbh O'Sullivan is co-founder and editor of Ladybeard magazine*

*Sidgwick Says*  
**What's  
your online  
persona?**

*I sometimes find myself  
typing flippant things  
I would rarely say in  
real life – online I am  
free from the constraint  
of whether certain  
words or phrases seem  
appropriate.*

AZIZA  
AMES

*I try not to keep too much  
of an online persona.  
I find people who live  
their lives online quite  
cringeworthy.*

LAURA  
CLASSICS

*My online persona is a  
window through which  
my fans can take a peek  
into my BNOC lifestyle.*

SHYAM  
ECONOMICS

*My online persona is  
split into two – nice guy  
& porn addict. Depends  
if the door's locked really.*

MATT  
ENGINEERING





# vulture

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# Going to the Ballet...

## UN, DEUX, AVANT GARDE

This season, the Cambridge Junction have hosted the international cast of Lost Dog dance company performing their acclaimed Edinburgh Fringe show *It Needs Horses* alongside their new work *Home for Broken Turns*. Avant Garde dance company will also be taking to the stage, performing a triple bill of *The Black Album*, *A Classical Break* and *Dark Matter*.

Daniel Pitt, Arts Producer at the Junction, describes Avant Garde's work as "moody, with a dark atmosphere to it." This group's work focuses greatly on music, with *The Black Album* composed around responses to experimental DJ Jazzanova, while *A Classical Break* links Beethoven, Mozart and Prokofiev scores with break-dancing.

Compared to other forms of theatre, dance tends to attract smaller audiences, says Pitt, which is the same across the city: "There isn't much of a dance theatre scene in Cambridge." Despite his concerns over low audience numbers, Pitt certainly appreciates the liberating nature of dance. "Dance is less bound by convention. Contemporary dance is so free – almost as if there are no rules left at all. It affects you on a visceral level." He admits that a lack of clear narrative during dance shows can scare some people away: "Dance is generally about feeling, it often isn't easily understandable."

*Avant Garde Dance will perform at the Cambridge Junction on Wednesday 13th November*

# Beauty, brains and ballet

Hannah Piercy  
THEATRE EDITOR

I ask Elizabeth Spence, President of Cambridge Ballet Club, to explain her love of dance. Elizabeth sees ballet as "a kind of art form, a way of expressing myself." She argues that it is "very much creative," suggesting that despite the physical and technical sides of ballet, accomplished ballerinas must also possess a strong stage presence.

I'm intrigued to hear Elizabeth's perspective on how ballet and other dance fits in with theatre and its other more unusual forms, such as opera. She agrees that traditional ballet is perhaps analogous to opera, but suggests operas, often in Italian or German, can be "even harder to understand. If there's no language at all, it's universal."

But while the occasional touring production visits the Junction, Mumford Theatre, or the Corn Exchange, the Cambridge dance scene remains limited in scope. Elizabeth suggests a practical reason for this which I had never considered: to put on a dance or physical theatre production, you not only need a large stage, but plenty of room in the wings. Venues like the ADC are just not suited to dance productions.

Nonetheless, Elizabeth hopes more dance shows might in future find their way to Cambridge. She gives an example of a tiny theatre near her hometown where a professional company performed *Beauty and the Beast*: "I know it's possible!"

Elizabeth has a lot to say about ballet stereotypes. Although the Ballet

Club consists of far more women than men, they have some excellent male dancers and an inspiring male teacher, Mark Swann, who used to dance for European Ballet.

"Actually doing ballet isn't 'girly' at all," argues Elizabeth. "It's tough physically; it improves your posture and your

***"Doing ballet isn't 'girly' at all. It's tough physically; it improves your posture and your core strength. It's not just about looking elegant!"***

core strength. It's not just about looking elegant!"

I ask Elizabeth's opinion of *Black Swan* and the media's recurrent tendency to link ballet to issues of stress and mental health. Elizabeth didn't particularly like *Black Swan* as she didn't think it was realistic: "From my personal experience, ballet has always been friendly and supportive."

She believes ballet at Cambridge is particularly far from the stereotype, as dancers don't work towards exams: "I suppose the only conflict would be with yourself – if you want to push yourself further, then it can get frustrating."

Having already discussed whether she considers it a sport or an art (for Elizabeth, it has the physical toughness and benefits of a sport, but is undoubtedly an art), I ask whether ballet has

the same stress-busting effect as other sports. "Yes, definitely, definitely!" is her enthusiastic response. "Concentrating on the movements your body's doing, listening to the music, taking time out from everything else – but also the exercise itself."

When discussing the Ballet Club's annual production, she predicts that it'll be a "sell-out": "Of course, if you're hoping for excellent acting, you're not going to have that. It's more pantomime than anything else, because everything's so overacted."

There are constraints, too, on the sorts of production the club can choose. "We have to be realistic about how good we are. Everybody wants to do *Swan Lake*, but on the practical side we can't afford that many tutus and on the artistic side it would have to be absolutely perfect," she tell.

Elizabeth is fully aware of the aspects of ballet than can put people off, saying she has known people to "get halfway through a ballet and ask why no-one was talking." She suggests it "helps to read the synopsis before," highlighting the difference between ballet and today's usual entertainment of TV and film where "you're so used to having everything explained to you."

Elizabeth's advice is to just enjoy the dance, without worrying about what's next; she argues that with the music and the artistic beauty of the movement, "everyone can get something from it."

*The CU Ballet Club are holding auditions for solo roles in their Lent term show on Saturday 16th November.*

## Ballet on a budget

### Kizzie Burkett's top tips for doing ballet on a shoe string

#### Sign up to student schemes

One of the most popular is the Royal Opera House Student Standby scheme, where anyone with a student card can sign up entirely for free. This will enable you to pick up unsold tickets for as little as £10, in addition to student discounts on all other shows.

#### There are always cheaper tickets

If you don't mind standing or perching on a bench at the back of the theatre, with a partially restricted view, you can snatch up tickets for as little as £4 at the Royal Opera House.

#### Buy last minute tickets

You can usually buy unsold tickets at vastly reduced prices close to the performance. This is definitely for those of you who like spontaneity in their evening's entertainment and don't mind waiting around the box office.

#### Pick your performance wisely

Matinée performances and modern, less known ballets tend to be cheaper, so try experimenting with something you haven't heard of before – there's much more to ballet than *The Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake*.

#### Smaller names and local theatres

You can get a completely different, more intimate ballet experience in a smaller, local theatre. The majority of ballet companies do not have a permanent base, instead choosing to travel across the country. Seeing these smaller companies are great for students – the tickets are cheaper and you can also save on transport costs.

#### Support university dance societies

Cambridge University Ballet Club performs an annual full-length ballet at Anglia Ruskin's Mumford Theatre in February, with discounted student tickets. Past productions include *Alice in Wonderland*, *Cinderella* and *The Sleeping Beauty*. Also look out for the CU Contemporary Dance Workshop performance in January.

#### Support local/youth performances

Local dance organisations produce highly professional performances throughout the year that are cheap to attend and highly welcoming. In Cambridge, keep your eyes peeled for the end of year performance of the vocational dance school, Bodyworks, and local dance schools such as King Slocombe.

#### Attend the graduation performances of ballet schools

This is your chance to spot future stars, so that you can smugly say that you saw them before they were famous. These performances are great for ballet newbies, as they're cheaper than a company show and tour across the country. Plus it's always humbling to see what somebody has achieved through sheer hard work by age 19.

#### Resort to cinema, TV or YouTube

Although the experience is totally different from seeing ballet live, it's a great place to start. Performances from the Royal Ballet and Bolshoi Ballet are screened throughout the year. You can also get a unique insight into ballet via companies' YouTube channels – try the Royal Opera House, Anaheim Ballet, New York City Ballet and Tendu TV.

Visit Kizzie's website [www.facebook.com/RoyalOperaHouseCambridge](http://www.facebook.com/RoyalOperaHouseCambridge) for more student schemes



# It's a kind of music magic

**Sabina Dewfield** sits down with the director and cast of the ADC's operatic mainshow, *The Magic Flute*, about their Grand Tour-themed production

Simply put, Mozart's *The Magic Flute* is a masterpiece. Its startling, almost childlike innocence has been analysed, deconstructed and reimagined hundreds of times over the last two centuries, making it one of the most popular and enduring operas ever written. Where most masterpieces rely on an overarching logic, symmetry and aesthetic unity, *The Magic Flute* defies conventional standards of coherence and clarity in favour of the fantastical, the impossible and, above all, the imagination.

Composed in the year of the composer's death, *The Magic Flute* has an edge of irony to it. At first glance the work seems to be a simple, suburban sing-spiel, but the sheer diversity of operatic idioms have caused critics to complain of Mozart cramming everything into *Die Zauberflöte*.

This much cannot be disputed. Take the Queen of Night, for example: she is a classic coloratura soprano, straight from the pages of any *opera seria*. In the next scene we meet Papageno, a stock pantomime buffoon, and wonder if another cast has accidentally stumbled onto the wrong set. In this regard, the opera demands a flexible, versatile cast with exceptional vocal and acting pedigree.

*"We are fantastically lucky in Cambridge with the choice of singers, I don't think there would a better place to put on such an opera"*

Sitting down with director Rob Hawkins and musical director Quintin Beer, I ask how difficult casting the *Flute* was. "We are fantastically lucky in Cambridge with the choice of singers; I don't think there would a better place to put on such an opera."

And what about the fact that this is the first opera the ADC has staged in almost a decade? "It gives you the opportunity to bring the opera scene right to the centre of town, to a new audience, and put it in a context that people don't normally associate, you know, opera and ADC."

I ask whether they were planning on having a full orchestra, but Rob shakes his head: "We *do* have an all-star band, fifteen people, which was already bit of a struggle to fit in the ADC's pit."

*The Magic Flute*, with its fairly generic stock characters, a timeless, fairytale setting and a contrived storyline, is a director's dream when it comes to original staging interpretations. From Kenneth Branagh's First World War film adaptation to the Mayan theme of the Chicago Lyric Opera, *The Magic Flute* is fertile ground for imaginative direction.

This production

promises to be no less inventive: "We're set at the height of the Grand Tour and we hope to be in period dress as much as our budget will allow it!"

Thematically, the Grand Tour preserves many of the best original features of the libretto while bringing an edge of situational coherence to the plot and a *raison d'être* for each character. "No-one ever really thinks about it, but there is no reason for Tamino to be where he is at the start of the opera. He just is."

Wanting to give the characters a purpose, Rob first gave thought to Tamino's possible backstory: "A gentleman of that class, with an interest in adventure and nobility, enlightenment and knowledge – what might they be up to?"

And so the directors hit upon their Grand Tour interpretation. In Tamino's revamped characterisation the prince becomes a "bewildered, toffy, and fundamentally naïve" young noble on his eighteenth-century equivalent of a post-Oxbridge gap year: romping around the Mediterranean, digging for crypts and searching for ancient statues to send back to the British Museum.

As far as interpretations go, setting *The Magic Flute* within the context of rediscovering classical antiquity is genius: in doing so the setting justifies, and redefines, the quasi-pagan cult leaders Sarastro and the Queen of Night. To my mind the Queen embodies the cult-worship of Egyptian goddess Isis – especially the metaphorical lifting of the veil of Isis as a means of political and intellectual obscurantism.

Rob nods: "The characters split into two – those aristocrats contemporary with Tamino's time, and the more magical, mythical characters who, well, it's ambiguous as to whether they're Greek gods come back to life."

I ask about the music's relationship to the characters: "We often talk about music as a symptom," Quintin explained, "when a new thought enters a character's head, you can hear the change in the music before they've started to sing it. It just makes sense: everything that happens onstage is present in the music."

Rob, with a comparison that would make the most traditional of music dons turn uncomfortably in their leather-studded chairs, agrees, saying: "It's certainly very characterful writing; it's like a modern-day musical ... like Bernstein: he would have a leitmotif for each character."

The cast do not seem daunted by the prospect of performing such a famous work. "It's quite easy for me, in a way, to act my part," Joel Williams, playing Tamino, says. "For example, I have to be in awe of the Queen of Night as she commands me to save her daughter and, basically, all I do is stand there [...] in awe of her. It's pretty easy when she's sounding so amazing. Likewise, if I have to fall in love with Pamina, I mean she sings so beautifully that it's just not that hard."

Henry Hawkesworth, on the other hand, takes his cues from the score. "The music for each character is so wonderfully defined. My character's [Sarastro's] music is low; it's the closest the Classical period got to finding its own kind of church style. Of course, my direct opposite is the Queen of Night, and her music could not be more different to mine." Quintin nods: "It's so

*"An improbable farrago of Viennese slapstick, oriental fairy-tale and Masonic allegory"*

wild, and extraordinarily high."

Rob later elaborated on the Queen of Night's role, which is one that has often been interpreted as a parody of coloratura sopranos in *opera seria*: "She's the sort of fickle, Greek goddess figure. All these characters, in Ovidian myth, are portrayed as changeable, with a very human nature. The feud between the Queen of Night and Sarastro is basically one of those obstinate, warring-gods type feuds."

A thorny topic in any staging of *The Magic Flute* is its prejudicial overtones – namely misogyny and racism. "We ended up twisting Monostatos into a slightly different character: he's no longer a Moor, but a rakish gentleman, so it just became pragmatic to rewrite all the really quite horrible racial material. It was no longer applicable to the story," Rob tells me.

And women? "With gender

inequality, you know, it's harder: all our characters have the same gender as the original – it's integral to the plot."

Another famous aspect of the opera is Mozart's fairly overt representation of freemasonry in *The Magic Flute*. Cloaked rituals, rival light or dark-worshipping cults, a high priest and the protagonists' eventual initiations are all inescapable, if strange, elements of the drama.

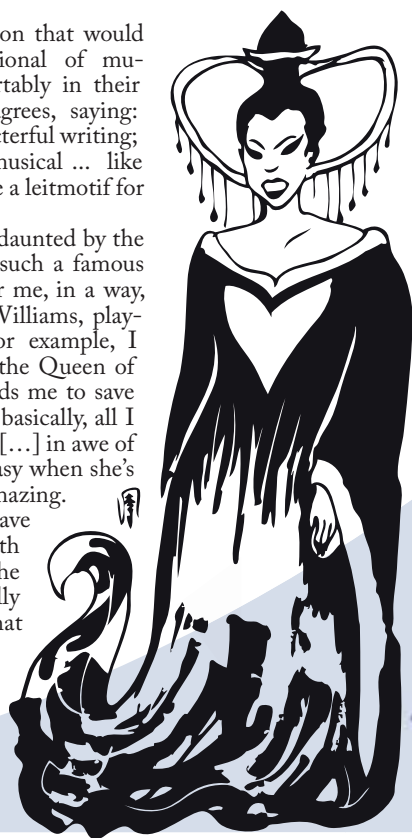
Understandably, contemporary productions tend to downplay the Illuminati references, which – although fascinating both from a historical and a 'getting-your-DoS-off-topic' supervision perspective – fail to resonate with twenty-first century audiences.

"We're not really playing that up," Quintin tells me. "It is inherent, and if you wanted to you could read into those elements really quite a lot. In the music as well there are references to the number three: chords played three times, keys with three flats, you know, but it's actually not particularly rewarding to try and base your production on those."

Rob agrees: "The Masonic stuff is a can of worms and if you open it..." Suddenly his enthusiastic smile beams and he ends our interview rather quixotically: "I've decided I'd rather have other fun with it."

*The Magic Flute is on at the ADC Theatre from 29 October to 2 November.*

... and a night at the Opera



Illustrations by Moana Li



## Letters from the Lab

RAMEEN SHAKUR

The start of another academic year and anaemic, vitamin D deficient and oxycutted faces of freshers swim towards me as I attempt my perilous migration upstream from one coffee house to another. "Those were the days," I would like to say. But my status as the proverbial student means I'm unable to reminisce. The few letters that have embellished my name mean the porters now give a nod of approval. I am a tax payer, a responsible citizen (on weekdays and before 10pm) and had the good consciousness to renew my TV license before I even received a reminder.

Now, as a postgraduate, one feels the hope and aspirations of every member of society. You can make a difference, you can change lives, you can even get a job! My family continually reminds me of the sacrifices being made, whilst friends who took the Brylcreem and pastel-coloured chinos lifestyle to heart attempt to re-enact Grand Theft Auto scenes around that far corner of Cambridge, Parker's Piece.

The academic bubble also just got a lot smaller. Dedicating the remainder of your youth (but not quite all of your pension contributions) for further research, which no one except your departmental colleagues really understand, can be demoralising. (Except my own work which is of course of pivotal importance to all humankind.) In actual fact, however, I feel more liberated than ever before: a project defined by you and for which you were selected. Yet, the post-doc who seemed so encouraging at the time of the rotation is now too busy to see you cry a river as yet another experiment fails.

But this is still the time where ideas and conversations about 'what if' seem to flow the most. The time where you have the confidence to say, tomorrow is another day, and yes, you will get to the Nobel Prize ball someday. Welcome to the Premiership of Academia: where only English students should be allowed to do great world-leading research and living in Cambridge for more than five years does not mean you can apply for an independent grant and have your own research lab.

This is the time of independent thought, independent hard work and independent lonely nights trying to finish your report. The postgraduate community provides the inspiration for the future generation of researchers and scholars in this bazaar of ideas. I hope I can look back on another year and say it was worth it and still have the momentum to face the avalanche for another term. I think so – with thanks to my friends and family and the resilience and support network that begets research hubs such as ours. Well, at least I'll never have to do Part II again.



# The Drinking Game

Magdalen Hoyt unravels the intricacies of drinking rituals in Cambridge

The Cambridge drinking scene may be as vigorous, intellectually orientated and diverse as the admissions process itself. Unlike American frat parties, we have 'swaps'; instead of mere soirées we get slogged on candlelit three-course dinners and pub trips become pub crawls.

This is without even mentioning May Week: the notoriously newspaper-slammed days of champagne spilling and raucous behaviour. To some, getting into Cambridge is not enough to satisfy their sense of 'privilege' and another kind of initiation is needed to admit them further into the depths of the 'depravity' the papers drink up.

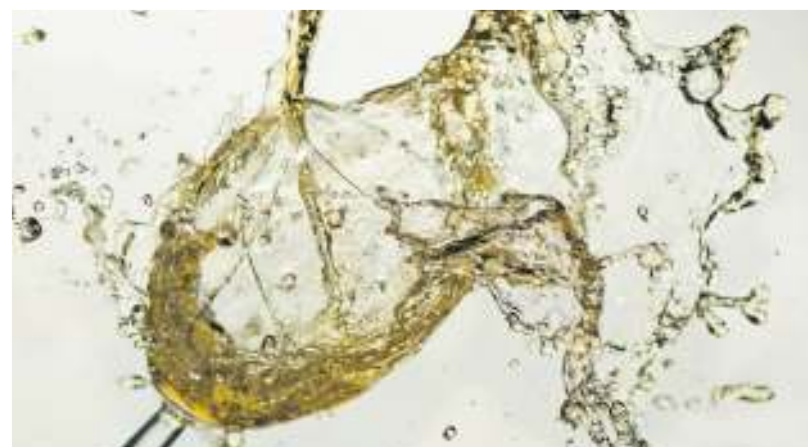
Whether it's pennyng at formal or fines at society swaps, we drink in the same manner that, as bright-eyed freshers, we viewed this institution: a challenge. But first you have to understand the rules of the game. It's in our DNA.

Family formal breaks the seal. Parents are proud of their children's abilities, especially if that includes good conversation and the ability to down enough wine and stay upright. Our parents have taught us well and when subject dinners roll around (Classics' ones are as riotous

as they come) we have learnt the art of using alcohol as an instrument of learning. Wine in supervisions, formals with academics: by graduation, the art of drunken conversation has become our forte and we can small talk even when downing vodka with our professors.

This thirst-fuelled intellect is not only limited to occasion, but has affected the methods we use to make our alcoholic experiments. The Cambridge gallon challenge stands as the epitome of Cambridge drinking etiquette. One gallon i.e. eight pints, is consumed inside the vicinity of eight specified pubs in Cambridge. It becomes a kind of maths question: "If Harry must drink 8 drinks at 8 different pubs all at 10 minutes distance apart from each other, how much time will it take him and how many units of alcohol will he have consumed by pub 8?"

Fines on swaps resemble a game of bingo; highest 'lad' points for the person who has not only had a three-some in the law library but got into the pants of a Blues rower. Pennyng, originating amongst students and dons at Oxford in the 13th-14th century, has been adapted and revised: not



Pennyng originated amongst students at Oxford in the 13th & 14th centuries

only do we have engineers' pennies, but we have our stealthy alternatives with the 'spoon of doom', 'the knife of strife'. Creativity is not limited to the way we structure our essays and pose our arguments, but an inherent part of all aspects of the Cambridge lifestyle.

Wine is the blood of Cambridge, integral to the functioning of departments and colleges, the secret solace of

the academics and for some, the essay-escape or the conclusion-congratulator. Yet like all aspects of the Cambridge lifestyle, drinking is not restricted to normal limitations. When we drink, we will drink for that First. One may think this is extreme, but extremism is embedded in the culture of Cambridge itself. After all, no one told off Watson and Crick for 'experimenting' in the Eagle.



## SINGLE vs STEADY

The Great Debate

Daisy May Pope  
SUCKER FOR LOVE

For one have always been a sucker for love. Having that special someone to share laughs with, and who you know has your back. Who wouldn't want that?

But this year, I gave myself a New Year's resolution: to stay single for one whole year, or at least to avoid unnecessary dramas.

So far, whilst on my 365 day love-ban, I have learnt that being single between the ages of 18 and 22 shouldn't be something we are complaining about. Instead, we should be revelling in the freedom it gives us.

Look, the reality is that we'll (probably, hopefully) meet someone by the time we're 30, meaning that even then we'll be with our partners for the

majority of our lives. What say we actually enjoy the free, non-committal years of our life and leave the tedious compromising, legal jargon and long phone calls for when we're past our prime.

I mean, who are you kidding? That guy on the other side of the lab with

*"Have you ever thought which shade of grey you and your partner are?"*

the dreamy eyes who keeps liking your Facebook statuses and Instagram pics isn't The One, otherwise he'd have 1) asked for your number and 2) called you by now to set up a date. It's not rocket science (unlike your degree).

I'm not saying we can't have fun with these people but we need to see them as the frogs that help us find our Prince Charming at a time that we're actually ready for a relationship.

I mean, what does being "in a relationship" really mean at Cambridge anyway? Once upon a time, not so long ago, one's relationship status was black and white. Either you were single, or you were in a relationship.

However, in the post-Carrie Bradshaw era an ever expanding grey area has emerged (*Fifty Shades* to be precise). Even Facebook offers "in an open relationship" and "it's complicated" relationship status options.

So, have you ever thought which shade of grey you and your partner are? It's a scary thought – what with long-distance, friends with benefits and loved-up monogamous relationships, it can be

hard to see through all the foggy grey.

But what do YOU want? If you really want that person with the dreamy eyes then just go for it! See what happens. Let's face it: as Cambridge students, we're all used to challenges and a bit of hard work, so why should we shy away from making a move when it comes to love?

For the people who can feel in their bones that they're not ready to commit to that one special someone, there's an easy solution: don't. Stay single and avoid letting anyone down.

The bottom line is whether that "special someone" who will always laugh with you and has your back is your lover or simply your best friend, we are young, heart ache to heart ache we stand, no promises, no demands.

In the words of Pat Benetar "Love is a battlefield," so stay single. I am.

If, like us, the start of term has hit you like a train full of dirty pint glasses, then this week's playlist is for you. As we all know (unless you're a fresher, in which case, sorry), Cambridge changes from party central to a clinic for Berocca addiction faster than you can say 'DoS meeting,' so we thought we'd gather some songs that will wrap you up and massage your poor, pounding brain with warm waves of sonic comfort.

Happy listening!

DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY  
Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes  
OUT OF THE WOODS  
Foals  
WHAT I MIGHT DO  
Ben Pearce  
HOW DO YOU FEEL  
Zebra Katz (feat. Michele Lamy)  
TAKING OVER  
Joe Goddard  
YOUNG FOLKS  
Wolf Saga (feat. Leamon)  
AROUND (SOLOMUN REMIX)  
Noir + Haze

PLAYLIST OF THE WEEK  
THE HANGOVER

## Cambridge English Dictionary

The definitive guide to the Cambridge language.

### swap (n.)

Pronunciation: /swap/

1. format for meetings between drinking societies; traditionally accompanied by dinner and wine, typically held at suspect curry houses although can take place at formals  
*the Lions-Emmanuelles swap was typically scandalous*

### -soc (n.)

Pronunciation: /sok/

1. suffix, abbreviation meaning society, often used to add legitimacy to groups or meetings  
*the students created their own history-soc in the hope of funding for booze from college*



**DO A FULL ON TAYLOR SWIFT**  
Ran into your ex in a crowded lecture theatre or café? The answer's sweet and simple: take a leaf out of Miss Swift's book. Her songbook to be precise. Write something totally personal about your relationship and subsequent breakup and then perform it to everyone. And I mean everyone. The greater number of strangers that you can enlighten about the intimate details of your relationship, the better. The entire world should hear about what a complete and utter douchebag they were (even if they weren't). Backup dancers actively encouraged, as they're guaranteed to feel more awkward than you.

**SAY 'HI'**  
Engage in brief pleasantries. Ask them about their new DoS or compliment them on their folder and file colour coordination. Not only do you come off the bigger person (and us students always love another reason to feel smug), but your effortless manners and impeccable politeness will only serve to make your opponent ex feel more awkward in the wake of their own social inadequacies. Oh, and I suppose it keeps things a little more civil for the next time you meet, which, Cambridge being Cambridge, is probably going to be quite soon.

**HAVE A BREAKDOWN**  
Arguably not the most dignified of options, but it's great for venting and should at least inspire some sympathy (initially, but it should be noted that frequent repetition of this option can cause some distress and annoyance to others). If you're really committed to making them feel bad why not go the whole hog and do a Britney in front of them, although perhaps replace the car for a bicycle. Cheaper and more conveniently accessed.

**WALK THE OTHER WAY**  
Scratch that, run! Run as fast as you can in the opposite direction. Who needs lectures anyway? It's not the smoothest (or most musical) of moves, but it gets you as far away from everyone involved as fast as possible. Don't be so quick as to not look where you're going though: walking headfirst into a lamppost with your ex helping you up is undignified to say the least. Sadly a true story.

# Exes Ettiquette

Over the summer, serial dater (and heart-breaker) Taylor Swift was caught on camera seemingly imploring her ex (the only slightly more infamous Harry Styles) to shut the fuck up during an acceptance speech. The momentary slip up with regards to manners is testament to the difficulties we all face when dealing with former

lovers in close quarters. Unfortunately for all of us, Cambridge's are closer than most. After you've got over the initial amusement of fresher-fuelled frolics, you'll suddenly notice that the guy from Cindies just always seems to be in Sainsbury's, while quite a lot of last week's swap seem to be sitting two rows in front of you in lectures. God forbid you start up with

somebody on your staircase, because you can be well assured that when it all goes sour, you're still going to have to make small talk in the buttery. In light of this, *Varsity Lifestyle* has decided to offer up a plethora of solutions, options and escapes to consider when you get yourself into just a sticky, sexually tense situation.

## How (not) to survive an essay crisis

EMILY DEAN

The clock is ticking. The deadline is looming. Procrastination has struck. You've already made two cups of tea, four fruitless trips to the fridge and colour coded your underwear drawer. (Not to mention the two-hour long lunch break you spent watching disturbing Miley Cyrus parodies on YouTube.) As you slump back in your chair, you realise you've reached full on crisis mode.

Before it gets any worse, you just get out. Escape your stagnant room/library/lair. Fresh air is your best friend in any essay crisis situation. So you take a wander around town, dodging school groups and tourists till you find a secluded spot on the backs and give yourself that much needed ten minutes of oxygen, CO<sub>2</sub>, hydrogen, or any other exotic elements you take a fancy to. (Yttrium is underrated.)

One you have had your fill, it's time to get serious. You need inspiration. You toddle off back to college and watch some of the most inspiring essay writing movies of all time – *The History Boys*. The montages, the Dominic Cooper, the 80s music...

You're feeling better, you're sitting back at your desk. Then, the realisation that life does not happen in montage form hits. You can't cut from the stack of library books to the finished piece via *The Clash* in real life.

Crushed by this damning epiphany, you sink deeper into your pit of despair. Two coffees and as many sentences later, the effects of the fresh air are fast wearing off. Time for a reviving lukewarm shower. With the cooling drips of water trickling down your back, you scurry back to your room and manage to trawl through another 500 words. **Four hours to the deadline.**

Then, disaster strikes – dinner. For some, hall is a welcome salvation from the library's migraine-inducing oppression, but for the serial procrastinator, the prospect of spending an hour or two with friends and, more importantly, food. Why would you ever sit alone and snackless?

A (not-entirely guilt-free) lengthy dinner later, the situation is becoming dire. It doesn't help matters that your jeans are feeling uncomfortably tight after the pain-au-chocolat bread-and-butter-pudding. **One hour to go.**

You spent the last half an hour making a Motivational Playlist, consisting mainly of *Psy* and *Glee*. You pour yourself a little G & T and finally, with help from a little bit o' *Beyoncé*, the end is in sight. Powering through, you reach the final sentence. The final frontier. The home run. Something pithy; an eloquent summation of your carefully crafted argument.

Let's face it, no one can master the art of writing **The Final Sentence**. So steal someone else's. So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.



## Lucy's Cookbook



Having previously bombarded you with heart-attack dishes laced with bacon and oil, this week's recipe is a more healthy stir-fry, with lots of those vegetables we need for getting over the last of that fresher's flu. (I am not usually a fan of plain boiled veg unless it is smothered in gravy on a Sunday, so in my opinion stir fry is one of the best ways of making veg tasty.)

Sainsbury's does some really good pre-prepared veg selections so you don't have to spend hours chopping (because who has time for that really?), and then you just have to choose what meat you want in it. I like prawns because if you're going to be healthy, you may as well go the whole hog, and they are very low-calorie and high-protein.

But chicken is still a good option, beef or pork mince are both very tasty, and you could even go gourmet and sear some chunks of salmon if you want to show off!

Lucy Roch

### INSTRUCTIONS

**Chop** the carrots or peppers into thin batons first. **Peel** an inch or two of ginger, **chop** half into thin slices and the rest a bit more finely, adding flavour to the whole dish and giving you the satisfaction of crunching through whole ginger slices while you're eating it.

For chicken or fish, **chop** it into bite-sized chunks. **Heat** some oil in your wok until nearly smoking, then **throw** in your meat with the ginger and some roughly **chopped** chillies. For mince **brown** it off, for chicken **cook** it through, and for prawns **fry** until just turned pink.

Separately **fry** your carrot/pepper next as these take longer to cook than other veg. When it starts to look a bit floppy, **tip** it out, and **chuck** the Sainsbury's pack in the pan. **Add** a dash of soy sauce (it makes a fantastic sizzling noise).

When it looks fairly cooked, **add** everything else. **Sprinkle** over a bit of stock powder, **add** another dash of soy sauce and a little hot water from the kettle.

*Et voilà!*

### INGREDIENTS

For 2 people, you will need:

**1 pack Sainsbury's ready prepared stir-fry veg**

**Some fresh ginger** (other forms are fine, but fresh tastes better)

**A red pepper or some carrots**

**Chillies or chilli flakes**

**Soy sauce**

**Some stock powder**

**Sunflower or olive oil**



### TOP TIP

A wok is ideal for this dish (I'm betting someone in your friend group will have one which you can beg, borrow or steal from them).

If not, then a large frying pan is a good substitute, as long as it's really hot (If you're fined for setting off the smoke alarm, I am not to blame).

### EASY ADDITION

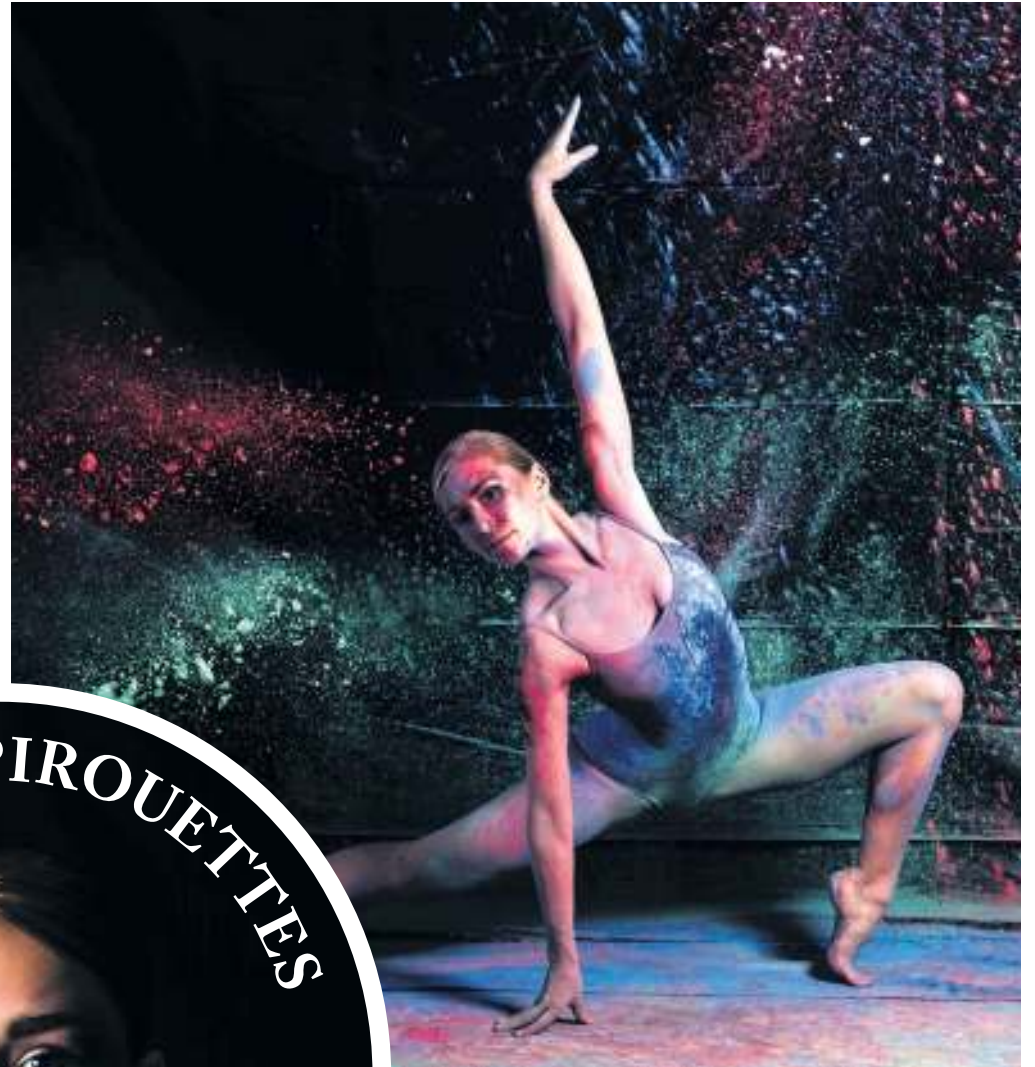
Egg fried rice is really simple and makes a great side. Just chop half an onion into thin slices, fry until soft then add some frozen peas.

When they're defrosted add some pre-boiled rice, warm that through, then push everything to one side of the pan and pour in 2 beaten eggs.

Stir them around with a spoon to scramble them, and when they're cooked but still soft, mix them back into the rice and peas.

*Delicious.*





## PAINTING PIROUETTES



Craft a new look with colour and make up. This week, Varsity Fashion takes inspiration from the vibrant excitement of dance. Ballerina style 'body' leotards make a fashion statement everywhere at the moment. We think, the more simplistic the clothing, the more scope there is to get creative with make up and colour. You only have to take one look at the autumn/winter catwalks to see that make up can be sumptuously creative with drama and opulence. Chanel's creative hair and make up – colourful shading around models' cheekbones, powerful and brushed up brows, hair swept back into messy chignons – were a particular inspiration for our colourful impact with this shoot.





◆ Styled by Lottie Franklin with assistance from Daisy May Pope ◆

◆ Kizzie Burkett, Anisha Ratan & Helena Clark-Maxwell were photographed by Tom Porteous & Barney Couch for Varsity ◆





## Let's talk about Television

BETHAN KITCHEN

"What's 'Twilight'?"

"You know, *Twilight*, it's a film about vampires."

"Never heard of it!" (the absurdly middle-class, well-travelled mother says with a proud giggle before leaving the room).

"How has she never heard of *Twilight*?" I ask.

"Of course she's heard of *Twilight*. [reflective pause] Idiot."

This conversation happened over a year ago, and sparked in me an increasing awareness of a certain fashion involving purposeful ignorance of national mainstream culture.

Put into practice, this fashion seems to obliterate all televisions from the homes of rich, unusually educated bohemian families for whom clarinet practice is a much more productive use of one's time than watching Sue Perkins talk about soggy bottomed tarts on BBC2.

Don't get me wrong I have nothing against unusual education, bohemia, or clarinets (my very own grade two certificate proves that, obviously). But I do have a problem with these replacing TV as a more culturally valuable use of time.

OK, so a lot of what is put in front of us is pretty shocking, and won't do anyone any good. But we can't dismiss the fact that television is that accessible thing which also gets everyone talking about everything in that typically British cynical way.

Whether it's quality TV fiction (I'm thinking the likes of *The IT Crowd*, *This is England*, and we mustn't forget the irreplaceable Noel Fielding and Richard Ayoade combo), politics, or even sex (there does seem to be a lot of that on TV at the moment, doesn't there?), nobody need step into that scary alternative cinema, or that expensive exhibition space to see it.

Some of the best and most clever writing, acting and cinematography I've ever seen has come from sitcoms and serial dramas. And who else would you want telling you about a giraffe's sexual science other than David Attenborough?

I just think it's brilliant that we can find all these gems in our living rooms with our families and friends. Anyone who dismisses this as low culture or trash needs to step down from their high-horse and have a look at what TV actually offers - priceless communal culture that's brought right to you. I love it.

### TV PICKS OF THE WEEK

*Later with Jools Holland*  
Friday, 11.05pm, BBC2

*George Clarke's Amazing Spaces*  
Thursday, 8pm, Channel 4

*The Great British Bake Off*  
Tuesday, 8pm, BBC2

*Googlebox*  
Wednesday, 10pm, Channel 4

# A new kind of glossy

Isabelle Barber chats to *Ladybeard* Editors Sadhbh O'Sullivan and Kitty Drake, and Art Director Tyro Heath about their brand new feminist project

Brought up with fashion magazines that urge zealous dieting and spending hundreds on cosmetics and clothes, it is so refreshing to witness the start of a magazine that showcases alternative perceptions of beauty. The editors and art director of new publication, *Ladybeard*, are passionate and challenging but not aggressive, 'to the point' but understanding, stylish, intelligent and not afraid to flash a bit of armpit hair. They certainly have the potential to take this magazine far. This is what they had to say:

*"I would have liked to pick this up when I was 14... it wouldn't have given me such a and damaging perception of beauty"*

So, what is *Ladybeard*? Short answer: feminist glossy.

The magazine, the editors say, aims to challenge the idea that "to be beautiful you have to subscribe to a certain white, heterosexual, airbrushed idea" and "where representations of sex and men seem to be a little bit removed from the kind of equality that we strive towards and make women feel bad about themselves."

"We want to create something that is beautiful and has those pictures you want to tear out, but won't damage you at the end of the day," they add.

*Ladybeard* is an alternative to the popular glossy magazine: "It's something I would have liked to pick up when I was 14 which would have been equally as beautiful as something like *Vogue*, but wouldn't have given me such a narrow, horrible and damaging perception of beauty and incredibly low self-esteem."

The editors cite Charlotte Raven's comments on the tendency in women's magazines to use feminism as an alibi,

arguing that within women's media a baseline of equality is assumed and issues are discussed as though we all share the same feminist ideals.

Yet a discussion like this will be bizarrely placed next to a photo of woman "who has been airbrushed to within an inch of her life telling you to buy something so you can look like her". Salient topics are tackled but without the acknowledgement that they are being presented "within a framework that doesn't celebrate women at all, it doesn't celebrate anyone".

The team hope that the *Ladybeard* reader will come away with lots of different, thought-provoking ideas from a collection of voices, as opposed to feeling oppressed by an editorial team that seek to create a particular voice which projects a preconceived notion of what it means to be female.

Though they admit that at the moment the magazine doesn't represent as diverse a collection of voices as they would like, the team want to eradicate the idea that feminism is reserved for white, middle class women. They want to get rid of the frightening prerequisite that "you can only be a feminist if you've never shaved your bush".

The response so far has been extremely positive, they say, with the editors making appearances in the *Observer Weekend* and on BBC Woman's Hour. The magazine's Kickstarter campaign raised over £4,000.

*Ladybeard* is currently print-only: the team suggest that online articles which bombard you with comments and links to other articles can be intimidating. Print, they say, enables you to sit and think about something in isolation.

The first issue - "The Body Issue" - is filled with illustrations and artistic photographs that are able to represent the body in unusual ways, and not just as a sexual object. The team want a beautiful, covetable and collectable medium for the magazine is to entice readers who perhaps had not thought about feminism before.

The magazine, the editors tell me,



aims to enable its readers to think about feminism as natural and nuanced - rather than "shouty" and aggressive. The *Ladybeard* reader is asked to make up his or her own mind, and to read articles that do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editorial team. The magazine seeks to pose feminism

as a question, an open invitation for discussion.

Drake remarks that women telling other women what to do is almost as bad as men telling women what to do: "It's exhausting. And boring."

The *Ladybeard* launch party is at Jesus Forum on Sunday October 20th at 8pm.



A POSTCARD FROM  
NEW YORK

## Dear Varsity,

Moving to the Lower East Side with my best friend, we decided to plan the best ways to infiltrate the art scene here. We needed endlessly fantastical wardrobes (check); charming British accents (half check - turns out the flabby vowels of northern Lancashire aren't the most seductive to the ear); and an ability to swindle our way into expensive places for free (check - ripped boob-covering fish nets and lime green lipstick work well!). With our fabulousness in excess, we hit the Meat Packing district's Milk Studios for an opening.

But what did I learn from this experience at Milk? Am I changed by it? Can you ever be friends with an ex? Do I sound like Queen Carrie Bradshaw yet? In my almost-month in the Big Apple I have realised a few things about the art scene here: I haven't met any artists or creatives who are just doing 'one thing'. Everyone is filming, photographing, modelling, writing, working on their latte art skills, all while learning the words to Cher's new album.

Everyone seems to want to help you. "You're not drunk yet? Your boss is an ass? Give me your number and I'll find you a new boss, and give me your hand and I'll put a Lychee Martini in it."

Everything is in flux. People seem to be constantly striving to do something new. All forms of creativity seem totally diverse, fascinating and constantly shifting. Throwing oneself into as many situations as possible is the best way to feed your glittering dreams of creativity that seemed so accessible in the wondrous Cambridge.

love Tom x



Despite our love of Cambridge, the desire to leave the bubble always hovers in the background. Each week we'll bring you cultural updates from around the world.

Varsity

Old Examination Hall

New Museums Site

Cambridge

United Kingdom



# The sweet success of The 1975

**Danielle Poole** interviews Matthew Healy, main vocalist of the Manchester-based band, The 1975

The 1975 have had a golden year. Opening for the Rolling Stones, a summer of festival appearances, heavy radio play of their devilishly incomprehensible single 'Chocolate', and the small matter of their self-titled album debuting at number one have launched the band from indie obscurity to musical mainstream.

Although the band's ascendency appears swift, the 1975 – made up of Matthew Healy (vocals, guitar), Adam Hann (guitar), George Daniel (drums) and Ross MacDonald (bass) – formed when they were only 13 years old. Healy says that in the early days they were "making music for fun. We always played music for ourselves."

It's this belief in playing music according to their individual style and essentially for pleasure that has seen the band grow and develop through various name changes and musical styles. Listening to their debut album, it's evident that their years together have created a broad, eclectic sound.

It's difficult to pigeonhole them into narrow generic definitions: "I think we define ourselves by the way that we're able to write because we've got so much history there, we all share the same musical interests and vocabulary." Although The 1975 might appear the typical alternative-indie band, their debut album includes streaks of R&B, electronica and straight-up pop.

When asked to pick one song from the album which he thinks encapsulates the band's sound, Healy finds it impossible to choose: "There's so much



to say with our band sonically and stylistically that I'd hate to pin it down on one song. You'd get ten different bands if you thought we sounded like one song you're listening to."

Despite the disparate genres of the songs, they are all united by a lyrical wordiness. It is unsurprising that Healy describes Mike Skinner of The Streets as a songwriting inspiration.

More surprisingly, it isn't musical but visual inspiration that Healy considers to have had the biggest impact on their style. He remarks: "I think that whenever I write, whenever we all write, we

have a very visual idea of what we're creating, with the idea of music and visuals being intertwined."

"The idea of incidental music being used to heighten an emotion has always been really interesting for me."

He points to the iconic 1980s film director and writer John Hughes as the band's biggest inspiration: "I think John Hughes's movies are a perfect testament to that; the overly romantic, kind of apocalyptic music."

Indeed, singles like 'Sex and the City' seem to be infused with the same yearning, angst-ridden charge that

films such as *The Breakfast Club* were plugged in to.

Away from the recording studio, The 1975 have become a formidable live act. Whilst they are currently on a worldwide tour until next year, this summer saw the band jump on the festival circuit which culminated with a triumphant return to the Reading and Leeds festivals. After previously playing the iconic festival in 2012 on the BBC Introducing Stage, 2013 saw the band nudged up to a position on the Festival Republic Stage.

The band, however, were keen to demonstrate their respect for where they had come from and, in a brilliant touch, returned to play a secret set to a heaving Introducing Tent before their later performance, an experience which Healy describes as "pandemonium".

He says: "I think Reading and Leeds was really special to mark the end of festival season. It was a couple of days before our album came out and there were so many people in the tent. We just walked on and nobody knew we were going to be there, it was really cool."

The 1975 have worked for years to gradually build up a solid fan base, and have only recently enjoyed mainstream recognition and success. You wouldn't blame Healy for feeling resentful to TV talent shows like *The X Factor* for dishing out overnight fame and success to its contestants while bands like his strive for recognition.

Other than an understandable dislike of the show's penchant for "wheeling

people out to be laughed at by the nation and millionaires," Healy has a refreshing perspective on the opportunity it provides: "I've got to remember that I've been brought up in an environment where being creative is allowed, endorsed and financially supported."

"A lot of people don't come from that environment. They see stuff like *The X Factor* as their only way. I hate it when you get 16 year old jumped up kids that just want to be famous; that pisses me off."

**"You'd get ten different bands if you thought we sounded like one song you're listening to."**

"But when you get that woman who was a prison officer, she doesn't really have any other outlet to express herself and she can be like, 'Well if I go on *The X Factor* it might actually change my life', I don't have a problem with that."

If 2013 is anything to go by, The 1975 are destined for great things. But before world domination beckons they are keeping their heads down and sticking to what they have done since they were 13: "We're just doing lots and lots of shows and writing lots and lots of music."

If they stick to that mantra they can't go far wrong.



## THE COFFEE TABLE BOOK CONNOISSEUR

From one coffee table book lover to another, it's high time we spread the word about the best books for adorning our coffee tables. Not that I'm suggesting you should try to show off your cultural superiority or anything, but there's no harm in appreciating good art.

This week the theme is New York artists.

*Note: Some of these books are quite pricey. But don't worry you can come round and look at mine. (Or flick through them at a gallery bookshop, or even slum it at the UL if you'd prefer.)*

## WRITINGS ON ART: MARK ROTHKO

Many artists write about their work, but until *Writings on Art* was published, Mark Rothko's views were largely unknown. Containing around 90 documents, including short essays, letters, statements and lectures, *Writings on Art* provides a detailed picture of Rothko's thoughts that many never expected.

## NEW YORK NIGHTS AND STORE FRONT

*New York Nights* won The New York City Book Award in 2012 and it's easy to understand why. James and Karla Murray's photographs of New York store fronts, restaurants and bars are brightly coloured, perfectly lit and pin sharp. Their style isn't tarred by gimmicky effects or strange, disrupting angles.

## VANITY FAIR: THE PORTRAITS

*Vanity Fair* is famous for its world class writing and photography and this 384 page coffee table book is a testament to that. *Vanity Fair 100 Years: From the Jazz Age to Our Age* is sure to be a hit with those interested in *Vanity Fair*'s history, since the book starts in 1913, the year the magazine was first founded.

## ROY LICHTENSTEIN: A RETROSPECTIVE

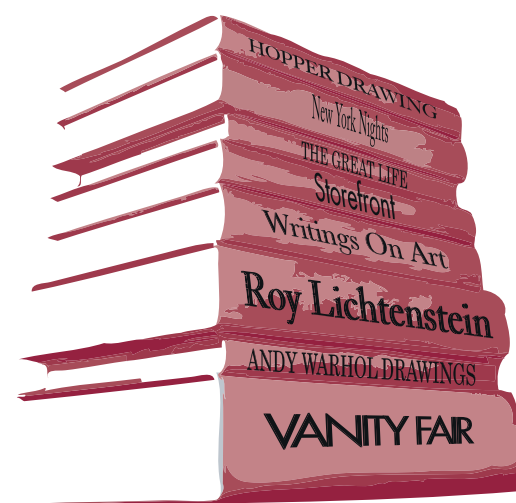
Roy Lichtenstein's Pop Art paintings are some of the most famous artworks ever created. *Lichtenstein: A Retrospective* pulls together his most famous and lesser known pieces into one comprehensive volume. This book is definitely worth looking for if you missed the retrospective at the Tate Modern earlier this year.

## HOPPER DRAWING

For those wanting to engage critically with Edward Hopper's work, you've got to look at *Hopper Drawing*. Following the fabulous 2013 Whitney exhibition which showcased over 200 of Hopper's sketches, this book republishes his drafts, notes and musings alongside critical essays about Hopper's life and work.

## THE GREAT LIFE PHOTOGRAPHERS

If a contest were held for the best magazine ever created, *LIFE* magazine would surely be among the top contenders. Bill Eppridge, one of *LIFE*'s staff photographers, died at the beginning of this month. Take a look at his work in this book, which features many of the iconic moments of the 20th century.







## Playground

WEN LI TOH

Let me begin with a confession: last Thursday's Joss Arnott Dance double bill was the first dance show I have ever reviewed in Cambridge. Needless to say, I am no dance expert. My dancing ability begins and ends with grooving to laptop music in the privacy of my room (sad, I know) and shifting awkwardly to the beat during May Balls and the like.

But watching the dancers on stage last week made me realise two things: firstly, how intellectually stimulating a performance relying almost purely on physical movement can be. Secondly, that dance theatre is highly underrated here in Cambridge.

The reasons for this are obvious. The logistical challenges posed by dance shows, and the need for performers who are already of a high standard, would naturally deter most people in a university that doesn't offer degrees in performing arts.

Nonetheless, there are a variety of dance styles on offer at the University: ballet, contemporary dance, Latin, many of which produce an annual show. The Cambridge University Ballet Club, for instance, performed *Alice in Wonderland* at the Mumford Theatre in February.

When in Cambridge, fail to seek and you shall not find. Be it acting, playing a sport, or getting involved in student journalism, those who don't take the initiative often end up with almost nothing on their plates. The same can be said for dance.

Still, one cannot help but feel that more could be done to engage people in dance beyond the level of hopping to 'Gangnam Style' in the college bar. While most of these dance societies already offer classes for different ability groups, I wonder if more could be done to make the dance scene more open and inclusive.

A friend told me how she stopped attending ballet classes at the Cambridge University Ballet Club because she found the experience too intimidating. According to her, during the intermediate classes "you found girls with their legs up around their ears." Others I have spoken to have described the ballroom and Latin dance communities here as "quite cliquey" and at times "a bit bitchy".

Maybe we need more informal dance clubs here at the university, for those with an interest in dancing as a hobby, or who simply want to bond with like-minded people. After all, dance – intrinsic artistic value aside – is meant to be fun, relaxing and sociable.

Maybe I should ditch the books and get out more. Or, pick up dance – Salsa, maybe? – this term. If that doesn't work out, I guess I'll just turn to the next best thing: sticking to writing reviews and columns about it.

# Complicite turns thirty

Judith Dimant, producer of internationally acclaimed company Complicite, talks to **Hannah Piercy** about their work and the future of British theatre



*Shun-Kin* was first performed at the Setagaya Public Theatre, Tokyo, in 2008

Thirty years and almost thirty plays: Complicite have staged number theory, productions entirely in Japanese, and the world premiere of a Russian opera. Exciting, innovative and ambitious, it might seem they have been trying to make a name for themselves. But Judith Dimant sees things in a simpler light. "It's all about telling a good story," she says.

Dimant joined Complicite in 1993 and has produced all their work since 1996. She is passionate about Complicite's artistic principles: "We're very bold and we don't do things to

make lots of money, because the industry doesn't make lots of money."

Complicite put on productions that "are very difficult to make happen," she tells me. Perhaps the most obvious examples of Complicite's challenging productions are *The Elephant Vanishes* and *Shun-Kin*; both performed entirely in Japanese, by a Japanese cast. Language barriers are no issue: they use interpreters. Six or seven worked on each play, mediating the relationship between Simon McBurney as director and the Japanese cast throughout the process.

It is these plays Dimant returns

to as I ask what she considers to be Complicite's most memorable work: both were "quite extraordinary to work on, as they were so difficult."

Some may see Complicite's three revivals of *Shun-Kin* as a mark of the show's incredible success. But for a company whose success comes from their ability to "reinvent ourselves", what is the attraction of returning to a production after its run has ended?

"Simon will only do them again if he can improve them. That is the pattern of our work. It's never finished for him. Never ever." *Shun-Kin* is a prime example of this: even at the end of the third revival this year, McBurney was "still tinkering with it." Although Dimant

*"Simon is very generous about people imitating him. I'm not, I get cross"*

says the production has "come to the end of its life. We'll never do it again," I can't help but wonder if McBurney will take that as a personal challenge.

But while Dimant stresses McBurney's desire to continually improve upon productions, she also makes clear Complicite's artistic commitment to each piece of new work. If they can't find a piece to do, they wait until the right one comes along: "We're not churning it out."

Despite – or perhaps because of – Complicite's principle of not churning work out, they have been a continuous force in shaping and changing theatre over the last 30 years. When I ask Dimant to name some young companies she feels have been influenced by Complicite, her list includes Curious Directive, The Faction and Idle Motion. As for their contemporaries, it is British

physical theatre company DV8 who stand out for Dimant as having "the same sort of longevity."

There is a fine line between wanting to inspire and wanting to remain individual in the theatre scene. It's a problem Dimant confronts in relation to the recent production of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time*, which shared the same designer as *A Disappearing Number*, Complicite's 2008 play about number theory. "It's hard to tell which came first," she says; then, in a matter-of-fact tone, admits "Simon is very generous about people imitating him. I'm not, I get cross."

I ask Dimant to describe the changes she's seen to the theatre scene in the last 30 years: "More money, and then less money, and now it's all about money." She believes now is an important time for theatre: "Social media, everybody stuck to their computers. There is going to be another change." Dimant is genuinely concerned about the way forward: "I don't know how we reach young people; the next generation of theatre-goers and theatre-makers," she says.

When I ask what's next, Dimant tells me she has no idea: "We take it one year at a time – that's one of our strengths." Dimant is ambivalent about Complicite's place in British theatre. "We're in it and we're out of it. In some ways we're at the forefront and in some ways we're just another company."

It seems to me there are few who would consider Complicite "just another company". Known for their experimentation, constantly different productions, and the visual spectacle of their performances, Complicite have inspired audiences and thespians alike. Will there be another thirty years of innovation ahead of them? Let's hope so.

*Complicite's collaborative production of The Magic Flute is at ENO, London 7th November – 7th December.*

## NEWNHAM ANONYMOUS PLAYERS A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Upon arriving at Newnham, the audience was instantly immersed in the confused, dream-like narrative. Maids chatted as they escorted us to the wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta, where the action was already under way; foolish 'rude mechanicals' sat amongst us, earnestly talking nonsense; Hippolyta sat nervously on stage, furtively drinking from a hip flask.

The maids ushered viewers from the scene of the wedding, to the beautiful gardens of Newnham, to 'the woods', recreated in the Old Labs as a 1920s jazz den complete with cocktails and olives for the guests – all of which worked to great effect. Characters were portrayed as increasingly intoxicated as the evening escalated into confusion, leading up to an impressive, hilarious crescendo of drunken brawling. The arrival of a punch-bowl full of drink elicited laughter from the audience, who could already see its terrible fate.

Gelling Shakespearean verse with a 1920s jazz den is no mean feat, but the actors made this work superbly. Though generally strong as a cast, Rhianna Frost's mischievous Puck and

Alys Williams' hysterically frustrated Helena were particularly excellent. This play also contains the funniest portrayal of 'Wall' I have ever seen, using a simple cardboard costume with a hole – the chink which the lovers looked through – through which the actor's fingers rapidly appeared, only to vanish.

The cast's greatest achievement, however, was the way they worked as a unit to create a seamless performance. They had fantastic on-stage chemistry, and adapted easily to well-placed cuts made to the script. The occasional modern colloquialism gave great comic effect.

The only disappointing aspects of the production were its use of sound and lighting, which both lacked the intensity one would expect of a jazz den. The sound was played from a laptop, meaning that a clearly well-constructed sound set lost its power by simply not being nearly loud enough. An otherwise well-choreographed and well-performed dance by the fairies felt slightly underwhelming without the blaring jazz accompaniment expected.

In spite of these flaws, Katie Akers deserves much credit for her fantastic direction. Her innovations made this a fantastic performance of a well-known classic, and the production brought out the humour of the play, making for a highly entertaining evening.

Megan Dalton

## LOST DOG

IT NEEDS HORSES AND HOME  
FOR BROKEN TURNS

"Un, deux, trois!" is the cry to unity of three sisters seemingly adrift in a wasteland in *Home for Broken Turns*. As the sisters pull apart from each other and are pulled apart by the direness of their circumstances, this count to three, followed by a dance sequence involving linked limbs and bodies, is their means of maintaining the cohesiveness that seems key to their survival.

It makes sense that *Home for Broken Turns*, though performed first, was in fact written more recently. It lacks the polish and tightness of *It Needs Horses*. As the three (admittedly very able) performers moved through indulgent, lengthy, mainly narrative-free dance sequences, there was the definite impression of fat that could be trimmed.

There were certainly moments that were effective, for example when Anna Finkel's character desperately ran after an invisible motorist, gesturing clumsily to her body and shouting, "Take me! I am young and beautiful." Such clarity of concept – in this case, a young woman's frustration at her youth and sexuality going to waste for lack of an outlet – is what seemed lacking from much of

the piece. Where physical movement rather than speech is the main mode of communication, ideological simplicity seems necessary to avoid an overall impression of confusion.

This is the strength of the second piece, *It Needs Horses*. The narrative here is simpler, and perhaps better suited to being conveyed through motion: a down-at-heel circus duo stoops to ever-greater lows to impress the audience and earn a few coins. As the set of *Home for Broken Turns* is dismantled to form a circus ring and Finkel reappears on a trapeze, her torn and muddy dress replaced by a glittery, feathery, ragged costume, continuity between the two acts is suggested.

The young girl wasting away in the first piece has run off to join the circus. But this circus seems rather like one you would want to run from. The two performers exploit and humiliate one another in turn, with each outrageous action followed by a bleak wave of a bowler hat, held out to the audience in the hope of some return.

Lost Dog: *It Needs Horses* and *Home for Broken Turns* was billed as 'blackly comic', but for the most part the blackness strongly outweighed the comedy. Dark and not always effective, this piece nevertheless deserves some applause for the experiment it attempts.

Chloe Clifford Astbury



# 10 Questions with comic Milo Edwards

*Varsity* speaks to one of the comedians who will be performing at this week's Corpus Smoker



"The only time my life isn't embarrassing is on stage"

**M**ilo Edwards is a third-year classicist at Peterhouse. He has performed in both Footlights Smokers and comedy nights as a stand-up and sketch comedian. Last Lent, he wrote and starred in *Tough Crowd* at Pembroke New Cellars, and the one-act farce *Surgeons* at Corpus Playroom. He also performed stand-up in *Four Comedic Porpoises*. This year he also travelled to the Edinburgh Fringe where he performed stand-up as a part of *Free Footlights*.

Milo currently runs and compères the *Peterhouse Smoker* and will be performing in this week's *Corpus Smoker*.

The thing he really dislikes about Cambridge is its student politics, and when asked where he sees himself in thirty years says he will be "a faceless cog in the oppressive regime of the underwater Chinese super-state." Before adding "Either that or managing a branch of Aldi."

**What's your favourite thing about Smokers?**

Having people sit there and listen to the stuff I would otherwise just be muttering to myself. They occasionally laugh.

**How did you get started in comedy?**

The first time you do stand-up is a lot like the first time you have sex: a lot of fun, as long as you prepare thoroughly with adequate research and rehearsal in front of a mirror.

**What's the worst thing about Cambridge comedy?**

Pretentiousness: too many people want to judge comedy on what the 'point' is - comedy doesn't need a point, it needs to be funny.

**What's been your most embarrassing on-stage moment?**

The only time my life isn't embarrassing is on stage.

**What's your guiltiest pleasure?**

Rod Stewart, because I've been pretending not to like him for 10 years to spite my mother and sister.

**How would you describe your sense of humour?**

Dry, caustic and generally hostile. I'll laugh at pretty much anything, though.

**What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?**

I can't really function before 1 pm.

**What is the nicest thing someone has said to you?**

A Russian nun recently told me I had a "Slavic face." True story.

**What is your favourite comedy show?**

*I'm Alan Partridge* is the best TV comedy ever made, closely followed by *Peep Show* and *Garth Marenghi's Darkplace*.

**What's been the worst reaction you've had to one of your jokes?**

Every time I tell Charlie Palmer (friend and fellow stand-up) a joke that isn't outright fantastic, he does this blank, weary face and takes a very slow sip of his drink before replacing it on the table and staring at me in silence. It still hurts, man.

*The Corpus Smoker will run from Monday 21st October – Monday 4th November at the Corpus Playroom. Student tickets are £*

## It's like we're talking different languages

**Richard Stockwell** talks to Cambridge Greek Play director Helen Eastman, and student translator of *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, Atri Banerjee, about the challenges of foreign drama

**H**elen Eastman fell in love with Ancient Greek theatre at Bryanston, a Greek language summer school famous among classicists, where she played her namesake in Euripides' *Helen*. Now she finds herself directing the triennial Cambridge Greek Play for a second time, following up on *Agamemnon* with a double bill of *Prometheus*, attributed to Aeschylus, and Aristophanes' *The Frogs*.

When they say Greek Play in Cambridge they mean it: this is performed in the original language. Why bother? Because, Helen says, Greek is "the most extraordinary aural language", which has such emotional power that it deserves to be brought back to life, if only for a couple of hours.

The actors – the majority of whom are not classicists – "work terrifyingly hard" to overcome the many challenges of learning lines and performing in an unknown language. Helen's advice comes from her own Bryanston experience: "Just follow the rhythm and everything will make sense."

Academic debates rage over the sights and sounds of the Athenian theatre, but an antiquarian reconstruction is not what Helen wants: "The real mark of respect is to make sure it's brilliant." Alex Silverman – who is "that rare thing, an ex-classicist composer" – has a crucial role to play in this. For *Prometheus*, Alex is tasked with creating a unique sound world, taking all the rhythms from Greek metre.

The deficiency in what tone, score and staging can convey is made up for by surtitling. Screens will display functional translations of the Greek, though far short of a comprehensive or performable translation. The surtitles are designed to carry the essential

metaphors and illuminate the action, while allowing the audience to focus on the performance. Having felt guilt at butchering somebody else's translation of *Agamemnon* to fit the screens, Helen is using her own this time round.

So is Atri Banerjee, director of the week two ADC main show, who was not content with any of the existing English translations of Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (*Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*). All offered only stale, literal translations of 1920s Italian idiom, and often adapted the original far too liberally, overcomplicating an already complex play by adding another layer of authorial voice.

But being fluent in Italian, having lived in Florence for seven years, Atri could undertake the artistic challenge

*"Just follow the rhythm and everything will make sense."*

of translating the play for himself, while transposing just the relevant elements to the present day.

The original was set where it debuted, in the Teatro Valle in Rome. To retain the metatheatrical sense of the original, Atri set his adaptation in Edinburgh for his Fringe performances, and in the ADC for his Cambridge home run.

This illusion was more holistic at the Fringe, where the distinction between actor, performer, writer and audience member is blurred by the very nature of the festival and the mass of drama on show. But Atri believes this will transfer well to Cambridge's thriving

theatre world and the university city more generally.

Atri feels comfortable doubling up as director, since there is enough distance between Atri as adaptor and Pirandello as author; above all, this is "still Pirandello's play". Atri has been "very faithful to the Pirandello", "riffing off" it at most, with every line and every update justified by a correlate in the original.

The same cannot be said of *The Frogs*, the second part of Helen Eastman's Greek Play double bill. This comedy has also been transposed to the present day, but in an "irreverent and highly anarchic" way which aims to make it funny at almost any cost. Updating the satire has been difficult, with the target audience ranging from teenage public school girls to crusty emeritus professors. There is, however, a list of figures hoped to be universally recognised, with an especially buffoonish ex-classicist politician being particularly memorable.

Helen and the cast have built their original translation into the comedy. An extra screen is on stage in view of the actors, so that sometimes the surtitles are the gag, contradicting and misquoting the characters or displaying subliminal messages. *The Frogs* aims to demonstrate an awareness of the fact that translation and transposition are tricky tasks. Making fun of something is, after all, a great way of establishing the limitations of this complex process.

*Prometheus & The Frogs runs at the Cambridge Arts Theatre until Saturday 19th October. Six Characters in Search of an Author runs at the ADC until 19th October.*



It's all Greek to me: the cast of *Prometheus & The Frogs* during rehearsal



## MAD ABOUT MUSEUMS

AT  
ARCH AND ANTH

LUCY MEEKLEY

The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology showcases the beliefs and traditions of cultures from across the globe. It was established in 1884, when the Cambridge Antiquarian Society decided to consolidate various collections held across the city and colleges. Since then it has built up an assortment of one million objects, spanning almost two million years of history, culture and society.

The first gallery we enter is the archaeology gallery. Its first case is clearly designed to whet the appetite: it is full of intricate tools, trinkets, masks and statues. What I find most intriguing is the Jade statue of a man, thought to be Mexican and dated between 1500 and 400 BC. However, the accompanying sign suggests curators are unsure if it is real or fake. It poses the question "If it is modern, is it less special?"

The remainder of the gallery explores the history of Cambridge. One case, "Under our very feet", contains objects dating as far back as the 15th century, excavated from beneath the John Lewis site. Another explores college life then and now; the collection of wine bottles suggests it hasn't changed much...

A real highlight of the gallery is the Roman Arbury, a lead lined stone coffin containing a human, mouse and shrew skeleton. While studying for her degree, Sylvia Plath visited the museum, and this skeleton is thought to have inspired her poem *All the Dead Deers*.

Upstairs, the Anthropology gallery is an absolute treasure trove. The first thing you are likely to notice is the Totem pole. It is decorated with animals, and at 14 metres high, is taller than any on display at the British Museum. Like many of the objects, it is accompanied by a photograph of its original setting: a nice contextual touch.

There are impressive objects from Tibet, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Fiji, to name but a few locations. Of particular interest are various canoes and kayaks and the giant wooden grizzly bear. Objects from Fiji are currently being brought into particular focus by the temporary exhibition *Chiefs and Governors: Art and Power in Fiji* which will feature at the museum until April 2014.

The final gallery is a work in progress, but it contains an astounding installation: a stone front originally built for Winchester Cathedral in 1638. The style quickly became unfashionable and the front was put into storage. It was rescued by Thomas Jackson, and it has been built into the foundations of the gallery.

Here, the artefacts are fantastically displayed. The museum is an excellent reminder of history that surrounds us in Cambridge and an eye-opening, continuous study of cultural practices across the world.



## event



### EVENSONG

KING'S COLLEGE



Who precisely can find time within the overbearing Cambridge routine for some daily Anglican liturgy? On the basis of my visit last Friday evening, the congregation is ragtag: equal parts tourists, university members, and the public. The particular spiritual loyalties of the crowd are not so easy to discern and the mood is one of respectful curiosity rather than browbeating reverence. Most people only follow the carefully structured service thanks to prep sheets provided by the chapel. Despite the grandiosity of the surroundings, this is far from an intimidating experience.

The question remains. Why would students choose to extract themselves to this archaic ritual without clear religious motivation? A simple response is obvious: the lucid beauty of the music. Through a series of preces (calls and responses between minister and choir), the scene is set for the daily psalm and the standard canticles 'Magnificat' and 'Nunc dimittis.' The former is more intricate, stretching into crystal clear high registers; the latter is a briefer, calmer interlude with simpler cadences. Under Stephen Cleobury,

the choir may have turned away from the gentle tones of twentieth-century masters such as David Willcocks, but the chapel's remarkable acoustics compensate for any stridency. It will be fascinating to see how the choir develops with Cleobury to step down shortly.

The psalm of the evening veers between anxiety and triumph, invoking enemies both threatening and defeated. The choir worked the repetition of chords inherent to this style of prose setting to great effect, striking the right balance between tentative and insistent. The literal intent of the words may have been lost on the crowd. Skimming the lyrics to the psalm and fidgeting through to the lessons, one got the sense that the majority of the audience were taking this in with a healthy sense of detachment, enjoying the novelty of unabashed religious sentiment like the tourists we mostly were. Clearly the Old Testament is a lesser universal language than music.

If you ask people why they occasionally feel the urge to wander over to evensong, the answers are often the same: to reflect, to enjoy the music, to add some theological clout to a hangover cure. In a town where so many quotidian rituals are spruced up and hung out for tourists, it seems odd to question one above others. Somehow or other we've all chosen to live in this odd fenland police state, where commercialised 'tradition' and 'history' taint everything with the same absurdity. Evensong at least offers an unusually high quality product. Why not take a little something back?

Sam Goff

## event



### THE UGLY SISTERS

CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION



The latest offering from two-handed RashDash – theatre's answer to Robots in Disguise – is a re-working of *Cinderella* from the ugly sisters' perspective: an exploration of the struggle for beauty in modern life. What I'm watching is panto meets German Expressionism. The two actresses enter convulsing as if they'd just got out of A&E. Incomprehensible screaming is followed by unfortunate audience members systematically being asked: "Are we bitches?"

Half an hour in – somewhere between the liposuction-themed dance and motherhood song delivered by a bearded musician – I'm grinning ruthlessly. There aren't superlatives to outline these depths of oddness. We've been warned: audience members may be singled out for "self-scrutiny." We've been spanked and I think we like it.

It's a worthy cause, but somewhere the twosome get side-tracked. Halfway through the piece and the anger is palpable – I'd feel safer in a riot. The guitarist is going through an awkward foreplay ritual stage left. One ugly sister is running around with a large drum, while the other is rocking to the

beat with a *Jungle Book* wiggle. They seem a couple of overgrown groupies getting in the way of the band but they're more committed than anyone I've seen do anything. They've been method-matting their hair for months. I look around and all I see are teenage girls who seem to understand what's going on.

Suddenly, one of the sisters is trying on beautiful clothes. The bawling of pre-pubesence is over, but the antidote is sexualisation. Next, I see the audience blindly clapping to a song about the instant stardom of The X Factor and Page 3. Now I see which side of the fence I'd rather be on. I am entirely won over until a Barbie doll is beaten with a drum stick.

Their one-liners sink in succession but the sustained clowning stops the entire craft from going under. The storytelling is done well though at times it tends towards being patronising. It's like being back at school, only with obscene teachers. The short bursts of contemporary dance are incredible, although obscured in the general nonsense. The meta-theatre grows annoying, and the repeated motif of performance anxiety becomes one uneasiness-inducer too far.

To compare the mood of the evening to something from Plath's 'Ariel' wouldn't be a tall order. The piece grew in intensity, by the end having won me over too late. The ugly sisters turned from yelping monsters to Beatrice and Eugenie on wedding day. They became victims of expectation. They were taken off to hospital. The smile was wiped from my face.

Seb Sutcliffe

## exhibition



### ORIGINS OF THE AFRO COMB

THE FITZWILLIAM



*Origins of the Afro Comb: 6,000 years of Culture, Politics and Identity* is an exhibition exploring how functional objects can also be works of art, tools of artistic creation and symbols of the cultural identity, proximity and diversity of African countries. One object: a kaleidoscope of meanings.

The beginning of the exhibit confronts you with the juxtaposition of Antony Romani's 'Clenched Fist Comb' (1972) and an Egyptian comb with horns. Despite the 5000 years separating the two pieces, holding the

black fist and the bull's horns are both acts of appropriation. The hand holding the clenched fist in the 70s visually and psychologically embraces the Civil Rights movement and the Egyptian piece symbolises the acceptance of the power and values of that object.

Combs can be seen as an extension of human hands and hence of artistic creative power. This symbolic value is crystallised by one of the highlights of the exhibition – the Mmo mask of the Igbo people of Nigeria. This mask shows coiled braids creating elaborated concentric patterns. Four small combs are inserted in the hair in such a way that a sense of fluid continuity is maintained between the white dentils and the black braids, as if they formed an unbroken creative wave.

Particularly successful is the display of 19th and 20th century combs from central, east and western Africa in a single window, according to their geographical location. This comprehensive window feels as though it were open in the heart of Africa as it is able to direct the viewer's vision from east

to west, noting differences and similarities.

The installation visually links with the opening linocuts series 'Drawing Combs: Davunu/ 'Afe Nutata', in which combs like the iconic clenched fist, the palm leaf fan-shaped Cameroonian comb, the east African double sided ones or the brass made one from Morocco, becomes themselves the pictorial subject, frequently repeated as to create polychromatic patterns.

Many of the exhibits shows carved or incised human figures: from a 4000-3500BC Egyptian Hippopotamus ivory with human head shaped handle, to 20th century Edo state Nigerian ones showing plastically carved knee-bent fertility figures, or remarkable 19th

century exemplar from Ghana where female figures show a carved heart or a necklace with a cross pendant.

*Origins of the Afro Comb...* is a memory of Africa and of African heritage – its bronze heads bring to mind the 1897 British punitive expedition in Benin and the clenched fist comb is a reminder of the Black Power salute of the 1968 Olympic Games. The exhibition takes the viewer through the continent and across

time, documenting through photography the richness of the cultural diversity crystallised by numerous hair styles, as varied as the combs exhibited.

As Pliny the Elder said "There is always something new out of Africa."

Lavinia Puccetti





music



KRISTIAN BEZUIDENHOUT

PETERHOUSE THEATRE



Mozart’s solo piano works have been neglected by concert pianists of generations past and it is not difficult to see why: there is absolutely nowhere to hide. Transparent textures, simple and direct melodic writing and a sense of classical proportion prevail. Open to clear scrutiny are the most fundamental elements of the pianist’s craft – the touch, judicious use of rubato, and nimble finger-work to name but three. Performances in the wrong hands can be anodyne. No fear of that, however, with playing like Kristian

Bezuidenhout’s. First off, what a classy little venue the Peterhouse Theatre is. Its original purpose was for lectures, but it makes for an unusually democratic and intimate concert venue with its ideally tiered seating and clear acoustics. Bezuidenhout’s playing was supremely idiomatic, with rubato sensitively employed throughout, and some delightful ornamentation during the repeats. The opening item on the programme was the Sonata in C Major K.545: a tastefully understated performance with some lovely details, and a beautifully phrased slow movement, though the Rondo would have benefitted from a slightly more devil-may-care tempo. The following Sonata in A minor K.331 utilised a completely different palette of colours, a harder-edged sound befitting the ‘Sturm und Drang’ aspects of this work. The second half began with an illuminating talk from Bezuidenhout about the instrument and his thoughts on its complete suitability for these

works. Having been seen previously as a historical curiosity, players such as Bezuidenhout have proved that there is more to this softly spoken instrument than that. The next work – a Suite for Keyboard in C major in the Style of Handel K399 was compelling. Rather than the more straightforward Handel pastiches in the Requiem and other choral works, this piece sees Mozart meet Handel half way with some striking results – the chromatic and contrapuntal elements of the Baroque style are filtered through a classical sensibility. The work, as Mozart left it, is incomplete, so Bezuidenhout interloped several movements from other sources, thoughtfully chosen and played with contrapuntal textures taking on a glass-like transparency. The final sonata in this programme (the A Major, K.331, ‘Alla Turca’) is another of Mozart’s most famous solo piano works, with the final Rondo Alla Turca being a favourite for massacre by child pianists. Bezuidenhout’s

tempo for the first movement’s Theme stuck me as near perfect – a wee bit quicker than most would think. The use of pedal for the purpose of subtle colouration was exquisite. The famous Rondo was likewise impressive – never have I heard the jangling sounds of a Turkish janissary band better recreated on a keyboard instrument than here. The encore was the slow movement of the Sonata in C K.330: a wistful coda to an evening of rare refinement. Why not that fifth star? Well, as mentioned, there was sometimes a sense of playing it safe – this was certainly Mozart the arch-classicist rather than proto-romantic, although understatement in these pieces is preferable to overstatement. Although Bezuidenhout’s stage presence is far from poker-faced (it is often wonderfully expressive), more humour would have been welcome in the passages of unalloyed sunshine. But these are small criticisms – this concert was a tour de force of musicianship. Henry Hawkesworth

music



FRYARS

RADIO PWR



Fryars – a.k.a. Benjamin Garrett – is the one-man electro pop-crooning wunderkind whom you’ve probably not heard about but soon will. He’s recently been announced as one of the supporting acts for the first half of London Grammar’s tour starting this month in Brighton. This career-launching announcement is coupled with Fryars’ EP, *Radio Pwr*, to be released this month. The record as a whole includes Fryars’ fail-safe vocals, strong beats and melodies

transitioning smoothly between pared down hip-hop, alt-pop and sublime electro. The overall result is stylish, surprising and definitively his own. Lead track, ‘The Power’ is a relaxed summery tune that showcases sultry vocals. Wait for the subtle hook and Fryars singing “I’m hanging up my microphone for vicodin-like highs,” the singer then reveals an impressive falsetto and a glittering pop chorus. ‘Wedding Crasher’ is a slow, smooth track; the sumptuous beats balanced with strings make for an alternative hip-hop sound. The strings continue into ‘Yoni’ creating an ethereal and haunting atmosphere. However the track does not fade away, instead maintaining a satisfying pop sound. A brief return to hip hop sounds in ‘Cypress Avenue’ lead to ‘You’re Listening to Radio PWR’, before ending with ‘You Hold the Key to My Heart’ which creates an impressive tableau – think Daft Punk mixed with Frank Ocean. The new style of experimental hip-hop that Fryars is creating punctuates the ethereality of the EP with an urban grittiness. The lyrics of ‘Wedding Crasher’ provide the emotional core of the album. The line “she wants a man who knows bright lights, wild nights, hits the heights and this strange figure,



he just might...he just might” shows his youthful poetry. But what starts as a testament to bold debauchery quickly escalates to tragedy. ‘Wedding Crasher part II’ shows elements of social discontent and disillusionment. Fryars has an unapologetically dark voice, exploring youth, life and death as a modern-day beatnik. The overall result is a bold EP creating individual melodies with unexpected hooks and changes in tempo. Yet the tracks never become too experimental or instrumental, remaining firmly in the realm of electro pop. Indeed ‘The Power’ remains the most memorable tune of the EP, a well-rounded accomplished effort, but each track bleeds into the next, contributing to the tone of the whole. On his Facebook page, Fryars describes *Radio Pwr* as his ‘seminal EP.’ If an EP release is a make or break moment, this is definitely the former. Becky Rosenberg



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Exhibition

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UNLIMITED

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RAPPERS

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7.30pm, 24th October

The Junction,

Clifton Way

Album

JAMES BLUNT

Purveyor of Year 9 disco classic ‘You’re Beautiful’ James Blunt comes back to the studio for his fifth album.

18th October

Atlantic Records

Comedy

JIMMY CARR

Ex-Tab Jimmy Carr returns to Cambridge for his 25th show at the Corn Exchange.

8.00pm, 20th October

Cambridge Corn Exchange

Wheeler Street

Spoken word

FIREFLIES

A story slam on the theme ‘Wanderlust’. Enter your name to tell a tale or just sit back and listen

6.30pm, 18th October

The Fountain,

Regent Street

Live music

JAZZ@JOHN’S

The first jazz night of the term features the Preston-Glasgow-Lowe trio.

9pm, 18th October

Fisher Building

St John’s College

# Reviews & Listings





## The Fun Run

*The Hare and Hounds Club challenged the freshers*

Su-Min Lee

If Saturday's Freshers' Fun Run is anything to go by, the Hare and Hounds look in good shape to follow a repeat. Despite the departure of various key runners such as Robin Brown and Alex Young, it was clear that improvement within the squad had been supplemented by a strong new intake.

Pre-race favourite Alex Short successfully defended his title having won the race as a first year. Short's outlook was positive on both an individual and team level, despite having had the latter part of his cross-country season blighted somewhat by injury: "The race was in perfect conditions and I felt very strong which was pleasing, with it still being such an early stage of the season. To have that kind of depth... really bodes well for Varsity."

Captain Matt Leach, who did not run, emphasised the high quality of the race despite the absence of several Blues contenders: "It was good to see some fantastic performances from freshers and old faces alike ... we're in good shape for Varsity at the end of term. It was particularly pleasing to see several freshers up near the front."

In the women's race, Polly Keen, having had a track season that led her to the British World Athletics Championships Trials for the steeplechase, won in dominant fashion, followed by Bex Taylor.

Perhaps the most exciting moment of the day was the sprint finish between Katy Hedgethorpe and Chloe Beckett, with Hedgethorpe just edging into third place. A similar battle took place between former captain James Chettle and Josh Carr for fourth in the men's race. The women's team has surely been aided by the arrival of two talented freshers Lauren Major and Rosie Talbot, finishing fifth and sixth respectively.

The fact that twenty-one women ran under 11 minutes for the 2.7km course and twenty-five men ran under 17 minutes for just under 5km shows the incredible strength and depth of the squad that the Hare and Hounds have at their disposal for the Varsity match against Oxford at the end of term, whilst competition for places on the selected teams will be fierce at the final selection race, Cuppers on 17th November.

The next college league race will be held on Saturday 19th October at the Fen Ditton Dash.

# Mixed Lacrosse Club dominate

## Impressive teamwork, tactical awareness and excellent transitions help secure a Light Blue victory in spite of spirited play from the opposition

Fiona Latham  
LACROSSE CORRESPONDENT

Cambridge University Mixed Lacrosse Club (CUMLC) started their season in splendid style on Sunday with a comfortable 19-2 win against opponents Brighton.

Cambridge started the first quarter brightly, looking dangerous in attack and assured in defence. The straight attacks used speed and skill to outwit the Brighton defenders and create a huge number of chances.

Any attempts by the opposition to counter-attack were stifled by the Light Blue defence, who displayed impressive communication and tactical awareness despite the large number of new faces in the team.

The second quarter saw much of the same from Cambridge. The flurry of goals was testament to the determination of every Cambridge player to keep possession and win every ball. The defence remained solid, carrying the team and new goalkeeper Harriet Wade into the half time break with a clean sheet.

Brighton were clearly frustrated by the scoreline as the team are used to being a dominant force in the league. The third quarter was harder for Cambridge; Brighton packed their midfield with their speediest male players and resorted to passes from one end of the pitch to another in order to create chances.



The team were jubilant post-match and confident that a great Lacrosse season would follow

Their efforts were, for the most part, held in check by a Cambridge defence anchored by 2013-14 captains Ellen Heddle and Wei-Ying Chen, only allowing Brighton a single consolatory goal during the quarter.

Despite the dominant performance, there is no room for complacency in lacrosse games, and CUMLC entered the fourth quarter in a quest for more goals.

Despite Brighton's spirited play, a series of excellent transitions from midfield to attack resulted in more goals for the Cambridge side, denying Brighton the chance to add more than one other goal to their tally.

Special mention must go to Cambridge midfielder Jacob Lam for contributing 6 goals to the 19-2 scoreline. However, the first win of the season for the Light Blues came as the

result of impressive teamwork from the whole CUMLC side rather than just the prowess of one individual.

The result will build confidence for the new-look CUMLC side at the start of the new season and is a great follow-up from very successful past seasons.

In two weeks' time, the Light Blues face The Other Place in their first showdown since Cambridge's 9-5 Varsity win in February. GDBO!

# Mixed week for hockey

Therese De Souza & Johnno Cobbold  
HOCKEY CORRESPONDENTS

The Men's Blues set out on the not so well-travelled road to Dereham in the knowledge that three points were required against a side that have made a remarkable start to the season.

The first half of the match was all Light Blue and the Dereham's metaphorical toys were rapidly leaving their prams. A couple of greens and a yellow allowed Cambridge to capitalise and a quick shot from Joe Rich was able to be deflected goalwards by the ever-present Dave Mclean.

A rare Dereham attack was upgraded to a corner and was put away. This represented a small blemish on an otherwise faultless first half that ended with a Jamie Bristow deflection and a wonderful team goal scored by Sunil Sajdeh.

To be 4-1 up at half time was satisfying, but Dereham were a different side in the second half and the combination of some aggressive running and more sophisticated pressing allowed them to claw back a goal.

The game remained in the balance for the rest of the second half with more cards shown and chances missed. The game ended 4-2, with a well earned 3 points for the Blues.

On the Women's side, after a chilly week of training, the team met with excitement and trepidation over this week's match against Bromley and Beckenham. A win was a must as they were still yet to get a point on the board.

The first half started with what can only be described as 'ping-pong' hockey, and easy mistakes kept creeping into the Blues' game, giving the opposition



The Women's Hockey Blues had a string of chances, but none converted.

a fighting chance they didn't deserve.

In the second half, after a slight lull in the first ten minutes, the intensity amplified. With help from the support of the Wanderers (the Men's 2nd team) the Blues had a string of chances, but none converted. Then the worst happened, with a well worked goal by B&B.

Straight up to the other end of the pitch, the Blues kept fighting. Alex Maskell was taken out by the keeper's stick, but luck was not on the Blues' side. When the final whistle went, frustration and determination were the main feeling in the Blues' camp. Bring on Wednesday and hopefully a first win of the season.

## Golfing Blues win their third match in a row

Carl Rietschel  
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

The Golf Blues were undefeated in their first two matches of the season against Little Aston Golf Club and the Wigorns Golfing Society. On two wonderfully sunny days in the Midlands the team gave it their best and had reason to believe that a promising term would come, which they hoped would continue with a victory against the West Hill golfers.

But dark clouds loomed above as the Blues stepped onto their first tee on Sunday morning. After a drizzly start, the rain became even heavier towards lunchtime, resulting in afternoon play being called off and a loss for Cambridge University after the foursomes.

Despite the weather, West Hill presented itself in still summery condition, and a testing team awaited the Blues as they set out for the foursomes. However, it would soon be clear that puddles on the greens were growing rapidly and even the best rain gear was standing no chance against the floods coming down from above.

Many a Cambridge player now wishes he had had the negotiation powers of Cumberland and Hill, who secured a gentleman's half on the 16th hole. Cambridge's only full point came from Lewicki and Smith, who held their nerve down to the last after their opponents holed their second shot for an eagle 3 on the par-5 17th.

Still, the final score was to Cambridge's advantage: CUGC 1.5 - West Hill Golf Club 3.5. Next weekend, the Blues will be taking on the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society in their first home match of the season.



# Rugby ladies take the spotlight

Following the male side of the Rugby Club being crushed in their latest match, the women's team made sure to save the day with a promising second victory

Fiona Gillanders & Jemima Lane  
RUGBY CORRESPONDENTS

For their first league match of the season, the Cambridge team travelled to the West Midlands to meet the Bridgnorth ladies.

The game started off strongly in defence, with a good line, powerful tackles by forwards and backs alike and a strong scrum from the Cambridge team.

However, this proved to be not quite good enough, and several fumbles over the ball meant that Bridgnorth were able to dominate possession and score their first try which was then converted.

The first half finished with some good play from Cambridge, with the ball making it out to a strong back line including new player Devan Kreisberg. Excellent tackles from Jess Gurney and Sian McGuinness and a stolen line-out gave Cambridge a positive outlook for the start of the second half. Unfortunately, this was not enough and in the second half a lack of solid recoveries on the Cambridge side resulted in Bridgnorth adding two more tries to their score, despite a good Cambridge defence and particularly excellent play from Tia Knight and Bryony Coombs. The match ended with a disappointing result for Cambridge, yet the team showed immense promise; the match highlighted areas of play that they look



Doncaster could not get past the Light Blues' solid defence

forward to working on over the coming season.

After this heavy defeat, the Cambridge ladies had something to prove against Doncaster the following Saturday. The game began well with an early try from newcomer Kreisberg. This was quickly followed by Poppy Brewer, a returning Blue, breaking down the wing to attempt try no. 2.

Unfortunately, their 14 was almost as quick as the Cambridge player and managed to catch her. Brewer had to pass the ball and McGuinness was there on her shoulder ready to take the glory

of the second "under the post" try.

Doncaster then had their turn with the ball, showing some promising breaks through the line. Cambridge began to tackle a bit high and the opposition weren't going down that easily. The Doncaster no. 14 managed to score the first try for Doncaster, despite a big old tackle from Brewer.

Clare Donaldson decided to take things into her own hands, got the ball, ran straight through the centre of their pack, dodging the arms as they reached out to grab her and scored a third try under the posts.

Things got a bit tense after this and Cambridge had to put up some solid defence on their own tryline as a scrum at 5m and a penalty against Cambridge almost saw Doncaster get their second score of the game.

Thankfully a double movement on the tryline saved Cambridge, who were frightened into a fantastic try at the other end of the pitch. The ball began at McGuinness, who passed to Kreisberg, on to Knight, to Brewer, back to McGuinness, on to Molly Byrne and finally back to McGuinness again who was there to score the try, which she then converted for Cambridge.

The following kick-off went straight into touch, providing Cambridge with an opportunity to try out their new flare line-out move. It almost worked.

Cambridge obviously got a bit too comfortable in the second half, and Doncaster upped their game.

A line-out near the Cambridge try line allowed their players to use their size and strength to overpower the defensive line and score their second try.

This was followed by some more faffing around the try-line, allowing Doncaster a third. Brewer managed to scamper round their players and score another two tries to even out the second half score.

Cambridge jubilated in their victory, final score 49-16. Their next match will see them facing Oxford Brookes on 16th October.

## Blue Trials ETON FIVES

Nathan Smith

What is Eton Fives? Chances are, unless you went to a private school, you haven't got a clue. I didn't, so I went along to visit the Cambridge Eton Fives Society.

The sport is kind of like a poor-man's squash, which is rather ironic given its heritage. The game consists of two teams of two hitting a ball at a wall with their hands until one of the teams fails to hit it back or the ball bounces more than once.

The game's history is one of hardship; it grew out of the confines and oppression of Eton College, where A. C. Ainger and friends developed a simple game with the limited resources they had and played against the ancient walls of the Eton chapel. I suppose it would be easy to be disparaging of the sport but the whole idea is so peculiar as to give it a kind of allure. Every Eton Fives Court is built as a replica of the chapel in a tribute to the sport's heritage. It's like football fields having to have concrete jumpers instead of goalposts!

Upon watching I was amazed at the level of physical skill often employed to play the game. Nevertheless, it's a sport that has retained the charm of amateurism and invites even the most dyspraxic to attempt. Though I'm not expecting it to turn up to the Olympics, I thoroughly enjoyed myself and I'm hoping to go back.

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# Sport

## BLUES TRIAL

Our correspondent tries a new sport every week. See what he thinks about this week's challenge, Eton Fives, on page 29.



The Light Blue boys were outmuscled – but not outplayed – by their professional opponents

# Rugby boys outmuscled

**The Rugby Blues met their first professional opposition, Northampton Saints, on Monday, but ended up being overpowered by their opposition's forward pack**

Richard Stockwell  
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

The Blues came into this fixture on the back of a largely positive start to the season. After losing to Bath University in their opening match, they have enjoyed three consecutive victories over Loughborough, Friends of Cambridge Old Boys and Shelford RFC by increasingly large margins, the latest being 41-11. Northampton Saints provided the Blues with their first professional opposition of the season on Monday night and overturned this trend, but Cambridge were spirited in defeat.

The Saints pack were eager to make their presence felt in the cagey early exchanges, engaging in plenty of off-the-ball rough and tumble. But Cambridge were first on the scoreboard, with their only try of the game coming in bizarre fashion. Mather arose with the ball behind the Saints line after a possession-less maul had progressed ten metres further downfield. The Blues lock had the good sense and selflessness to offload to Murdoch on the left wing, who streaked away from the halfway line to score. Stevens missed the conversion attempt, as well as a penalty straight in front of goal soon afterwards, hitting the left post.

After early Blues success, the Saints

pack gained a stranglehold on the game. Completely outmuscled in the scrum by Saints' professional heavies, the Blues pack repeatedly disintegrated. The referee soon lost patience and singled out Blues tight-head prop Sanders to send to the sin bin. Saints' numerical advantage began to tell immediately, as a clean line-out ball and quick hands saw Artemyev score in the left corner. The conversion missed and the scores were level at 5-5.

The Blues gained good field position from the restart as the Saints left the catching duties to each other and fumbled the ball into touch. Peck marshalled his forwards well from scrum-half after retaining the line-out ball, but the Blues found no way through.

A series of aggressive penalty kicks to touch took the Saints to within 15 metres of the Blues line. The seven man pack fared no better as the Saints steamrollered their way to an easy, mauling try, duly converted.

Saints then hit their stride with a lively passage of play, featuring flat passes, jinking runs and cross-field kicks. But the Blues held firm to go in for half-time only seven points adrift at 5-12.

The deficit was reduced right after the break, Stevens kicking a penalty from straight in front of the posts. But

good tactical kicking from Saints pressured the Blues into a fluffed line-out on their own five metre line. An at-

*"Completely outmuscled in the scrum by Saints' professional heavies, the Blues' pack repeatedly disintegrated. The referee soon lost his patience..."*

tacking scrum from this range was only going to end one way, with the Saints number eight Nutley touching down from the base. Oliver missed the conversion, but soon extended the lead to 8-20 with a penalty for offside.

The Saints backs, particularly the back three trio of Collins, Packman and Artemyev, were dashing all night. But the Saints forwards struggled to keep up, allowing Cambridge to steal a good deal of ball at the breakdown. Morrison went a step too far when a ruck had been formed – in the eyes of the referee – and was yellow carded for a professional foul. It was again the Saints forwards who made the extra

man count, Onojaife scoring a converted try after another dominant maul.

Parity in numbers was restored when Saints' Day was sin-binned for a tip tackle just seconds after coming on as a substitute. But the Blues continued to go backwards in the scrum, as their replacement front row were unable to turn the tide.

Saints wore the Blues down until Williams scored under the posts, Hockley converting for 8-34. The game opened up in the dying minutes, as the Blues summarised their doggedness with a final play that took them from their own try line into opposition territory before a knock on eventually brought proceedings to a close.

The Blues had been outmuscled but not outplayed by a professional opposition. They will face a similar challenge from Saracens next Monday night, whose first team are undefeated at the top of the English Premiership. Entry to matches at Grange Road is now free for students – an effort to further boost attendances and atmosphere – as the Blues continue their build-up to the season-defining Varsity match at Twickenham.

This year's is set for Thursday 12th December and will see the Light Blues attempt to end a run of three successive defeats.

## SPORTSCENE

### Victory for the Netball Ladies

**NETBALL** The netball Blues christened their new home at the University Sports Centre with a convincing victory in their first game of the season against Warwick. With only one training session under their belts since trials and only two returning Blues in the squad, the challenge was by no means an easy one.

Some consistently impressive shooting from Sophie Hussey and fresh-faced Izzy Bell, combined with the impenetrable defence of returning Blue Laura Spence, ensured the Blues were able to take a lead in the first quarter, which they carried through until the final whistle. The game ended 41-14.

### Third time lucky for Football Blues

**FOOTBALL** The first game of pre-season saw the Blues take on Histon, but the lack of match practice was evident with the 'liquid' football characteristic of last season seemingly frozen. With 5-3 the final score, there were, however, plenty of attacking positives.

The next challenge was a very strong AFC side. The Blues started much brighter and looked most likely to score in the first half. However, two quick fire goals at the start of the second half meant there was no way back.

Luck was on their side again on Wednesday, in their first league game of the season to UWE Hartpury. A victorious 2-0 turned odds back on their side. This was followed by further success of the Falcons (second team), who won their final game of pre-season 2-1 against Alleyns School.

### CULC off to a winning start

**LACROSSE** After the summer break, the first game of the season saw CULC travel to East Grinstead. Cambridge went two up in the first quarter, thanks to two initial goals from Ireland international Cillian Murphy on his Cambridge debut.

The team were looking comfortable at the half-time interval with a lead of 5-2, with further goals from Mark Currie, Nick Evans and Josh Findlay. The defensive unit improved and gained confidence as the game progressed and by the final quarter the poles of John Wilhelm, Ben Langridge and Sid Jain were dominating their attackers. A final flurry of goals gave Cambridge a resounding 9-4 victory.

On the ladies' side, the Blues match against Cardiff was rained off and had to be rescheduled. The Kingfishers, the ladies' second team, on the other hand, dispatched Birmingham 2nds with a final score of 9-6 in the first match of the season.

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