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Cambridge est Charlie

Cambridge shows its support for victims of Paris attacks

Eleanor Deeley & John McCarrick
News Correspondents

On Sunday 11th January, Cambridge rallied in unity against three days of terrorist attacks in Paris, which left 17 innocent people dead.

The events, which have since dominated the international press, appear to have struck deep within the Cambridge community, who came together on Sunday to show their support for the victims of the attacks.

The rally, organised by Alliance Française de Cambridge outside Great St Mary's church, brought together hundreds from in and around the city. Many had brought pens, placards and banners, lots of which were homemade, whereas others held printed copies of the viral #JeSuisCharlie image.

Marchers were a mix of young and old, of students, professors and residents. All quietly gathered in tribute to those who lost their lives at the hands of at least three terror suspects over three days in France's capital. Those killed included journalists of satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, police officers at the scene, and shoppers held hostage at a kosher supermarket.

The atmosphere was sombre, with a French flag drooping across the iron fencing of Senate House. Yet amidst the sobriety was defiance. Those interviewed by Varsity were preoccupied not so much by freedom of the press, but rather by the ever more oppressive environment for the nation's sizeable Muslim population. The response was unanimous: France will not fall to fundamentalists, but stand strong with French Muslims. Some, although categorically condemning the attacks, questioned the moral merit of Charlie Hebdo, considering that some of its cartoons were, in their view, racist.

Clare College's student publication,

Clarefication, drew strong criticism from some when it republished satirical cartoons of Prophet Mohammed in February 2006. Varsity reported at the time that one Clare student described the cartoon as "one of the most offensive things I have ever seen." Charlie Hebdo's publication of the cartoons led to its editor Philippe Val being sued by the Grand Mosque of Paris, though he was acquitted of inciting hatred against Muslims.

At the rally, Matteo Mirolo of Fitzwilliam College said: "I think it's

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“THERE WILL BE A 'BEFORE' AND 'AFTER' PERIOD.”

important to start to reconstruct the country after what has happened because there will be a 'before' and 'after' period." For him, the 'JeSuisCharlie' movement "shows the unity of the French people," and he stressed that his thoughts also rested with "the Muslim people of France... and the Jewish people who have once again been the target of anti-Semitism."

The attack on the kosher supermarket in Porte de Vincennes just two days after the initial shootings was seen to add another dimension to recent events.

Prompting another outpouring of support on social media, it has led many to display #JeSuisJuif alongside the already popular #JeSuisCharlie and #JeSuisAhmed hashtags, the latter referring to the Muslim police officer Ahmed Merabet who was shot dead while patrolling the streets outside the Charlie Hebdo offices.

A minute's silence was held outside Senate House followed by a round of applause led by an organiser of the rally from Alliance Française. She said the rally was important because "it's our liberty, it's our children, it's your future." In this, she managed to capture the main themes of the discussions

that took place in the street afterwards among a crowd bound by solemnity but looking to build a stronger France and international community in the aftermath of tragedy.

Guillaume Guilbaud, a Parisian who also attended the event, spoke of the attacks on journalists as "an attack again on the rights for which we have been fighting for, for centuries now." For him, being present at the march was "a way to say thanks to all those people that are fighting and know that their life is in danger."

It's "easy, it's not a lot... [it's] the minimum I could do," Guilbaud went on, "I couldn't be in Paris today."

This feeling of solidarity with the international condemnation of the Paris attacks was strong. Amidst the signs and other frequent references to social media, where the outpouring of support has come to be one of the defining features of the attacks, it was difficult to forget that the 400 or so people gathered outside Senate House represented only one of the many rallies across Britain, France, and the world. Forty-four world leaders, among them David Cameron, had also assembled in Paris to take part in a mass demonstration, and the resonance of this was not lost on Sunday afternoon in King's Parade.

Among those at the gathering was Amanda Ekström of Robinson College, who was in Paris at the time of the attacks. She said "it's very important to support the freedom of expression," and voiced hope for resulting social movements.

What struck Amanda most, though, was the global display of solidarity with phrases like 'JeSuisCharlie' and 'Not Afraid.' "It's very beautiful how people around the world have reacted."

Despite the solemnity of the march, Wednesday's publication of the first edition of Charlie Hebdo since the attacks, featuring a new cartoon of Mohammed on the cover and lampooning the world leaders gathered in Paris, shows the magazine's intention not to become the sanitised Charlie of the 'JeSuisCharlie' movement.

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A marcher during Sunday's rally

Qui suis-je?

EDITORIAL

This week, Cambridge has been Charlie. Over 400 people gathered together last Sunday to express this sentiment, and it has been at the forefront of conversations, thoughts, and media attention throughout the university since. In addition to this, however, Cambridge has been Ahmed. Cambridge has been Juif. And presumably, in between, Cambridge has also been stressed students preparing for the first week of term.

Yet 'students' appears to have been an insufficient standpoint from which to condemn the horrible events in Paris that left 17 dead. This newspaper stands in solidarity with these victims and has co-signed an editorial expressing this with more than 100 journalists from over ten student publications nationwide in the *Tab National*.

It is interesting, however, that as student journalists, and moreover as students, a community that has shown overwhelming support for those affected by events in France, we still choose to

articulate this sympathy from the standpoint of someone else. Nous sommes Charlie.

But what do we really mean when we claim these identities for ourselves? How closely can we identify with a French satirical magazine, a police officer protecting it, and the religion of a supermarket in east Paris? The answer, it seems, is with difficulty. And yet identity politics of this kind is not unusual in our responses to tragedy. Last year we were Michael Brown, Eric Garner.

Why is our voice less powerful as students, who can view these events with nuance and draw our own conclusions, than as 'Charlie' or 'Ahmed'? As George W. Bush declared in the aftermath of 9/11, "either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists." A statement as idiotic today as it was then, with the latest issue of *Charlie Hebdo* containing a crying Prophet Mohamed, it is of course possible to be against a borderline racist publication and the terrorists who threaten it.

This nuance is even more important when *The Economist* reveals that in most major European countries, France included, over 50 per cent of the population believe Islam is not compatible with the West. As the British media has pointed out tirelessly, racist publications don't help this fact. While the recalcitrant response of #JeSuisAhmed was better, the 'not all Islam is bad' mentality inherent in this is equally unhelpful.

Our response to these events shouldn't be claiming that we, too, are Ahmed, or that his identity is now somehow acceptable because we recognise in ourselves aspects of it. At a time when certain identities' 'incompatibility' with the West is once again in focus, we should celebrate difference, not insist everyone file behind a single 'Je Suis'.

Because, whether Ahmed, Juif or Charlie, these are not our identities. They are theirs. But that does not mean that we can't stand with them, as Cambridge did on Sunday 11th January.

NEWS

College travel grants

With some colleges offering over £40,000 for student travel, Sarah Sheard looks at the disparities (*page 4*)



INTERVIEW

David Willetts

Leo Sands talks to the man behind £9,000 about the ideology behind the coalition (*page 12*)



COMMENT

The Feminist Image

If 2014 was the year of the 'woman', Millie Paine wants 2015 to be the year of 'women' (*page 15*)



CULTURE

Sara Pascoe

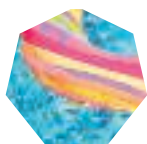
Ahead of her stop at The Junction, Jordan Mitchell talks to this rising comedic star (*page 18*)



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Naked Talent

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Varsity Writers' Meeting

Come along on Monday 19th January at 6.30pm to the Varsity offices if you're interested in writing for us

Contact editor@varsity.co.uk for more information

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Sunday 6pm

Will Heilpern and Alex Rice on this week's Varsity and more

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Low turnout for CUSU campaign event

CUSU project receives distinct lack of interest and support

Till Schöfer
Deputy News Editor

On Wednesday, student societies from around Cambridge descended on the Guildhall in order to participate in a campaigning project launched by the Cambridge University Students' Union.

According to the event's Facebook page, Campaigning Cambridge aimed to "bring together different societies and groups from around Cambridge that campaign for change within the University and the wider community."

The CUSU project was structured around a series of panel debates on issues such as the cost of education, the value of your vote, no platform policies, and the living wage, with a brief interlude featuring comedian Chris Coltrane.

The various participating societies were also given the opportunity of campaigning at stalls, in a fashion similar to Freshers' Fair.

Roughly 20 political societies set up stalls in the Guildhall's main chamber. Several of the UK's main political parties campaigned at the event, with stations representing the Green Party, Labour, the Lib Dems and the Conservatives present.

Other internationalist societies were also present such as the European Society, War Child and the Palestinian



Top and bottom: CUSU 'Campaigning Cambridge' event throughout the course of the day

Society.

Student campaigns focusing on social issues such as tuition fees, the living wage and women's rights were represented at the event by Cambridge Defend Education, the Hills Road Feminist Society, the Living Wage Campaign and Marxist Syllabus.

As may be expected, various initiatives set up by CUSU including the Women's Campaign and CUSU

Supports Education also participated in the project. These campaigns were joined by stalls for the Vegan Society, RAG, and, perhaps most surprisingly, by the Cambridge University Light Entertainment Society, an amateur dramatics group.

The event, which stretched over a six hour period from 12pm to 6pm, was marked by a distinctly low turnout and lack of interest. Consequently,

panel discussions set up in an adjacent chamber were moved to the main hall. This, however, still did not manage to attract large audiences to the panel debates.

Oliver Garner, a second year economist from Robinson who was one of the few attendees, gave Varsity the following statement: "As a theoretical concept such events could work. But having it so close to the start of term

may make Campaigning Cambridge unappealing to students. The notion that some people don't want to go to the Guildhall and are apathetic to CUSU should also be considered."

Susi Navara, one of the representatives of the European Society, stated that "in theory it was a really good idea. Publicity for the event could have however been better."

Regarding the low turnout Matteo Mirolo, another European Society campaigner, claimed that "[the low attendance rate] is quite symptomatic of the state of student involvement in politics." Similar sentiments concerning the disparity between campaigning projects in theory and practice were voiced by Tom Wilson, a campaigner for the CU Labour Club. Citing his own pre-university experiences, Wilson stated:

"In theory it is a really, really good concept. You find out about the various parties and learn how to get involved. In practice however, it may not engage people who are completely apolitical and haven't come into contact with politics before."

Reece Edmonds, the current Chair of the Cambridge Student Liberal Democrats, approached the issue of campaigning slightly differently claiming: "It is a good way to inform students of the good things their MP, Julian Huppert [Lib Dem], is doing."

The approach to campaigning adopted by the project was summarised by Oliver Garner as follows: "You're getting a series of facts, which aren't being debated. It consequently quickly turns into a sales pitch."

DESTINATIONS

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



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Too much baggage?

With some colleges offering students up to £40,000 for travel, **Sarah Sheard** explores whether centralising travel bursaries could level the playing field



Some colleges offer up to 27 separate grants to fund undergraduates’ academic or recreational travel, a Varsity study can reveal, while others are only able to provide one or two.

Undergraduates looking for financial support while planning academic or recreational travel can look to 6 university-wide grants. While some of these funds are awarded only for academic travel, such as the A.J. Pressland fund to support language study for science students, others, like the Oxbridge-wide Gladstone

£300

Money allocated to every undergraduate at Clare for “generally beneficial” travel

Memorial Trust Travel Award, are intended for undergraduates to “travel abroad and extend their knowledge of foreign countries”. Academic-related travel is automatically ineligible for the Gladstone award.

Competition for university-wide grants for recreational travel, however, is fierce; all Oxbridge undergraduates (except finalists) are eligible for the Gladstone Memorial Trust Awards, for instance. There is thus a startling disparity in the support available to students who wish to travel for a non-academic reason – a disparity based entirely on which college they attend, and how much money they are able to offer to travelling students.

Of the 29 undergraduate colleges examined, St Catharine’s had the highest number of separate travel grants offered to students, claiming that it provides £40,000 to its undergraduates “for travel and other related activities”. Of these funds, 15 are subject-specific, and the remainder are simply “general”, although academic projects, altruistic plans and “personal travel with the aim of cultural enrichment” are apparently prioritised. The extent of travel grants

at St Catharine’s, by its own admission, is the result of the generosity “given by various private benefactors over the years”.

This seems consistent with the expected pattern that older and more prestigious colleges are more capable of funding student travel, though there are exceptions; Fitzwilliam offers 24 separate grants, Christ’s 19, St John’s 16, and Downing 15. Trinity provides 7 separate funds as well as 6 fully-funded scholarship years for students spending a year at university in Paris, Germany and the US.

Clare College is unique in allocating every undergraduate registered on a course of at least 3 years’ duration the sum of £300, which may be used for “travel that either relates to that student’s course of study, or which might be regarded as generally beneficial to them”.

“

THE SIR WILLIAM WADE AWARD AT CAIUS IS INTENDED TO SUPPORT “TRAVEL IN MOUNTAINS”

offer much sparser opportunities for college-funded travel; Robinson lists just one travel award under its prize list, whilst Homerton similarly only has one travel grant. Mature colleges, in particular, seem to have funds that are lower than most and are restricted only to academic or conference-based travel. Hughes Hall claims it has a “small fund” to help students attend conferences as part of research. Similarly, Wolfson only offers support “to help with travel costs for students who are giving a paper at an academic conference”, a grant to which students may only apply once a year.

It should be emphasised that academic travel is mainly funded through the faculties of the university and not through colleges, and is thus not the main focus of this analysis; while some awards are focused on academic travel, the majority are for “general” trips which could more accurately be classified as “recreational”.

Comparing the number of grants that colleges award is the best way to compare the colleges. Even though the number of specific grants does not directly correlate with how much money a college allocates to its students for travel, annual variation under this method is likely to be extensive. One year’s figures are thus less representative than the number of grants.

The fact that older, more well-known colleges have more money (and potentially wealthier alumni to donate to them) is not a surprising result by any standards.

Central colleges have had a longer period to amass donations from far more alumni than newer colleges, such as Homerton, which only became a full college of the university in 2010.

St Catharine’s 2nd year Adam Butterworth, however, claims that most scholarships at his college “aren’t even taken up”. He benefited from the college’s travel funds to participate in an exchange with a university in Heidelberg, Germany during the Long Vacation in 2014.

“My tutor’s always telling me about how I should look at the bursaries page because most people don’t even know it exists,” he said.

Some grants are almost ridiculous in their specificity and obscurity, such as the Sir William Wade Award at Gonville and Caius, which is intended to support “travel in mountains”. Similarly, the Jopie Kempton Fund at Christ’s is specified as funding only “travel related to the Netherlands or associated territories, with preference for those studying Physics”, while the Medical Mission Fund at Selwyn supports only “religious (Christian) related trips... for the activities which can

Rank	College	Number of Grants Offered
1	Catz	27
2	Fitz	24
3	Girton	22
4	Christ's	19
5	John's	16
6	Downing	15
7	Jesus	13
=	Trinity	13
9	Sidney	11
10	Peterhouse	9
11	Caius	5
=	Selwyn	5
13	Tit Hall	4
14	Churchill	3
15	St Edmunds	2
=	Emma	2
=	Murray Ed	2
18	Homerton	1
=	Robinson	1
=	Lucy Cav	1
=	Wolfson	1
=	Hughes Hall	1
=	Clare	1
N/A	King's	"GENEROUS"
N/A	Magdalene	"MANY AWARDS"
N/A	Corpus	"GRANTS ARE GIVEN"
N/A	Newnham	"WIDE RANGE"
N/A	Queens	"SMALL GRANTS"
N/A	Pembroke	"ABLE TO AWARD GRANTS"

Data gathered by Sarah Sheard, and refers to number of specific individual grants each college provides. Information provided by colleges and college websites.

be regarded as missionary and medical in nature”.

One can easily imagine that such niche funds are not regularly taken up by students, especially if they are only open to undergraduates at one college, rather than the entire university.

Hanna Stephens, a 2nd year

Geographer at Homerton, described it as “unfair” that a student’s college, rather than their economic status, determines whether they receive travel funding.

“I think people who have had less travel experiences and have lower household income should maybe be prioritised,” she argues.

One possible solution would be a more centralised system for travel grants that could operate throughout the university. Colleges would have the amount of money they can distribute for travel capped, with any excess or unused grants placed into a central pool to which all Cambridge undergraduates could apply. A similar scheme operates at the University of York, which, despite being collegiate, has brought all its grants together in a centralised system.

Colleges with more (and greater) donations from alumni could have slightly higher caps, to reflect their higher donative income, while pooling funds above their grant cap would have a more positive effect on the university as a whole. Adam thinks this could be a way in which “people who really want funding and actually deserve it can easily access it regardless of college,” and a centralised system would ensure that the money would go to those who need it most.

Thus, students from lower income families with limited travel experience, especially those travelling with an academic intention, could use money otherwise left unspent at colleges, or given to recipients who could fund themselves.

Yet centralisation would be by no means easy. As 3rd year Historian Amy Hawkins points out, “while the disparities between college funds are certainly unfair, they are an inevitable symptom of a collegiate university.”

And, considering the response from a university spokesperson, who said “the issuing of travel grants is a matter for individual colleges,” it doesn’t look as if the system will change any time soon.

Election Profile: Julian Huppert

Richard Nicholl

News Correspondent

"Huppert the Muppet, I call him," says the cab driver taking me to see Cambridge's most visible politician, Julian Huppert, Liberal Democrat MP for the city since 2010.

If Cambridge is in the news, Huppert will usually turn up, usually holding a banner or frowning in a photo. Over Lent Term, Varsity is profiling the main candidates vying to take his seat from him; today, Mr Huppert gets his say.

Huppert is 36 and comes from a strong Cantabrigian background. He remains a fellow at Clare in Biological Chemistry, though is on unpaid leave while an MP, and was once a fellow at Trinity where he studied as an undergraduate and PhD. He is a friendly, unassuming man. He quips that his desk is the one without a seat. Perhaps the metaphor is best left implicit.

I get straight to the point and ask him about his election chances: the most recent Ashcroft poll indicates his closest rival, Daniel Zeichner (Labour) leads him by one point, while across the country the Liberal Democrats are polling only slightly better than tuberculosis. That said, the bookies have the incumbent as the slight favourite.

"I think it will be a very tight race," he says, "and it'll be a question of whether people like my track record as someone who has worked for Cambridge and delivered for Cambridge."

He does work hard in Parliament:

POLICY BOX

- ✓ Decriminalise cannabis
- ✓ Introduce a mansion tax
- ✓ EU referendum
- ✓ Nuclear disarmament
- ✓ Further devolution to the regions
- ✓ Maintain the Human Rights Act 1998

They Work For You ranks him "well above average" for his participation in debates and questions, and he is in several all-party groups, as well as the Home Affairs Select Committee.

Yet Huppert cites constituency work as the most rewarding part of his position, talking at length about a constituent whom he had assisted in finding housing.

Huppert is banking on visibility and the incumbency effect to hold out against an expected Liberal Democrat wipe-out in May. In Ashcroft's Cambridge poll, the Lib Dems trailed Labour and the Conservatives until Huppert's name was prompted.

What about the cab driver, tired of seeing Huppert every time he opens a newspaper? Does he ever worry that constituents will get sick of him? He laughs. "I hope to avoid it," he says sheepishly, though "people certainly say they see my picture quite a bit."

Proud of his track record, he describes himself as a "Rawlsian liberal", opposed to any concentrated power.

Unprompted, he raises the Lib Dem push on 'revenge porn' as a particular success. He says "it would never be on the front page of the newspapers... but is actually something that would make a big difference."

His liberalism has not been absolute. Although he rebelled on secret courts and pushed for a Commons vote on the new regulations banning British producers from making certain types of pornography, he voted with the government on the Data Retention and Investigatory Powers Act. Why?

"We've reduced the number of organisations that are able to get access to your information... the amount of time information is kept for, [the] purposes for which information can be looked at [and set] up a privacy and civil liberties oversight board... I think it was a good liberal package."

Would he have voted for it without those concessions? "Absolutely not. Without them, it wouldn't have happened. In my mind, it was a liberal measure. It wasn't the perfect measure... but there was no way of getting what I would most like to see passed."

In this sense, Huppert sees himself as a representative, acting "in the best interests of the people of Cambridge and the values of the people of Cambridge". I point out that this, of course, helps his re-election efforts. Quickly, he replies: "It's also what the job is. I don't think it's as cynical as you suggest."

Huppert comes alive when we talk about drugs. Recently, he co-wrote an article with Caroline Lucas, Green MP for Brighton Pavilion, advocating major reforms in UK drug law. I ask him to elaborate.

"The aim of drugs policy should be harm reduction... the traditional approach has been not to aim at harm



reduction, but to aim at use reduction, and... that's increased the harms.

"What I would do immediately is to decriminalise on the Portuguese model: possession [of] any drug is not a criminal offence. You can do that quickly and easily and say we should have police efforts, not focused on the users, but focused on the gangs. There's a lot of very, very nasty, violent behaviour there... That's the first step."

And after that? "Globally, we have to break the power of the drugs cartels. The only way to do that is to move forward on a global basis towards a more sensible system." Does he mean legalisation? "The best outcome? I don't know." In the end the scientist trumps the politician: on drugs he is anxious not to prejudice regulation in the US and Uruguay.

"The big question about legalisation is what happens to usage. I strongly suspect that usage will not go up in the long term... I think we can wait a couple of years and find out."

"Huppert the Muppet" seems unfair. He comes across as a Cantabrigian intellectual, for good and for ill. Whether that is enough for this crucial marginal as all eyes turn towards 7th May is another question entirely.



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Libyan soldiers report criticises MoD

A new report reveals MoD failings with regards to Libyan soldiers

Till Schöfer

Deputy News Editor

A new report into the Libyan soldiers training in Cambridgeshire was published last week by a group of civil servants. The review, ordered by the Prime Minister, has concluded that the Ministry of Defence failed to properly communicate with local councils and residents regarding the occurrences at Basingbourn barracks.

The Cambridgeshire barracks came under fire last year when two of its trainees were charged with the rape of a man in central Cambridge. Following this incident, two further Libyans training at Basingbourn pleaded guilty to leaving the camp without permission and sexually assaulting residents of the city. A fifth soldier has also been charged with sexual assault.

The frequency of unauthorised trips out of the barracks, including several visits to Cambridge, had been criticised by the city's residents in 2014 and has now been subject to further disapproval in the new report. Security at the barracks was also subject to censure:

"For the duration of the course as a whole, our view is that the security arrangements were, generally, proportionate but ultimately inadequate to prevent unauthorised egress from the



Andrew Lansley MP accepted the report among calls for an independent inquiry

camp by determined trainees."

The civil servants went on to detail the fractured relationship between the Ministry of Defence and local governments. "In our view, the relationships between the army organisations responsible, respectively, for training delivery and community engagement were not robust, and this in turn meant that the linkage between the training

unit, and local authorities and the wider community, was also not robust."

The training scheme, which attempted to educate 2000 Libyan soldiers as part of a wider project aimed at stabilising the post-Gaddafi North African state, was cancelled late last year amongst fervent protests from Cambridgeshire residents.

The Ministry of Defence, which has

received the majority of the blame for the security and communication upsets, released the following statement via a spokesperson last Friday:

"As we have previously made clear, we condemn the incidents that took place in Cambridge and Basingbourn... We accept that communication with the local authorities and community was not good enough

and we are now carefully considering how best to implement the report's recommendations. We have been clear that this training will not be repeated at Basingbourn"

Local reaction to the new report has been mixed. Andrew Lansley, Conservative MP for South Cambridgeshire, accepted the investigation's findings, claiming that "[the MoD] recognise they got it wrong. Unfortunately, the price was paid by... the victims of attacks"

Lewis Herbert, the Labour leader of the Cambridge City Council on the other hand continues to call for an independent inquiry into the behaviour of troops stationed in Basingbourn.

Mr Herbert stated: "The central issue is that the MoD ignored, and continues to fail to recognise, the seriousness of the risk that it subjected Cambridge and Basingbourn residents to, even after serious crimes were committed."

"Victims in Cambridge of the alleged serious sexual assaults last October, and all residents of Cambridge and Basingbourn, deserve better than the apparent complacency that has characterised the Libyan training plan from the start, and is reflected yet again in today's summary report."

"We welcome the sharing of more information but we have no choice but to restate our demand for an independent inquiry"

The new report was compiled by a Ministry of Defence employee not involved with the training programme, and a civil servant from another government department.

STUDENT
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Oxbridge grads will earn £8,000 more

Oxbridge graduates will earn more than those from other universities

Megan Stagman

News Correspondent

It is perhaps unsurprising that adults with a degree receive a higher average wage than the rest of the British workforce, but recent research has revealed that there is also a difference between the salaries of Oxbridge graduates and those from other universities.

The study, conducted by the Sutton Trust, calls into question the blanket cost of most degrees compared to their value in later employment prospects.

The raw data indicates that the average student leaving Oxford and Cambridge will be earning £25,600 after six months, compared to £18,000 for those graduating from former polytechnics.

This discrepancy remains even after other factors such as background, schooling and previous academic achievement are accounted for, with estimates that just under £5,000 of the £7,600 difference is unrelated to social background.

However, Sutton Trust chairman Sir Peter Lampl points out that: "your chances of going to a top university [are] nearly 10 times higher if you come from a rich rather than a poor neighbourhood." A study from the Social Market Foundation has demonstrated the private school students

have much higher salary prospects.

Oxbridge continues to improve accessibility through schemes like CUSU Access and through individual colleges. But students from fee-paying schools still made up 39 per cent of undergraduates in the 2013 admissions cycle.

Added to this already substantial graduate pay gap are salary differences between subjects. While humanities and social science graduates from

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**STUDENT[S] LEAVING
CAMBRIDGE WILL BE EARNING
£25,600 AFTER SIX MONTHS**

new universities reportedly earn less than £16,000 on graduation, Oxbridge economic and business graduates, as Britain's highest earners, can expect double, with an average starting salary of £32,400.

Sir Lampl's conclusion that "we need to look honestly at the extent to which some young people may be better earning and learning on good apprenticeships than on a degree course with poor prospects" finds support in the study. With current university graduates leaving with an average of £44,000 of debt, the value of an apprenticeship seems even greater in today's highly-competitive job market.



Recent studies show Oxbridge degrees offer graduates much more than a fur-lined gowns

Gordon Chesterman, Director of the Careers Service at the University of Cambridge, claims "high salaries are not a main driver amongst our students." He points out that "Intellectual

Challenge", "Contribution to Society" and "Peer group and colleagues" all rate higher as attributes sought out in careers by Cambridge students.

Chesterman detailed the work of the

Careers Service to enhance students' employment chances, especially those from less advantaged backgrounds. This includes an alumni network and £500 bursaries for unpaid internships.

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Police rape caution strategy questioned

Charity calls for a review of sex offence cautions

Bathseba Wells-Dion

News Correspondent

Following a recent Freedom of Information request, the charity Rape Crisis England has raised concerns about the number of cautions issued for sexual offences in the East of England since 2011.

A caution is a formal warning issued at police discretion, without involving the courts. 642 of these have been issued in the region since 2011 for sexual offences.

Police argue that cautions are a deterrent, but Rape Crisis representative Katie Russell is concerned that they “do not reflect the gravity of these crimes or the long-term and wide-ranging impact of sexual violence.”

The charity is calling for an investigation into the variety of circumstances that cautions are used for, especially those in which the age of those involved may have a bearing on the way the situation is dealt with.

Many cases involve subtleties not expressed by a uniform sanction. For example, cautions have been used in the case of the rape of a female under 13 by an 18-year-old, and in two separate cases in Northamptonshire in which a 17 and 18-year-old had engaged in consensual sex with a 14-year-old.

Amelia Horgan, CUSU Women's Officer, said that the number of



Rape Crisis England have raised concerns about the number of cautions issued for sexual offences

cautions is “very alarming.”

“This is not the first time that Cambridgeshire police have been accused of serious misconduct. [An

officer] was allowed to continue working for the force, despite their knowledge of his history of sexual violence.”

The former Cambridgeshire Police

sergeant, Nick Lidstone, was recently sentenced to 14 and a half years in prison after pleading guilty to 13 sexual offences, including three counts of

indecentcy of a child, taking an indecent photograph with a child, three counts of rape and various sexual assaults.

It has emerged that he had been arrested 8 years earlier for taking ‘up-skirt’ pictures of children, but was not charged with an offence and was allowed to keep his job.

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“THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF SERIOUS MISCONDUCT.”

The most serious of his offences occurred in the years following this conditional discharge. An investigation in The Bureau in June last year found that many counties, including Cambridgeshire, were not complying with Home Office guidelines on recording rape allegations.

Home Office rules outline that incidents of rape should be recorded as soon as officers are satisfied that it is more likely than not that a rape has been committed, and within 72-hours from the time the incident is first logged.

Cambridgeshire Police has said that it recorded rape allegations immediately, but only if the incident was reported within 7 days of occurrence.



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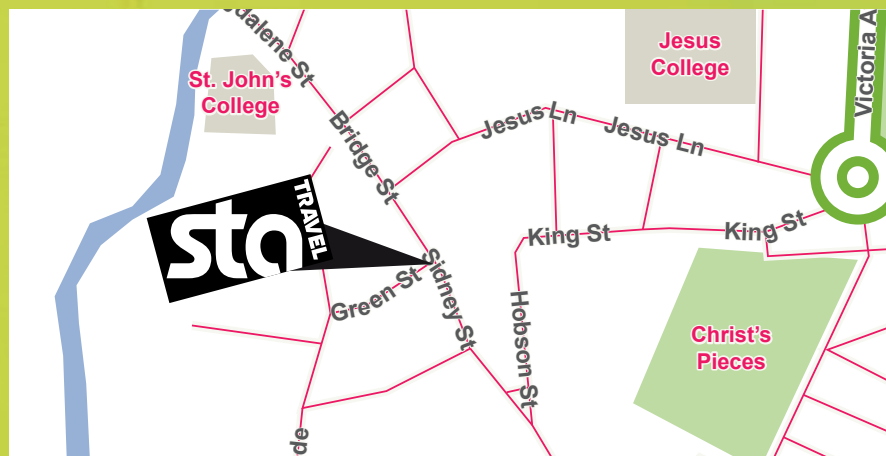
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Unis refuse to release tuition fee data

UK universities refuse to divulge how they spend income from tuition fees

Ciara Nugent

News Correspondent

In total, only ten responses were received from UK universities after the education think-tank, the Higher Education Policy Institute, asked a number of higher education institutions to divulge a breakdown of their spending information.

The think-tank wanted universities to follow the example set by Texas State University in the United States, which publishes an itemised breakdown of its costs, and plans to publish

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OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE CLAIM THAT EACH UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ACTUALLY COSTS THEM AROUND £16,000 PER YEAR.

a pamphlet containing the data.

Nick Hillman, director of HEPI and former advisor to ex-Universities Minister David Willetts, said: “I’d like to see our universities adopting an approach similar to the local authorities on how they spend their council taxes,



Cam students in Defend Education Cuts protests, 2010

where they itemise spending on individual services.”

He insists that without a clearer understanding of the way universities spend their money, it will be difficult for them to convince the government to raise the £9,000-a-year cap on fees,

introduced by the coalition government in 2012.

Universities “are in a weaker position than they think they are,” he said.

Oxford and Cambridge, institutions that both charge the current £9,000 maximum tuition fee, have claimed

that each undergraduate student actually costs them around £16,000 per year.

Tuition fees are not the only source of university income, however. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) issued universities with teaching grants of £2,860 per student in 2013/14. This would leave an estimated shortfall of £4,140 per student in 2013/14, if the £16,000 figure is accurate.

However, a spokesman for the University of Cambridge has made the following comment:

“The University’s calculations show that there is a £7,600 per year per student shortfall between the cost of undergraduate education at Cambridge and income from tuition fees.

“This shortfall is currently met by the University. The figure was calculated using methodology set down by the Government. All this information has been shared with Mr Hillman.”

In October, Hillman expressed frustration about the £16,000 number in *The Guardian*.

“No one ever explains how figures like £16,000 are calculated,” he said. “Those who use such figures resemble schoolchildren answering their maths homework with a single number and no underlying workings.”

Hillman has suggested that “One reason why higher education institutions are reluctant to produce detailed numbers on their costs is that it would expose internal cross-subsidies.”

In other words, publishing an itemised breakdown of costs would make explicit the ways in which fees from students who study subjects in areas

such as the arts and humanities, which are cheaper to teach, subsidise more expensive courses such as medicine and the sciences.

A recent survey published by student finance website Student Money Saver found that 81 per cent of students believe they are overpaying for their tuition, although it did not distinguish between the kinds of subjects the students were studying.

Second-year Trinity historian Harry Stockwell agrees:

“If universities expect students to believe that £9,000 represents a fair deal for students, they need to be prepared to divulge this information,” he said.

TUITION FEES

- Private New College of the Humanities charges students £18,000 annually
- Universities charging over £6000 are expected to offer poorer students financial support
- Cuts to govt funding mean shortfall of £4000 per Cam student

Addenbrooke's A&E worst in country

Cambridge University Hospitals one of worst performing NHS trusts

Dan Hepworth

News Correspondent

Figures released this week by the government show that Cambridge University Hospitals (CUH) is one of the worst performing NHS Foundation Trusts in the UK for seeing A&E patients within four hours.

NHS England, who carried out the report into trusts across the country, concluded that only 75.2 per cent of patients in CUH A&E departments were seen within the four hour waiting time last quarter – significantly lower than the government’s 95 per cent national target.

The revised target of 95 per cent was introduced after the original figure of 98 per cent, set by the Blair administration in 2004, was deemed “not clinically justified” by the coalition government.

Despite this, the CUH trust missed the national target by 19.8 per cent, one of the lowest in the country.

Only London North West Healthcare NHS Trust and North Midlands achieved lower figures of 68.8 and 70.5 per cent respectively. Neighbouring hospital, Hinchingbrooke, achieved 90.3 per cent in the period from early October to December 28.

Ruth Rogers, chairwoman of Healthwatch Cambridgeshire – a campaign to improve patient care



Cambridge University Hospitals is one of the worst performing NHS trusts

in the area, was concerned at the findings.

“I think we have known for some time they are under quite considerable pressure,” she said. “There’s a lot of people turning up there. Sometimes people will go with relatively trivial things if it’s not easy to get a GP appointment in the early stages.”

Over the Christmas period, both

Peterborough and Addenbrooke’s hospitals switched to their ‘major incident’ plan due to the volume of patients visiting the departments.

Operations were cancelled and consultants put on longer shifts in order to discharge patients and free up beds. Up to 300 people in Cambridge attend A&E each day.

A CUH spokesperson has said

“Implementing a new electronic patient records system in October affected the speed of processing information, especially in A&E which was already very busy.

“This has had an adverse impact on hitting targets.

“We are a major trauma centre, hyper-acute stroke centre and the only provider of many specialist services in

the East of England.”

Dr Neil Modha, Chief Clinical Officer for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group, reminds us that on the use of A&E: “We are asking that the public consider where they go when they are feeling unwell, and only use A&E or 999 when they are acutely unwell or have a life-threatening condition.

“The public can see their GP, use the ‘Minor Injury or Illness’ clinics

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THE CUH TRUST MISSED THE TARGET BY 19.8 PER CENT, ONE OF THE LOWEST IN THE COUNTRY

or walk-in centres” and, for out-of-hours medical advice, the public are urged to phone NHS 111 for advice and direction on the best place to be seen. On Friday 9th January, the chief executive of Addenbrooke’s Hospital announced that the “internal major incident” had ended, but that capacity remained at a “critical” level.

It has also recently been revealed that Cambridgeshire health services are to get an extra £20 million during the coming year. In 2014 Cambridgeshire healthcare received £35 million below the government’s own calculations for a fair share of NHS spending.

Cambridge Summer Music Festival saved from closure

A generous loan saves annual classical music concert

Eleanor Deeley

News Editor

The classical music concert, Cambridge Summer Music Festival, received “a very generous loan” which will allow it to continue for its 36th year.

A campaign to raise £35,000 was started by Tim Brown, Chairman of the festival, in October last year to secure the survival of the event, a prominent cultural feature in the Cambridge calendar. Despite a growth in audience numbers in recent years, and achieving widespread critical acclaim, the Festival has suffered from a decline in sponsorship and advertising revenue.

However, fortunes have been reversed since the Appeal Launch, run by the Trustees of the Festival. Over three quarters of the necessary funds have been generated in just four months. Contributions have come from personal donations on Just Giving, group fundraising activities, such as £360 raised by members of Choir 2000, and a substantial portion from an anonymous “generous loan”.

Cambridge Summer Music Festival released a statement on their website



A campaign to raise £35,000 was started last year

at the start of January, thanking donors but reminding the public that “there is just over £8,000 still to raise”. Further fundraising events are in the pipeline, but details have yet to be announced.

Cambridge’s Summer Music Festival has been running for 35 years. Last summer it was attended by thousands of people and provided nearly 40 classical music concerts, making it one of

the most successful and long running of its kind in the UK. Juliet Abrahamson, Director of the Cambridge Summer Music Festival, described the organisers of the event as “absolutely thrilled”, and said that “there is overwhelming public support and we, as the organisers, have great will to make sure it does succeed”.

“It’s now very important to keep up the momentum and put on something really good.”

Last year the classical music festival integrated talent from the university, Cambridge residents, and internationally acclaimed artists. Highlights from 2014 included world renowned conductor Sir Roger Norrington and pianist Joanna MacGregor. The Cambridge Summer Music Festival also has an ethos of supporting up and coming classical talent and locally based music projects. The previous opening night took place in King’s College Chapel and was performed by the Cambridge community based choir, Festival Chorus. The Fitz Proms, hosted in the Fitzwilliam Museum, is aimed specifically at giving a platform to new and talented young artists.

The next Festival is scheduled to take place between 17th July and 1st August 2015, confirmed by a statement on the Cambridge Summer Music Festival’s website. No acts have as yet been announced.

NEWS IN

BRIEF



Local gin rated one of the best in UK

A home-brewed gin produced in Cambridgeshire has ranked third in the country in a poll from the Craft Gin Club. Pinkster’s faced competition from 100 gins, and ranked just behind global giant Hendrick’s. It was launched in summer 2013 by Stephen Marsh, a finance director who quit his job to “focus on [his] passion.”



New Varsity road

Proposals to upgrade the road connecting Oxford and Cambridge are included in the Highways Agency’s latest road investment strategy. Cambridgeshire County Council has released analysis that the costs could be up to £500m, with construction potentially starting in 2020.

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The Interview: David Willetts

THE MAN BEHIND £9000



David Willetts, ex-Universities Minister, talks to **Leo Sands** about the justification behind the Coalition's trebling of tuition fees

There are few British politicians whose name alone can trigger an instant reaction amongst an often politically indifferent Cambridge student population. One of those names is David Willetts. As Universities Minister until last year's cabinet reshuffle, it was from Willetts' department that the ideological hallmark of this government's austerity programme was delivered – the trebling of tuition fees. For most of us, this was instantly the heaviest bearing that Whitehall politics had ever had on our lives. In the wake of Nick Clegg's back-peddling, followed by the well-attended but futile student protests of 2010, the tuition fees saga left students feeling betrayed by Westminster. Willetts has undoubtedly left his stamp on the collective political memory of our generation, but the details of that memory depend on who you ask, not least Willetts himself.

For some it was the Etonian conspiracy perfect enough to be masterminded by Hollywood; limit access to a university education to those who wouldn't flinch at £27,000 of debt, and hey presto, the poor's access to that great historical organ of social mobility and political enlightenment – the university – is shut down. Of course, for Willetts it is the exact opposite. Higher education is a right, but apparently not a universal one. It belongs, he says, only to "those who have the ability to benefit from it, and who

universities wish to admit". The "significant social reform" that Willetts enabled with the increase in tuition fees has, according to him, had this effect. In removing centrally administered number controls on university admissions procedures, he points out, it is the university and no longer the government that has the final say on whom it can admit for study. It goes without saying that it is also the student and not the government who now foots the better part of the bill.

So is this what the Big Society looks like in action, then? A transfer of both power and responsibility from the state to the private, or at least semi-public, level? Willetts, out of all the major figures of the 2010 Con-Lib coalition, ought to know. As the author of a series of books on Conservative thought published over the past 25 years, he has been the minister most often characterised as a thinker of modern Conservatism (subscribing to a strand he terms "Civic Conservatism") and in 2006 was even profiled by *The Spectator* as "the real father of Cameronism". Despite the fact that he no longer sits in the Cabinet, what he has to say offers a precious insight into the philosophy that underpins the behaviour of this government.

For Willetts, the trebling of tuition fees is partly, of course, a transfer of power and responsibility from the state down to the private individual; the Conservatives' serve in a 70-odd year game of ping pong between Left

and Right. Willetts is still quick to downplay the extent of these private contributions, which only "comes from graduates earning over £21,000 who make a contribution at the rate of 9 per cent of income tax". Beyond this, however, Willetts explains the trebling of tuition fees not merely in terms of reducing the state's role in funding the cost of tuition, but also in light of a fundamentally new imagining of what constitutes public and private benefits.

He reaches into this system of logic as he sets out for me "a good principle for funding the right to higher education". It is because "higher education both yields public benefits and private benefits" he arrives to the view "that the balance of public funding and private funding" should reflect this division. This means "rightly substantial public funding for higher education, including through maintenance grants", but it also demands private contribution, as the public should not have to fund the private benefits accrued from tertiary education.

Willetts calculates this distinction between what the university creates for the public's benefit and what it creates for private benefit with such coolness that it passes as obvious at first glance. In fact it is not, and goes to the ideological heart of what sets this government apart from its predecessors. The political consensus forged in the construction of Labour's post-war welfare state tended to the

position that whatever was in the interests of the public-at-large was in the interest of the private individual, too. That is to say that private interests must surely benefit from populations that are on the whole happier, healthier, better educated, and richer. The belief Willetts articulates, that the university's public value is in fact distinguishable from its private value,

“

"MAKING A COUNTRY THAT IS BETTER FOR OUR CHILDREN"

and that funding for higher education should "broadly reflect" this, flies in the face of this consensus. The distinction isn't limitless; the government has agreed to write off the debts of under earning graduates, but it still crucially forms the bedrock of his thinking on tuition fees

It is through this principle, which considers the public and private value of state provisions on separate terms, that this government has been able to apply the values of the free market to the state. An appreciation of it weaves ideological coherence between the Free Schools experiment, the increasing proportion of private provision in the NHS, and of course the trebling of

tuition fees.

The basis of Willetts' political thinking becomes clear when he talks about immigration; he refuses to pander to UKIP. He concedes that there is "genuine concern about immigration" and that "democratic politicians cannot ignore issues that are raised with them on the doorstep". However, he adds that "often this reflects worries about other issues such as pressures on the health service". Cambridge students, he reminds me, "who will by and large go on to well-paid jobs are likely, if anything, to be beneficiaries from migration". In addition, he is also quick to celebrate immigration's success in "making Cambridge a diverse city" and "helping to hold down the cost of services". The ideological difference, he explains, between Nigel Farage and himself is that he is "fundamentally an optimist" who believes in "making a country that is better for our children", in contrast to Farage and UKIP who "appeal to a rather bleak pessimism about Britain and its prospects which I do not share".

David Willetts is not a knee-jerk politician. He is deeply persuaded by the views that he articulates, and his tuition fee doctrine comes from a place of reflection, not to score cheap political points. Whichever name you give it, Civic Conservatism, Cameronism, or Neoliberalism, it is an ideology which this government has embraced, and it is not getting the attention it deserves.

Comment

The value of staying silent



John McCarrick

Free speech won't give you credibility

The jihadi massacre last week in Paris will remain branded in our collective consciousness for some time. Yet Charlie Hebdo's audacious publications and opinions leave me wondering about the magazine's real cultural merit. Cambridge's newspapers are heavily preoccupied with political correctness but, occasionally, questionable insinuations are unavoidable. If the university founded a similarly polemical weekly like Charlie Hebdo, many students would read and enjoy it; but amid the daring, comic illustrations, offensive slurs would often be forgotten.

Sooner or later, the Cambridge University Women's Society would get involved - many of you will remember the semi-innocent 'jelly-wrestling' debacle at Wyverns. In entertainment, not everyone can be satisfied. Although women wrestling each other in paddling pools of raspberry-flavoured gelatine seems like something pulled from the pages of Charlie Hebdo, it was a reality. Satire and caricature aim to distort our experiences. They are not media to be taken seriously.

In a free society, there is a place for everything, including parody. Each of these outlets serves a specific purpose, targeted at certain readers, age groups and interests. Bearing this in mind, at whom was Charlie

Hebdo's offensive humour directed? In our daily lives, the overwhelming majority would not dream of expressing such irreverence for fear of being discredited as racist.

Perhaps our stiff upper-lip filters it out. At a memorial on King's Parade this Sunday for attacks on Charlie Hebdo, those moved by last week's atrocity rallied in unison: terrorising France's freedom of press would not be tolerated, nor would negative backlash for France's Muslim community. Alizée Moreau, an MPhil student, argues that these protests have nothing to do with the articles themselves, believing that we must "refuse to turn on our Muslim or Jewish neighbours, and never [give] in to fear and hatred". One PhD student's concerns for the Muslim Community echoed Alizée's opinion: "In the UK and Cambridge, diversity is celebrated. In France however, many groups want us to conform to a strict definition of 'Frenchness'. I grew up with many of the cartoonists from Charlie Hebdo and it upsets me that we have lost them, yet what worries me more is how Muslims are being used as scapegoats, much like the Jews were in Nazi Germany."

The British practice of multiculturalism has largely succeeded, especially when compared to the French Burqa ban. However, the City of

Cambridge and its Muslim population have a turbulent relationship. It is disgraceful how long the community has had to wait to build a central mosque. So too is the Mosque's development committee's objection to placing student accommodation adjacent to it. If we cannot learn to live together, we cannot live at all.

Society's cultural critics balance between insight and offence. As teenagers, many of us get our first taste of controversy: giving the finger to society and poking fun at others' religious beliefs. In time, we realise this is childish. We develop more complex opinions of society and reality (the ridiculous is less fun when you are conscious of its ridiculousness). Most of us try to show at least a minimum amount of respect towards people of different races and religions. Instead of insulting, we listen.

At the same time, the extreme and provocative hold important public functions. Culture and art progress through the distortion of human experience. I believe that freedom of speech functions in a similar manner. When the extreme is taken seriously (see Marine Le Pen and the Front National), problems arise. Fundamentalists believe these extremes to the very last detail, and are unable to take their beliefs with a pinch of salt. Comedians single out

those who cannot laugh at themselves; we should do the same.

However, the Islamic community is victim to more than the occasional jibe. Constant undercurrents of antagonism towards the Middle East have become acceptable in our daily lives. Some people now use 'Muslim' as a synonym for terrorist. France has a multifaceted relationship with the Islamic world: many protesters in 2010 recognised the French Revolution as an inspiration for the Arab Spring. These are the values that Westerners should be celebrating, not offensive cartoons whose sole aim is to cause uproar.

But in most societies, adults and children eat at different tables. Those who read The Daily Telegraph or the Financial Times sit with the adults. The magicians, clowns and people like Marine Le Pen sit with the children. Most do not consider them credible, but they do listen.

In short, a healthy society does not silence free speech. Rather, it awards certain status to certain speakers. For great thinkers, our uninterrupted attention. For the comedian, a relaxed ear. For Marine Le Pen, a sceptical one. In Cambridge, the world's greatest discoveries come from outlandish ideas. Regardless of one's viewpoint, justifiable arguments are valid, with or without humour.



Basha Wells Dion

It's impossible to quantify the value of ideas

Do league tables actually matter?

University rankings played a big role when I was deciding which universities to apply for. I spent weeks trawling through the different polls from newspapers and university guides, covering everything from academic results to student experience and nightlife. But is it really helpful for students to base such a huge decision on statistics?

Cambridge has dropped to third place in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework. This puts it below Oxford and University College London in the quality of its academic work. Rankings like these may have a significant impact on how students see the university and whether they choose to apply there. The big attraction of Cambridge is its academic reputation as one of the world's leading centres of research.

The research assessment could have dramatic implications for universities and academics. It is used to determine the proportion of funding awarded to institutions. With £2 billion up for grabs, this has the power to make or break a research project. While undergraduates may not feel the direct effects of this, post-graduates and those higher up the university food chain may experience drastic changes to the way they work.

This has knock-on effects for the undergraduates they are teaching.

Much of this is irrelevant for prospective students. In my first term I spent more time worrying about socialising, societies and handing in essays on time than I did about league tables. When looking at rankings and prospectuses, it's more useful to think about what the university can actually do for you. Unless you are very lucky, this is unlikely to include the 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' research with which these studies are concerned.

Just because a university has a low rank, it doesn't mean that it isn't right for you, or not worth going to. A lot of courses - especially in subjects like art or literature - are highly subjective. So it is definitely worth looking behind the statistics to get a feel for the university and its style. Sometimes at events or open days, a university will simply feel right. There is no way a number can explain this kind of emotional reaction.

Many high ranking universities may not be as good as they look on paper. Lots of my friends studying subjects across science and the arts have found that high-level academics are not always the best at explaining things to students. I've sat through

plenty of lectures where the professor has spoken at breakneck speed, or leapt around and turned back on themselves so many times that I can no longer remember where we even started. Sometimes academics will disappear for whole terms at a time to focus on research or writing. Though this is all very worthwhile, it can be disruptive for students.

The problem of quantification is exacerbated for those studying humanities. I'm sure science students experience similar issues, but in the arts I've found it difficult to reduce courses to rows of numbers. The laws of physics won't change, but subjects like history and literature are based on ever-changing interpretations.

Here in Cambridge, the first round of interviews is over. Thousands of nervous students have received the response to their application, and the next batch of hopeful students are beginning the long months of events, open days, prospectuses and league tables to find out which university is right for them. My advice would be: take the league tables with a pinch of salt. Rankings can be handy as a rough guide if you aren't able to visit the university in person, but statistics will often not be able to tell you much about how a course or

a university will feel when you get there. Though the assessment and the funding that comes with it may be important for high level academics, the chances of this affecting undergraduate students is fairly slim.

What's more, for the first time, the Research Excellence Framework takes into account impact - 20 per cent of the overall score is determined by the effects that the research has on a wide variety of aspects of life, both within the UK and abroad. It is possible that this will do more harm than good. It places universities in competition with one another. Researchers may be discouraged from working together across institutions, preventing them from sharing ideas, and delaying vital discoveries through a culture of suspicion and opposition. Focusing on the outcome of experimentation undermines the valuable process of trial and errors.

Rather than fostering innovation, Research Excellence Framework provides just that, a restrictive 'framework' in which academics focus more on what they think the panel wants to hear than on original ideas. Ultimately, the quality of a university cannot be determined by statistics. How can you quantify the value of ideas?



The Ismist

Allan Hennessy

"One moves to the left to seek justice" – these evocative and provocative words were uttered at the height of the Iranian Revolution, and they remain potent. But, unlike the revolutionaries in Iran, here in Cambridge one moves to the left to seek attention.

And it has to stop. Now. I'm talking about what I like to call the 'trust-fund hipsters' of this fine institution, and at the heart of the problem is the dichotomy between reality and perception: what left-wing politics is about and what people think it is about.

You are not a revolutionary because you refuse to go to Cindies on a Wednesday night. You are not a revolutionary because you're a vegan who wears friendship bracelets and loves the Woodstock era. You are not Mandela-incarnate because you shop at charity stores. No. You, my friends, are judgemental snobs, and you don't even realise that you're doing something very dangerous: blurring the gap between rich and poor, pretending it does not exist. You're creating the illusion of inclusion and equality, and this only benefits the system that you'd like to think you're against.

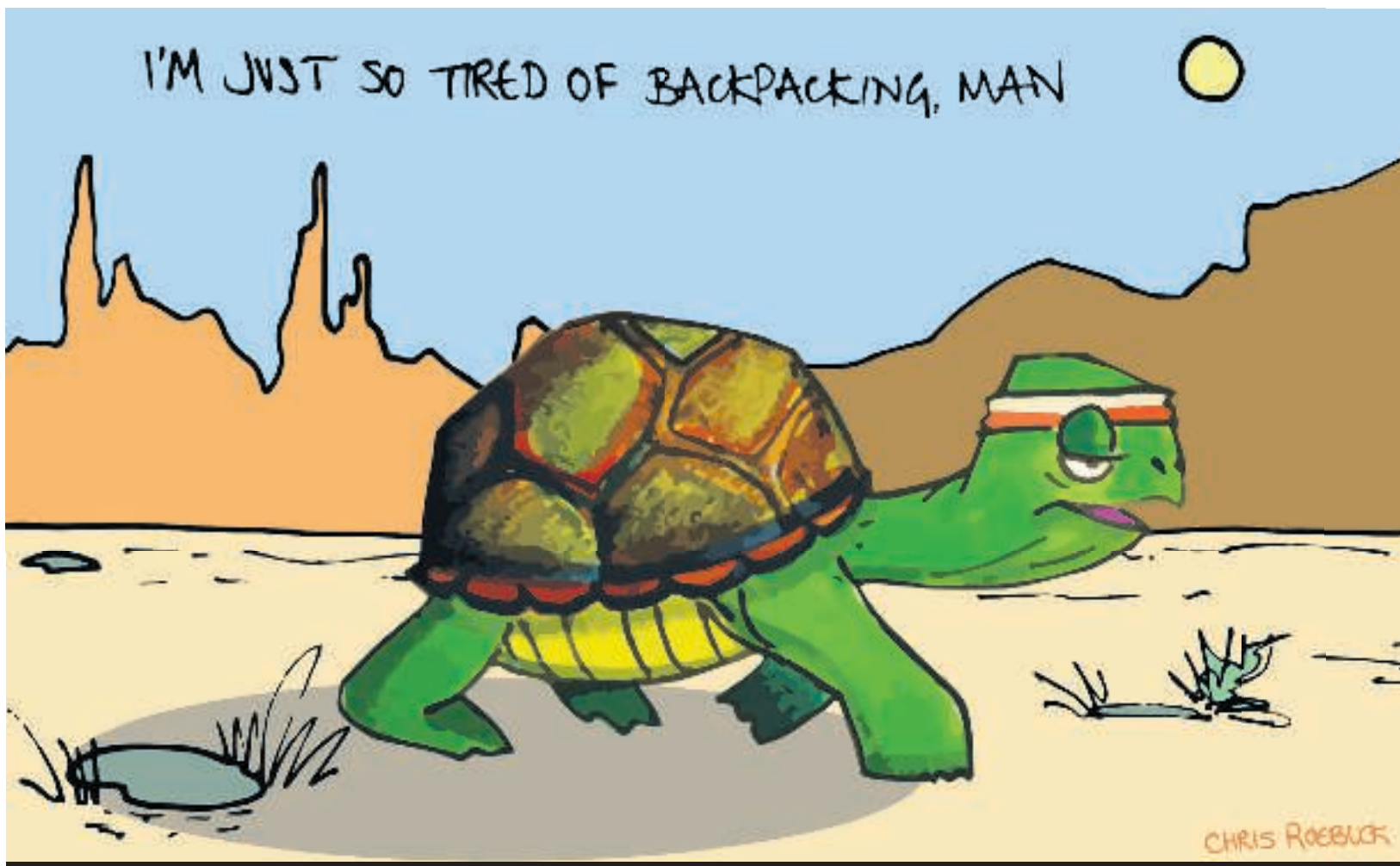
You like a cheeky joint every now and then. You only go to techno nights at the Junction; you like good cheese and vintage. You're renowned in college for stumbling home after a 'spiritual' one night stand at King's with the art historian you met at the Maypole.

Of course, you don't engage in lad culture like the straight-edge boys and girls in the drinking societies – your one night stand actually meant something and you even had a glass of elderflower gin together afterwards. This is all well and good. But it doesn't mean that you've shown any commitment to the poor and the downtrodden. They're not what being on the left is about at all. You're equating politics and hedonism.

Socialism is not a 'trend': it is a virtuous ideology. You can't buy socialist ideals from a run-down vintage shop; the poncho is not a socialist emblem. But because of you, things have got all mixed up and perception has won out over reality. You can't be a meat-eating, M&S-shopping, Cindies-loving socialist, allegedly. By pretending to be poor, you are creating the false impression that we don't live in a world full of privilege. I'm not suggesting you boast about your riches; I'm just begging you not to disingenuously hide it to the point of absurdity.

By turning socialism into a trendy clique, you are alienating those with genuine left-wing dispositions. Fans of red meat and M&S can be socialists. Socialism isn't just for the edgy.

Socialism is for the good and just. So, 'trust-fund hipsters', here's my message: try to be really liberal for once, and stop dismissing those who don't live like you.



I'm a graduate, get me out of here



Zephyr Penoyre

Often, graduate students go abroad for completely irrational reasons

Much to the annoyance of all my friends from more rural parts of the world, I have always said Cambridge is a village. Once all I meant by this was that I lived two minutes from a cow. Four years in and the city has only become smaller. I could write down many things you must do once in Cambridge, but sadly most things aren't worth a repeat. Seeing the same faces everywhere I go has started to feel less like an episode of Friends and more like a dull spy movie with too small a casting budget.

So I want out. Way out. The saying might go "If you're tired of Cambridge, move to London," but I've got bigger plans: I'm off to discover the New World. Plenty of others right now are also in the process of applying to further study, and the USA will be one of the most popular destinations. But why are we all so keen to jump ship as we start the next stage in our academic life? If you spend much time in any MCR in this city you may be surprised by how international they are – the entire world seems to have chosen to up sticks and leave.

Why, as some friends from continental Europe might say, is there such a zeitgeist for wanderlust? When people ask why I'm jetting off I can lay out my reasons. But like a badly trained flea circus, when I try to round them all up, they eventually leave me with the itching feeling that I've missed something. I can name people I want to work with, fields I want to explore, places I want to visit, but it starts to sound a bit like I'm standing in a perfectly good lifeboat trying to persuade everyone it's worth

jumping out in the storm to swim to an identical one on the horizon. Maybe I just love applying for visas. Maybe I enjoy being in places where no one can understand my accent. Maybe I want my PhD to drag on for twice as long. But in all honesty the changes are more motivated by my gut than my head.

In German the word 'Wanderlust'

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MAYBE I THINK I'M GOING TO BECOME THE ACADEMIC EQUIVALENT OF A JACK KEROUAC CHARACTER

has fallen out of favour, replaced by the even more apt 'Fernweh', literally far-sickness, a play on the old German word 'Heimweh', home-sickness. Call me a hypochondriac, but I'm pretty sure I'm afflicted.

Maybe I think I'm going to become the academic equivalent of a Jack Kerouac character, listlessly blowing in and out of physics departments up along the eastern seaboard. Maybe I just yearn to be a big fish in a smaller pond, but am I really the type who would make life decisions based on the opportunity to feel vaguely superior to my peers for a couple of years?

After doing all the soul searching I can manage without dissolving into some kind of existential puddle, I've whittled it down to two impulses.

And neither of them is going on my personal statement.

The first is the desire for a clean slate. Who among us doesn't believe that if they got to do the whole 'social life' thing again from scratch that they couldn't do a better job of it now? Was I unbearable as a fresher? Yes. Will I still be unbearable as a new grad? Probably, but it's a whole different brand of unbearable now.

I can't be the only person who notices about five years of maturity and social competency drop away whenever I go to a dinner party with my parents. I have lots of close friends and family who I'll miss terribly but I think it's inevitable that we'll always regress when we're around the people from our past. That can be a great thing; I just think it would be better if it was also a rare one.

The second is a hangover from adolescence. It's the same reason we love to travel, potentially more than any generation before us, and that's to prove our autonomy to the world. We've been cooped up in libraries for years, battery farmed for essays and examples sheets, neck-deep in the education process with not much more to show of our lives than an impressive list of hobbies and achievements counted in base-four. Education is for kids, and yet we're still here. Why wouldn't we take any opportunity to try and prove we're the masters of our own destiny?

Maybe others have more concrete reasons to be jumping ship, but if I have contracted far-sickness, it's from these base impulses. The reasons may be shallow, but once you've caught the bug there's no cure.



Jack Harding

If we want to change the world, we have to make giving a habit

The student charity debate rages on

We are all rich. Totally, and absolutely mind-bogglingly rich. There are times when we forget it. Student loans melt away like ice sculptures at May Balls. That Week One spending spree turns into a healthy dose of Week Eight scrounging.

And yet, earn minimum wage in Britain and you're a millionaire to half of the world.

I'm not trying to trivialise our money troubles closer to home. One in five inhabitants of the UK lives below the official poverty line. Many have it rough, and the need for significant and far-reaching domestic change is undeniable. It's just that it is equally undeniable that an awful lot of people have it much, much worse than that. And this is where Giving What We Can comes in.

By now, you've probably all heard of the initiative Giving What We Can (GWWC). If you haven't, I'd direct you to a recent article in Varsity online by Zack Hassan. In fact, you could probably set a clock by the regularity with which articles on GWWC (and the merits of effective altruism in general) pop up in Cambridge student news (this, of course, being no exception.)

There's still no Cam consensus, however, over the extent to which we ought to incorporate new ideas on charity into our lives, and a lot of discussion of the topic is mired by misconception. Recently, Amy Hawkins has put forward one of the

most forceful summaries of arguments against the effectiveness of the pledge – a central tenet of GWWC's philosophy. I still believe, however, that the ideas of this organisation cannot and should not be so easily dismissed.

It can be argued that while the pledge does good, the good it can do is limited: organisations like GWWC make minor changes within a framework that continues to perpetuate underlying inequalities. As Amy puts it, they effect "small adjustments within a system that still works to keep people poor".

To a surprising number of people, the pledge seems like the ultimate example of throwing money at a problem. It seems like a flimsy scam, like giving money to a corrupt priest in order to erase your sins. As soon as we treat money as a solution, these people say, we become unable to deal with causes, and occupy ourselves solely with symptoms and the ways they can be treated on a surface level.

But this is to conflate the pledge with 'earning to give'. Earning to give is a strategy where people deliberately choose a high-income career in order to increase their donations to charity. GWWC's pledge and the earning to give strategy are categorically not the same thing. When taking the GWWC pledge, members promise to donate a fixed proportion of their income (currently at least ten percent) to effective causes. Takers of the pledge are given no advice as

to the source of their income, or how much they should be making.

If GWWC constituted the sum total of all altruism in the entire world until the end of time, and all of its members donated to the same two or three symptom-treating charities, I'd have to come down on the side of Hawkins. The pledge would be supplanting more effective and meaningful expressions of charitable impulses. But it's not.

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WE ARE ALL RICH. IT'S UNAVOIDABLE THAT AT SOME POINT WE'LL COME TO NOTICE IT.

The use of the pledge comes not from seeing it as the be all and end all of your altruistic action, but as the beginning. There is nothing in the wording of the pledge which limits the potential causes to which the money is donated, as long as they are effective. The idea is that members choose where to donate the money themselves. If a convincing case is made for donation to a charity whose aims are to alter the system, then it is that charity that will receive the donation.

Furthermore, joining GWWC

does not preclude altruism of other sorts. An example is GWWC's sister charity, 80,000 Hours, which gives students advice on maximising the good they can do with their choice of career, among other things. There's nothing about taking the pledge which means you can't pursue other, more systemic methods of change, such as political campaigning.

Moreover, the pledge ought to be seen as a sort of systemic change in its own right. The average person donates under one percent of their lifetime income to charity. In a country as wealthy as Britain, this is unacceptable. Already, GWWC has nearly a thousand members, each pledging at least ten percent. There's an instinct, when you hear someone has donated, to praise them for their sacrifice.

Natural though this reaction is, it misses the point. GWWC is not about a few ethical superheroes fighting against a tide of inequality. It is about recognising that altruistic impulses are pretty much universal, and trying to find a way to use them to the best effect.

The pledge is a way of ensuring that the hardships we face in our day to day lives don't interrupt the translation of altruistic impulse into altruistic action. Ultimately, GWWC is seeking to create a culture where charity is the norm.

We are all rich. It's unavoidable that at some point we'll come to notice it.



Millie Paine

2014 was the 'Year of the Woman' – let's make 2015 the Year of Women

The Feminist Image Problem

With a new wave of feminist writers, campaigners and activists sweeping through mainstream media, 2014 has been dubbed 'the Year of the Woman'. The title is apt: with campaigns such as the 'Everyday Sexism Project' and #PassItOn gaining increasing momentum, it looks as though the gender equality movement is not only alive and kicking, but is showing no signs of slowing down.

Social media means that feminism has never been so high profile and accessible – it only takes 140 characters and two minutes of your time to help raise awareness of the serious inequality and discrimination that women still face today.

Laura Bates and her 'Everyday Sexism Project' have become increasingly popular, resulting in the publication of her book of the same title, containing over 50,000 submissions from women all over the world.

Emma Watson delivered a groundbreaking speech to the UN, encouraging both men and women to embrace feminism together. Beyoncé proudly and publicly proclaimed herself a feminist in her performance at the VMAs, whilst her husband and daughter watched on – two things that feminists are not typically seen as being supposed to have.

Malala Yousafzai became the youngest ever winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, aged just 17, due to her work in advocating female education. This is only the surface of the

ground-breaking feminism that has influenced women, young and old, worldwide.

Unfortunately, this new wave has been a double-edged sword. Not only has it outlined some of the inherent flaws in the feminist movement, it has also generated a significant backlash, demonstrating just how far we have left to go.

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FEMINISTS MUST WORK WITH EACH OTHER, AND GIVE UP THEIR INHERENTLY DANGEROUS FEMINIST SUPERIORITY COMPLEX

Even the very limited list of feminists above demonstrates the diversity of the women's rights movement. But with this has come the dangerous concepts of a 'good feminist' and a 'bad feminist'. There seems to be a significant amount of internal criticism within feminism: Laura Bates has been criticised for embracing typical female beauty standards simply due to the way she looks, whilst Emma Watson has been said to be advocating a safe form of feminism, which seeks to avoid male criticism.

This division is both hypocritical and limiting. Not only does this perpetuate the sexist ideal of pitting one woman against another, it also fails to recognise the shared end goal of these campaigners: gender equality. In order for this to be achieved, feminists must work with each other, and give up their inherently dangerous feminist superiority complex.

As the old saying goes: united we stand, divided we fall. Yet perhaps an even bigger issue that the feminist activism of 2014 has demonstrated is the criticism coming from outside the movement: the backlash.

The gender equality campaigns of the past year have generated a significant amount of anger, aggression and hostility. This ranges from the popular hashtag 'Women Against Feminism', which took Twitter by storm in August, to the repeated death and rape threats received by female campaigners.

The former involved women from all over the world tweeting messages detailing why they disliked feminism and felt they didn't need it. Most of the reasons given involved the fact that they had the right to vote, get an education and generally didn't feel inferior to men in any way (ironically, these women didn't seem to recognise that all of these are actually feminist achievements).

The most worrying aspect of this campaign is not the fact that these women feel they don't need feminism. It is the deep seated

misunderstanding of the concept that these women seem to harbour which results in such ignorant and damaging statements that desperately needs to be resolved.

This is not, in fact, helped by the concept of feminism as perpetuated by some feminists themselves: the notion that feminism is some sort of elite and exclusive club made up of feminist 'members'.

This is far from the case – a feminist is anybody who believes in the social, political and economic equality of the sexes. Full stop. There are no criteria for being a feminist other than a belief in this principle. The sooner we get this definition to replace the concept of the 'Feminazi', the better. Feminism is for everyone, and it's time we stopped excluding people from it.

So what can we learn from the success of feminism in 2014? That we as a society have a long way to go – both in our understanding of the concept of feminism, and in the way that we portray it.

If we want to make 2015 even more of a success for feminism than 2014 was, then it's important that we do two things.

Firstly, ensure that feminism is made accessible to an even wider audience through education and making the movement appear more inclusive. And secondly, stop the constant critiquing of other feminists: any effort to make gender equality a reality should be welcomed.



Millie Brierley

It's time to abandon the idea of perfectionism once and for all...



New year, new you. As the fresh, shiny cogs of 2015 are set in motion, we hear this phrase a lot. Advertisers, magazines and even great aunts all want to know how we are going to make ourselves different – better – in the coming twelve months. Will we exercise more? Work harder? Spend less?

All kinds of virtuous aims such as these are pressed upon us at this time of year, with an urgency to suggest that the chance to improve ourselves may never come again. There's nothing wrong with who we are, of course, so we are told. But if we just changed this, did this more and far less of that, then maybe we would, finally, be perfect.

It seems that the human race is determined to fly in the face of millennia of mistakes, cock-ups and mishaps, and doggedly promise itself that perfection is only just out of reach – hiding just around the corner. If we just strain a bit further – really put our backs into it – then it is truly within our power to be perfect.

It's a dream that all sorts of dealers are peddling: hairspray promises us 'perfect curls'; underwear promises us 'perfect curves'; and moisturiser promises us 'perfect skin'. Constantly, we are told that we are almost there – just one mascara, one bikini wax, one pair of jeans short of perfection.

And even if we can manage to see past *this*, we cannot quite escape Perfection's shadow.

On a good day, we can look

around us and think, 'these standards are not for me'. Because we know, really, that absolute, objective perfection is an unrealistic goal.

But still we cling desperately to the notion of subjective perfection – the belief that we can be perfect in somebody's eyes, if not to the rest of the world. And maybe, we tell ourselves, this is perfect in itself.

Bruno Mars tells us we're amazing Just the Way We Are, and One Direction say we're beautiful because we don't know it. Seemingly positive messages, but with a darker subtext. Mr. Darcy moments in music history. Read between the lines here, and the translation is, 'perfect but...' – 'perfect except for...'.

And for this, we are supposed to be grateful, because someone thinks we're perfect, even though really they shouldn't. We are supposed to be both on top of our 'flaws' – working tirelessly on ironing out the creases – and totally, imperviously au fait with them, all at the same time. If we thought 'perfection' was impossible enough, somehow we've managed to find a way of making the struggle to get there even more herculean. Not only do we have to be perfect, but we have to cope with this unreasonable standard in the perfect way. It's exhausting.

Of course, this is a heavily gendered issue – you don't hear Beyoncé telling Jay-Z in song that she loves him, despite his

imperfections – but it is increasingly becoming a problem for men, as well as women. This is something we have to work hard to remedy, but so often attempts to do just this, while well-intentioned, fall short: viral Facebook pictures of 'plus-sized' models are captioned with the word 'perfect'; celebrities (often men, most interestingly) assure fans that they are 'perfect' without make-up.

The problem with all of this is the concept of perfection itself. As long as we tell ourselves, and each other, that perfection – complete and utter flawlessness, under whatever guise – exists, and is within our reach, we are setting ourselves up for a fall.

Because, as the great Hannah Montana once sang, Nobody's Perfect. Perfection is not – and never shall be – within our reach, just around the corner, under our noses. An abstract notion with no possible earthly incarnation, it is not ours to have. Thus, it is not enough to simply keep on redefining what it means to be perfect – we have to abandon it entirely.

So this year, what if our New Year's resolution was to let go of perfection – thank it very much for its company, but say a very firm farewell. What if, from now on, the aim were just to be 'fine'?

Because 'fine' is available to us. 'Fine' doesn't see flaws – just human beings, bumbling along, doing their best. 'Fine' is what we are when we know we can't be perfect.

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The Louvre of the Pebble



Katy Lewis Hood is impressed by this new exhibition at Kettle's Yard

If you haven't discovered it yet, Kettle's Yard is one of Cambridge's oddities, tucked away next to St Peter's Church on the corner of Castle Street, nestled amongst trees. Jim and Helen Ede bought the four then-derelict cottages in 1956 and created a new home for themselves, filled with contemporary art. The house contains works by Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Joan Miró, David Wallis and Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, to name but a few, and remains in the state in which the Edes left it in 1973. The Edes made their house a work of art in itself, utilising the visual potential of space and light rather than leaving an empty frame for their art collection. In a similar way, but with very different results, the art of Kettle's Yard's new exhibition 'Beauty and Revolution: The Poetry and Art of Ian Hamilton Finlay' utilises the visual potential of words and surfaces in art and poetry.

Concrete poetry involves arranging words on the page – their size, shape, and layout. It dates back to classical antiquity, reworked through radical twentieth century literary movements such as Futurism and Dada. In these later

forms, concrete poetry can be controversial, sometimes consisting of a single word or even a single letter on a page, raising questions as to what constitutes art and meaning.

Finlay printed concrete poems through the Wild Hawthorn Press. In 'Acrobats', the individual letters of the word 'acrobats' are screen-printed diagonally across the page, performing visual acrobatics. In 'Sea Poppy I', the registration numbers of warships are arranged like a flower, exploring the tension between modern weaponry and pastoral harmony. 'Wave/Rock' is particularly satisfying aesthetically: the words are sandblasted into the glass, with the letters of 'wave' rising and falling unevenly and the letters of 'rock' clumped together, dense, at the other end of the piece. The works have a clarity and precision that corresponds with the minimalist gallery space, exemplified by 'Xmas Star', previously displayed at Kettle's Yard in 1969. This screen-print features a ship, a recurring theme in Hamilton's work, with clean lines and a poem consisting of a series of maritime abbreviations and codes. Other themes include revolutionary slogans, and the natural world.

Finlay's work tests the limits of what counts as poetry and what counts as visual art. He creates a landscape for words in which they can operate as emblems, open for multiple interpretations. This word-image landscape was realised in Finlay's garden in Pentland Hills, Edinburgh. Known as 'Little Sparta' after a lengthy battle with Strathclyde Regional Council over its purpose, the garden is shown in the exhibition in 'Stonypath Days', a 16mm film produced by Stephen Bann. It is a strange, idyllic place: poems, phrases and puns are carved into stone in classical style, models of warships lurk amongst the shrubs, and all is surrounded by trees and flowers with a view of the hills. It was Finlay's movement into carving that led him to engrave 'Kettle's Yard/Cambridge/England is the/Louvre of the/pebble' onto a flat stone in 1995, now included in the permanent collection in the house.

'Stonypath Days' cuts from rock to flower to sundial and back again, on loop in a bare room with rain streaming at the windows. Both Jim Ede and Ian Hamilton Finlay, whose friendship began at the 'First International Exhibition of Concrete, Kinetic and Phonic Poetry' at St Ca-

tharine's College in 1964, sought to create an environment, almost a temple, in which art could be collected, selected and displayed outside of the formal demands of galleries. However, neither Kettle's Yard nor Little Sparta is really 'outside' – they are intimate spaces bearing a trace of their creators. In this sense, it is apt that Stephen Bann's private collection of Finlay's work is being exhibited in the space alongside another open, private collection in the Edes' house. Both hold a modest, succinct charm. You might have enough knowledge of art to be able to identify the works on display in the house without labels, or you might not. You might have a view on whether words become poetry because of their environment and presentation, or you might not. In any case, Kettle's Yard as a setting allows the ideas of Ede and Finlay to be combined and contrasted as if in conversation with each other, replicating the connection and difference begun fifty years ago.

'Beauty and Revolution: The Poetry and Art of Ian Hamilton Finlay' is on at Kettle's Yard until 1 March 2015. The house and gallery open Tuesday-Sunday, 11.30am-5pm.

Lent Culture Highlights

With an unbelievable number of events coming up, Varsity narrows it down to the best of what to see, hear and smugly appreciate this term

Drama

There's no getting away from the fact that trying to condense a term of Cambridge theatre into a couple of paragraphs is like hosting a (very thesp-y) house party in a closet. But here is an attempt: sex tourism and feminism are among the themes of the Caribbean set drama, trade (27th-31st Jan, Corpus). Equally heavy themes and perhaps more nudity are to be found that week in Equus (27th-31st Jan, ADC). If you haven't seen any Shakespeare since school, the stellar cast and high production values of Henry V (4th-7th Feb, Cambridge Arts Theatre) promise to make it worth your time (and your £12.50 ticket). The following week, swap Shakespeare for student writing with Sam Grabiner's Amygdala Wonderland (10th-14th Feb, Larkum Studio, ADC). This one-man show tells the story of its protagonist, Strange, which will probably be a reasonable description of the experience (along with masterful, of course). February wraps up with two more cerebral dramas, Attempts on Her Life and Dreaming With Dali (both 24th-28th Feb, Corpus), which promise both head-scratching and a rewarding night out. March is the month to be thrilled – We'll Meet Again (3rd-7th March, Corpus), will draw us into the exhilarating chase for war-time spy Cara Satin. Finally, CUADC is staging Rent. Apparently Rent is about "falling in love, finding your voice and living for today", and if that doesn't make for some rousing songs I don't know what will.

Comedy

The ADC and Corpus Playroom will play host to an unusually high number of comedy shows this term, although many with shorter runs – so pay attention to avoid missing out. Alongside the usual set of smokers, January is going to be host to plenty of one-off stand-ups from Footlights regulars, with highlights including Who am I? by Battlesmash alum Orlando Gibbs (19th Jan, Corpus) and the less existential but enticingly-titled Sunset Eternal (27th Jan, ADC). Comedic play Picasso Stole the Mona Lisa (20th-24th Jan, Corpus) is also worth a look. February's big-ticket will be S.C.O.F.E.: The Comeback Tour (4th-7th Feb, ADC). This Footlights-backed show is one for those who like their sketches with a bit of meta-narrative thrown in as it tells the story of a re-formed popular sketch group. Towards the end of term Cirque De L'Extraordinaire (4th-7th March, ADC) is sure to amaze and astound you by blending feats of comedic mastery with slightly less successful circus performance.

This is also a big term for professional comedians in Cambridge as Sara Pascoe, Mark Watson, Dylan Moran, Josie Long, Simon Amstell and many more will be rocking up to the Junction and Corn Exchange. On 12th and 13th February Dylan Moran will surely sell out (in a good way) as he uses the Junction for a warm up to his 2015 tour Off the Hook.

Sara Pascoe:

Before Christmas, Sara Pascoe had never played 'Articulate', so she was thrown when her sister tried to describe Stonehenge as "loads of weatabix piled on top of each other". Despite her (justifiable) confusion at her sister's thought process, she says this is the best thing about the game; "it's very expanding in terms of what goes on in people's minds"; what seems like a whimsical weatabix-based description is actually a window into her sister's soul. This enthusiastic curiosity into the surreal workings of others' minds carries over from board game tactics into her comedic style. Pascoe challenges things with casual efficacy, balancing insight with self-deprecation and a goofy composure. She is not an embittered comic, raging at the world, but a playful partaker affectionately deconstructing its flaws.

Where her previous shows have tackled animal rights, women in the media, and Nietzschean subjectivity, Sara Pascoe Vs History offers a more personal tone. The show challenges the idea that monogamy is a natural state for humans and that female sexuality is passive. The central theme of relationships is explored through the varied lenses of sperm competition theory, her own relationship with fellow comedian John Robbins, and various tangential musings. Performing the show at the 2014 Edinburgh Fringe ("exam time for comedians"), Pascoe enjoyed a wildly successful run and earned her first nomination for the Fosters Edinburgh Comedy Award. The key to her success is not easily explained, "there are certain rules" she says, "but when they're broken, that's when the funniest things happen". This interaction conjures up a specific image for her: "if you want to break comedy down to anything, I'd say it's rhythm, it's music". Her sonorous and cadenced form of comedy entails "setting ingredients up at the beginning – there are then notes and riffs that come back concurrently in different patterns, and it's that [rhythm] that's satisfying".

Alongside the success of her live shows, Pascoe has become a popular guest on panel shows like Mock the Week and Never Mind the Buzzcocks. She says that her aim when appearing on these shows was to break the mould of victimisation and sardonic lampooning which they have become known for. While she is aware of the old adage, 'All comedy has a victim', that victim needn't be another person. It could be group, a presumption or a convention. Then there's always self-deprecation. According to the Pascoe rulebook, comedians should always be hoisting themselves with their own petards, "you can make really joyful things talking about your own failures", juxtaposing your critical grand narratives with more honest personal shortcomings. To best convey this sentiment she quotes Robin Williams, who spoke of "the comedian who rec-

ognizes hypocrisy everywhere, but most of all in himself".

I ask how this relates to another favourite quote of hers, Kurt Vonnegut's "the function of the artist is to make people like life better than they have before". This could almost be her mantra – if she can't make the world a better place, at least she can improve the panel shows. Fulfilling this aim, she stresses, is not a case of avoiding dark topics, in fact "something can be dark and entertaining – really dark actually – but still not make the world a worse place... the feeling afterwards can be energizing, or cathartic". It's also important to note that Vonnegut's idea does not imply that artists must change the world – they should make people appreciate and engage with it. While Pascoe praises fellow comedians Josie Long and Bridget Christie for their ability to inspire political engagement by finding comedy in such macabre topics as female genital mutilation and rape-blame, she is keen to specify that "comedy is reflective of social change rather than instigating it". Long and Christie's sets are hilarious, but rather than changing the way society works, they are challenging, deconstructing and reflecting on it.

It is important to remember this, she notes, because if we mistake comedy as an active force for change it can become a lubricant to stasis. Since laughter is cathartic, comedy "doesn't agitate people to do anything or change anything". People laugh, and they forget. Every joke ends with a punchline, which creates and then releases tension, for us to be jolted into doing something, that tension needs to remain in us. In this sense, comedy can be deployed like a sedative. Pascoe points to the satire boom under Thatcher – a celebrated era of politically charged comedy – as an example of polemic comedy becoming an inert substitute for actual change; a kind of entertainment-opiate that fosters social inertia. Pascoe argues that the satirists of the late 20th Century failed to shame society into improvement. Satire for them was a quick fix of victimising the state, followed by laughter and applause, and (contentiously) money. As Pascoe points out, "The people who had the mouthpieces, who did the most satirising, were people who were being rewarded by the system".

Yet that is not to say Pascoe believes comedians have a political obligation. Asked about the contentious notion that female comedians have a 'responsibility' to feminism, Pascoe responds, "I don't think comedians have any responsibility". It's very important that "comedy has no censorship", and responsibility is a step towards censorship. As soon as you start outlining what you can't say and what you must say, you are limiting yourself by obligation, and being inauthentic. With regards to Pascoe's own feminism, she explains that it comes from a very natural place.



Ahead of her stop at The Junction on 23rd January on her 2015 tour, **Jordan Mitchell** talks to this rising comedic star

Because she's explicitly feminist as a person, and standup is very authored, it naturally follows that her material becomes implicitly feminist.

One could say that feminist comedy has become vogue to the point of 'hack', as Pascoe observes, "everyone in Edinburgh has got a feminist bit", but as she suggests, feminist comedy is simply reflective of a wider feminist zeitgeist. For most comics, the feminist movement in comedy didn't necessarily start with an agenda to explore the politics of gender, but more with the highly ridiculous, absurd, and therefore comic nature of many events concerning feminism of late. "What happened with Kim Kardashian's bottom a couple of months ago was really funny" she laughs, "the fact that page 3 exists, is so funny". As Pascoe points out, it is bizarre that Britain is the only country that publishes pictures of naked ladies in its newspapers. Its absurdity has become widely recognised, perhaps as a result of a paradigm shift towards a more feminist society, which in turn is being reflected in the comic material that society generates. Pascoe suggests "when there's an ideas shift, it suddenly seems more ridiculous... page 3 didn't seem ridiculous in the 70s, it just seems ridiculous now."

I ask whether being a female comedian is inherently feminist – you have a voice, the ability to personally influence the portrayal of female stereotypes in the media, and the ability to inspire women to connect with their own sense of hu-

mour (undoing years of cultural conditioning). Pascoe agrees that this is very astute (I thank her). People are hyperaware of gender in the comedy world: "I felt like I was a person before I did comedy, I didn't feel entirely connected to my gender... there is something odd in that every time you go to work someone reminds you that you're a woman." On stage, Pascoe identifies as a comic first, and a woman second. Part of the trick of being a female comedian is not to acknowledge it, to keep it implicit. She learnt very early on, "don't say you're a woman" – as soon as you tell your first joke, you're fine. You shouldn't feel that you have to play off the audience's prejudice – just be funny.

Unfortunately, regardless of how female comedians present themselves, a problem persists in the way many male comedians present women, as victims of jokes; "If a man has been talking about how funny vaginas are for 20 minutes, and then you go on, there's an embarrassment". Luckily this doesn't translate into Pascoe's performance; she is always confident and self-assured, it seems as though any embarrassment is left in the wings. Pascoe does believe that problems of this type are slowly declining in comedy. We are exposed to comics from various backgrounds, and audiences are increasingly responsive to marginalized groups. Comics no longer have to come on and say "this is my race, this is my sexuality", they can just talk about their experience, as a person, and *that* is cathartic.



Art and Exhibitions

The term kicks off with student-curated Scandal: Representations of the Nude Body, an exhibition about freeing yourself from inhibitions. Sponsored by Cambridge University African Caribbean Society, Scandal focuses on differing cultural perceptions of the nude body, exposing the limits of a western mindset which views nudity as taboo. To have your eyes opened, head to Changing Spaces' pop-up gallery, 9 Norfolk Street – but be quick it closes on the 18th of January.

Assuming you haven't had enough of looking at bodies, there's a last chance to catch the Fitzwilliam Museum's Silent Partners (until 25th January), which takes an unusual look at the often neglected importance of the artists' mannequin through some beautiful – and often creepy – paintings, sketches, photographs, videos and dolls.

Another multi-form exhibition is Beauty and Revolution: The Poetry and Art of Ian Hamilton Finlay. On at Kettle's Yard until 1st March, it displays the colourful prints and whimsical writings of "The most original Scottish artist of the second half of the 20th century", all for the price of admission (which is nothing).

For those with an irrational hatred of visual art, the UL is accommodating your bizarre needs until 11th April with Private lives of print: The use and abuse of books 1450-1550. A fascinating look at the early use of the printing press and a chance to see some really old doodles in really old margins.

Film



Step off the windblown January streets and into the dark but cosy confines of the cinema with some of the greatly awaited films of the year. See Steve Carrel swap comedy for creepiness in Foxcatcher, Michael Keaton's washed-up superhero star in Birdman, Bradley Cooper as the SEAL with the deadly aim in Clint Eastwood's American Sniper and cinema royalty Meryl Streep sing for her supper in Disney's Into the Woods.

Remember to watch out for Matthew Vaughn's spy-comedy Kingsman, released January 29th and Inherent Vice, Paul Thomas Anderson's adaptation of Thomas Pynchon's detective novel of the same name on the 30th. If for some miraculous reason you are not behind on your dissertation deadline ensuring you've seen all these ahead of the Oscars, then squeeze into your best latex and leather and head over to see Fifty Shades of Grey which will be seducing the silver screen on 13th February.

Music

The Cambridge Junction is the venue to go to this term for your routine fill of live indie music.

In February The Staves (17th) will be performing ahead of the release of their hotly anticipated second album expected later this year. Whilst in March highlight performances come from the likes of Glass Animals (2nd), Lucy Rose (23rd) and the Jesus College-founded electronic group, Clean Bandit (8th) at the Corn Exchange.

If thinking about gigs and performance is getting your creative juices flowing, think about submitting to the 2015 Cambridge Band Competition.

Entry is now open for your chance to win musical development prizes and a cash reward of £300. The question isn't why should you; the question is why shouldn't you?

OUR PREFERENCE FOR POSH

With the recent influx of poshness on our screens, Joanne Stewart delves into the tantalising but troubling world of toffs, Tatler and tiny dogs



The word 'posh' is long past its Spice Girl-inspired heyday, and it has now acquired the rather naff air of words like, well, 'naff'. Yet if you tuned in to any TV over Christmas, you'll have found it hard to ignore that 'posh' is back. Sadly I'm not talking about a Posh Spice comeback tour. From the fictional halls of Downton Abbey, to Channel 4's

(probably equally as fictional) eight seasons of *Made In Chelsea* and the BBC's upcoming *The Super Rich and Us*, TV shows and documentaries are obsessively following the lives of the wealthy elite, and sounding a lot more RP for it. Jay Hunt, chief creative officer at Channel 4, justifies this change in commissioning: "As the economy feels more buoyant, we are seeing viewers drawn to more aspirational programming." But setting aspiration aside, is there something sinisterly celebratory about our obsessive on screen portrayals of the upper class?

BBC2's three part documentary series *Posh People: Inside Tatler* takes viewers behind the doors of Condé Nast's *Vogue* House and into *Tatler*, the 300 year old high-society magazine that boasts "the wealthiest readership in the country" and where corgis make bestselling cover stars. With a print circulation of 160,000, for *Tatler*'s readers, good schools, polo and Jilly Cooper reign supreme. The day-to-day dilemmas of the editorial team make addictive viewing, if not somewhat baffling for those of us who've never graced their *Bystander* page. Which undergarms are appropriate for a cut-out-and-keep Kate Middleton doll? Has the whippet usurped the pug as the chic dog *du jour*?

Unlike similar fly on the wall magazine documentaries such as *The Lady and the Revamp*, *Posh People* is less concerned with waning sales and the future of print journalism in the digital era, but rather with the well-coiffed ladies and gents who make up the office and fill the magazine's pages. As the programme's executive producer Danny Horan explains, "We didn't want to make a documentary about the workings of a magazine. It was the world they reported on. It uses *Tatler* as a prism to tell the story of class." And the story that unfolds over the three episodes

is ultimately as well-versed and scripted as the story of class in the UK always has been. The *Tatler* HQ's team embody the poshness and well worn clichéd caricatures depicted in its glossy pages – ladies with Kate Middleton hairstyles, plummy accents and double-barrelled monikers that test the character limits of most bylines.

From one old story to another, ten years on from Channel 4's documentary *The F***ing Fulfords*, the aristocratic Fulford family are back, starring in BBC Three's *Life is Toff*. Offering us another prosaic glimpse behind the tattered curtains of their 3,000-acre estate, the six-part docu-soap revisits Francis Fulford and his four children as they try to bring the crumbling Great Fulford Estate into the modern world. As a family that has "been here since before the fucking monarchy" there's no denying their aristo credentials, but the show focuses on the uncertain future of the family's estate under the control of the Fulford siblings. When they're not attempting to skin a recently shot squirrel and fashion a beer cozy out of its hide, the Fulford offspring are shown looking for savvy ways to cash in and restore the family's estate to its former glory. *Life is Toff* offers an insight into how old money is trying to embrace the entrepreneurial spirit of the nouveau riche and replicate, in their own irreverent way, the lucrative success of Russian art dealers and Nigerian energy company owners. Perhaps inspired by the royal success of Duchy Originals, the Fulfords attempt to make artisan cheese and elderflower cordial, but

their rancid goods seem more likely to bring about a slew of food poisoning lawsuits than financial salvation.

Channel 4 may have let go of the Fulfords, but their own programming about the super rich is wealth voyeurism at its finest. *Posh Pawn* is essentially *Antiques Roadshow* on crack, set in "the Beverly Hills of Britain" that is, apparently, Surrey. Unlike your local Cash Converters window filled with saxophones and Wii consoles missing their controllers, *Prestige Pawnbrokers* specialises in the high-end trading of Birkin Bags, Lamborghinis, fighter jets and personal submarines for cash. If you're more in the mood for £185 dog coats and 'cape drapes' (like a formal gown but sassier) than flogging your gran's Cartier diamond necklace, then there's *Liberty of London*, also from Channel 4. Under the management of American Ed Burstell, the series follows his attempts to reenergise the British institution and bring its mock-Tudor splendour into the world of modern retail and attract the attention of new money. Trying to entice new customers, regardless of their background (as long as they have money!), *Liberty* is seen to be a force for good for all, where its "Open Call Day" sees financial benefits trickling down as far as Essex to a budding entrepreneur with a line of scented nail polishes.

While some would have us believe that Britain is sailing into a harmonious era of classlessness, the occasional sight of a Tory MP tucking into a Gregg's sausage roll is not enough to dispel the evidence of our enduring obsession with class. The popularity of programmes showcasing the disparity between the haves and have-nots proves problematic for public perceptions of extreme wealth. In an age of severe social inequality, where demands for a fairer society consistently go unmet, shows like *Made in Chelsea*, *Posh People* and *The Super Rich and Us* are fuelling our obsession with caricatures of poshos as loveable eccentrics, gambolling around their personal National Trust-esque properties. And when one considers the way those at the other end of the class spectrum are represented and misrepresented on screen, the troubling stance of TV commissioners and executives becomes even more apparent.

Just as *Posh People* revealed that 90 per cent of *Tatler* staff are privately educated, in Benefits Street, James Turner Street in Birmingham was made famous for the fact that 90 per cent of its residents claimed benefits. Yet the critical voice and political narrative that underlie 'poverty porn' programmes such as *Benefits Street* or *Skint* is absent from 'poshness porn', where TV execs prefer to daintily tip-toe around the thorny issues of widening inequality and the absurd privilege of the wealthy elite in modern Britain. Instead they opt for a sympathetic 'aren't they odd' tone, as with the hapless Fulford brood, or even for praising the occasional charitable leanings of the rich, as with *Liberty of London*. It seems that in TV, as in politics, we are afraid to confront the problems of inequality where they are most blatantly manifest.



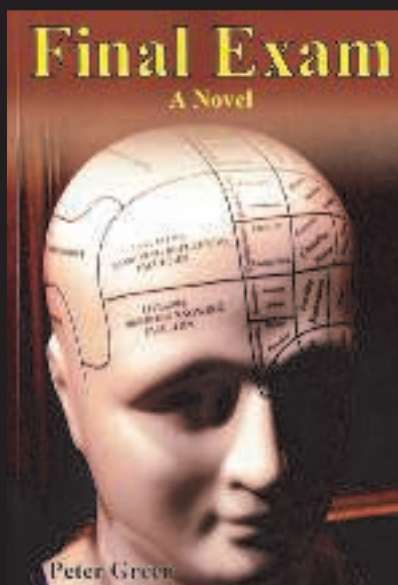
Final Exam: a warning.

Ian McEwan says: "I was fascinated and pleased by *Final Exam* – a stimulating blend of high-energy intellectual and sexual tease."

But Varsity's reviewer warns readers that *Final Exam* contains very difficult words, such as "lissom"!

Peter Green's *Final Exam: A Novel*

Lulu paperback £7.99 - Kindle text 97p.



Set in Pembroke College, Cambridge, this novel is about exams, literature, sex, cancer and time.

It asks: "What use is the study of literature?"

It alleges: "Exams tend to corrupt; final exams corrupt finally." And, finally, it examines the reader.

Poolside Perspectives

It's that time of year: Rose and Melissa share different experiences of the Winter Pool



Rose Lander

I opened my letter, "We regret to inform you..." I had received an awkwardly similar rejection letter from Oxford the previous year so I pretty much knew the score. Or so I thought. This letter was slightly different. It delivered the news of an oasis within a tundra of quick diminishing horizons. A mirage? No, the Winter Pool. The Other Place's pool is less beachy. After interviews you're held hostage without word of when you can leave. You're instructed to patiently sit in the JCR staring at a noticeboard waiting until a scrap of paper with your name on it may or may not appear.

Depending on this, you are then either free to return home or you must pick up your things and speed walk to a college on the other side of town to report for interview. Compared to this, Cambridge's Winter Pool was more like the jacuzzi of a luxury Alpine spa.

Luckily I was pulled from the water by a slightly nerdy but still strangely attractive lifeguard who gently cradled me whilst whispering, "you're going to be alright."

Trinity had picked me. Some people would say that I was lucky to be fished out by the Tompkins-Table-Topper and University-Challenge-Winner. I agree, but not because I think Trinity is the best. It's far from perfect.

Like a racist grandparent, I didn't choose it but I love it unconditionally. How can a prospectus guarantee you the right college experience anyway? The only reason I preferred Emmanuel in the first place was because it

had a pool – kind of ironic, now I think about it. It's more mysterious to think that your college selected you, rather than the other way around – as if the fates have intervened.

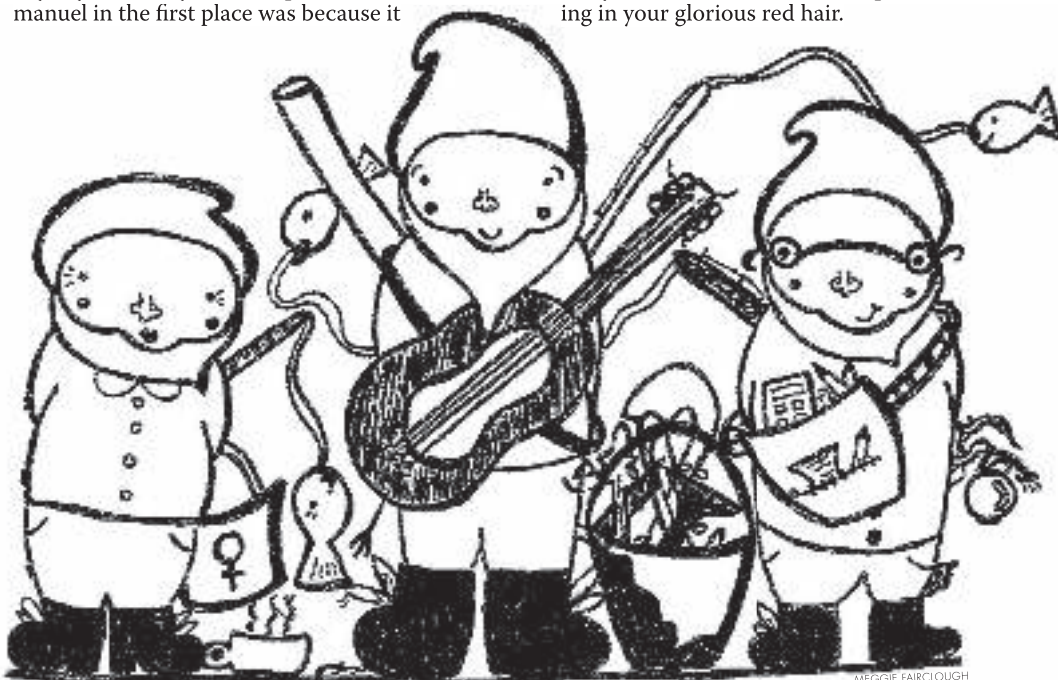
It's not always rosy. When I told my supervisor that I was helping out during interview week, she innocently asked whether I had a sadistic wish to watch the interviewees suffer as Trinity had made me suffer.

When I reminded her that I did my interview elsewhere and was pooled her reaction was "Ah, of course," giving me a knowing and sympathetic look that said: "Is that why you were so underconfident and insecure last year?" Great.

On reflection, that still-wet-from-the-pool insecurity can be a desirable quality. Cambridge students have often never failed before and because of this they are too sure of their abilities – hardly an endearing quality. You can't always get your own way. You've got an offer from Cambridge: who cares if you have to go to Girton? Girton is lovely! Getting cast aside by your original choice prepares you for the inevitable failures that will come in the future.

In fact, post-university life is quite a lot like a pool. You will get rejected from internships and grad schemes but you will (hopefully) be fished out eventually.

Emerging stronger, sort of like Ariel on her rock with the waves of opportunity crashing behind you and the winds of triumph billowing in your glorious red hair.



It was around this time last year that, sat in a sleepy cafe on a dusky winter's morning, I found myself in the pool. It was a strange moment: having spent all the Christmas holidays anxiously awaiting news of my UCAS fate, the email felt anticlimactic, to say the least.

The following day or two went by with the speed of a narcoleptic sloth, until finally the rod of destiny (alias the Murray Edwards admissions tutor) descended upon me and fished me from my ever deepening purgatorial depths.

As a concept, I have nothing against the pool. It allows everyone who is of standard

to study in these hallowed halls. Besides, without it, we Hill colleges would have a depopulation crisis more serious than Japan's.

But it is saddening that I can only name two



people who applied to my college directly. On the one hand, it can be comforting to know that we're all in the same boat: a bond is no doubt formed through the mutual circumstance of our wet arrival. However, is a solidarity formed through the fact that none of us wanted to be here really something to be cherished?

It can be assumed that this lack of interest stems not from our location (which isn't really very far away, contrary to popular belief), but from our somewhat girl-heavy nature.

In all honesty, this is my only issue with the pooling experience. If single-sex colleges didn't exist, all us fish would be equal. Ending up somewhere a little far out becomes manageable after a while, at least you're with your friends, right? College is where most people form their closest friendships – understandably, we're around each other a lot.

You'll get the same experience wherever you end up, they say. Yet while this may be the case for someone pooled to Fitz or Girton, for some of us it doesn't ring true.

By being placed in a single-sex environment it feels like we are essentially denied the full 'university experience' that mixed colleges enjoy. The fact is, it's not the same experience at all. Whilst I have many great male friends around the university, it's a single mixed friendship group that we often miss out on.

So while it's all very well saying the fates act on our behalf, until the sexes of our potential fishers are equal, the pool will continue to be a little bit unfair.



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New Term. New

The 2015 Crystal Ball

Ben Waters takes a peek and lets you know what he saw



North Korea cyber-attacks TOWIE: world rejoices

Outraged at the number of characters daring to emulate Kim Jong Un's enticing lid, North Korea will commission the Guardians of Peace to digitally infiltrate the producers of *The Only Way Is Essex*. However, after Brits take to the streets in their millions to celebrate the downfall of the country's most appalling reality TV show, the North Korean dictator quickly realises that he can use his powers of internet terrorism for good instead of evil. He then takes to hacking *Country File*, *Lizard Lick Towing* and all programmes with Keith Lemon in them, ridding the Western world of bad television once and for all.

Boris Johnson becomes reincarnated as an olive leaving him no choice but to compete for the Tory leadership

Following a tragic biking accident, Boris' soul will undergo several spiritual rebirths, assuming the forms of an elderly rastafarian, a small goat and a yeast cell, before finally settling its form as a pitted green olive. Ecstatic at such an unlikely fulfilment of his previous statement from 2012, Boris will have no choice but to finally run for Prime Minister, becoming the nation's first politically active marinated nibble.

Julian Assange seeks asylum in Kim Kardashian's cleftal horizon

In what amounts to the craftiest refuge of a century, the Wikileaks co-founder will be discovered living in Kim's rump. Upon discovery, he will have inhabited the space for eight months after leaving the Ecuadorian embassy when learning that this new residence has yet to sign an extradition treaty with the US. He won't have been the first to seek protection in such a place: an endangered species of vole and the ghost of John Lennon will be found sheltering for dear life in the instaqueen's bodacious booty.

Kanye West wrestles injured six year old

As if all the self-aggrandising radio appearances and the lyrics 'I Am a God' didn't make the point clearly enough, Yeezus will assert his undying superiority and virility once and for all by challenging an underweight prepubescent boy with a broken ankle to a mud-wrestling match. In a stunt carefully planned by the rap superstar's PR team, but unbeknown to the child, the conflict will be provoked by West accidentally spilling a froyo on his plaid shirt, prompting him to lash out at the passing boy with a clenched fist in New York's Central Park.

How to: get rid of not so fresh first-term friends

Hesham Mashhour

You staggered out of matric. You had nowhere to go. Two hours later, you're toasting Euler with the mathmo DoS, your arts allegiances forgotten, in the warm glow of a bevy of new friends. Or having tried a drink in a room where everyone had matching ties, you found yourself instantly sworn into a secretive and exclusive society. Or you found yourself in any other novel situation you don't fit in, but, confused by FOMO, you nevertheless became bound to the people you met for life. But suddenly life with your first term friends is looking pretty long. With Michaelmas over and done with, you feel less than positive about spending the rest of your degree lying on someone else's bathroom floor, or nodding along to compsci jargon. Something has gone badly wrong in your social life. We've been there and we've learnt. Here is some wisdom.

Get New Friends Before Ditching the Old Ones

Being friends with people you don't like isn't cool, but having no friends at all is even worse. So try joining a society – but be discerning. Avoid the Union (no one really likes each other there anyway) and CUSU (they might like each other but no one likes them). Host pre-drinks in your room and invite people who seem cool or well-connected, or start rowing for your college. Get Grindr even – you'll end up with a bunch of friends in some really high places. Basically, spend a few weeks slutting yourself around and if you're not the most detestable person in Cambridge, you'll find some new friends.

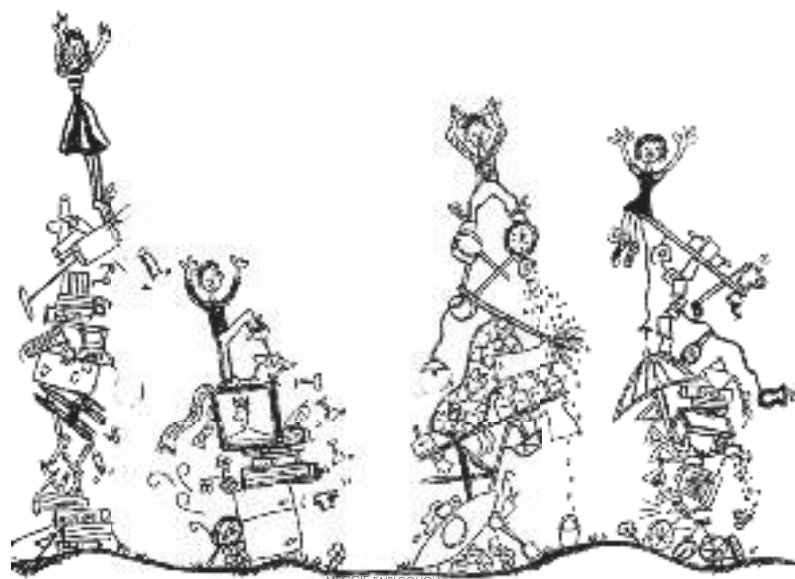
Flash your new street cred

Inevitably, you'll bump into your ex-friend. At the end of the obligatory three minutes of phatic chit-chat, look at your watch and excuse yourself. Say you're having lunch/coffee/something social with some good friends of yours. That's right: friends. Plural. You've got lots now and don't need any more.

Neighbours can't be choosers

Remember, your neighbours have a special status. You share a place in this world and so they have every right to enter your room unannounced and spend as long as they want there. You can't avoid them. It's one big polygamous marriage and divorce isn't an option. Plus, college walls are ridiculously thin. They know things. If they don't like you, they'll tell everyone about that time you threw up in the shower, or about that ugly guy you slept with last week. They have power.

So prune your friendships and enjoy the ride up the Cantabridgian social strata. The more steps you follow, the higher you'll climb. And that was the plan all along, wasn't it?



Year. A New You.

How to: rewin your bedder's love

Sarah Collins



If there is anyone in Cambridge who desperately needs to start afresh with their bedder it's me. With a level of messiness that deserves its own medical label, it has been confirmed by neighbours that I am one of my bedder's least favourite students. Not that she ever shows it, though. Her constant smile and motherly warmth in the face of my room's descent into subhuman conditions just makes my guilt worse for an inability to put anything where it belongs. Beneath this veneer of cheer, however, her resentment was bubbling, and something had to be done. January is the month for resolutions, and mine is a new relationship with my bedder. If you too fear you are on your bedder's blacklist, here is how to win them back

5

A Campaign for the Living Wage.

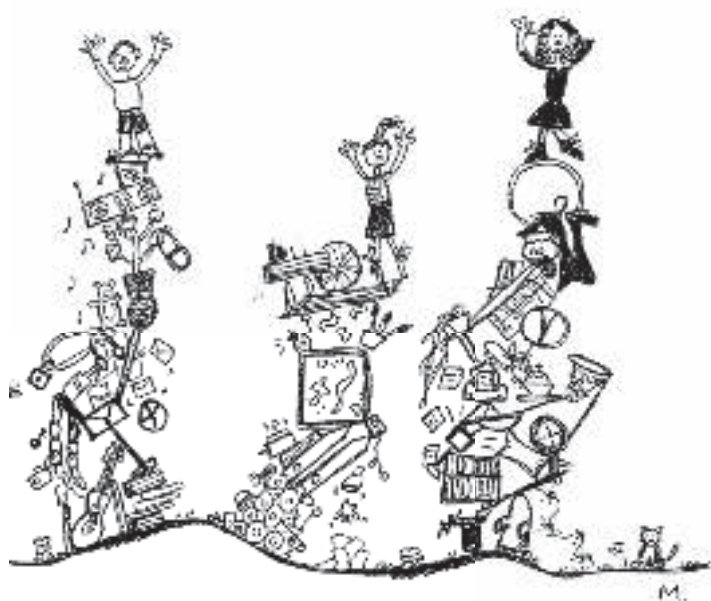
With last year's university wide success it's easy to forget that staff are rarely paid the the living wage of £7.65 an hour. I have been struck in my first term at Cambridge by the warmness and the dedication of the staff that work as bedders, in the buttery or on the grounds. Their tireless efforts have immeasurably aided the tough transition from home to university for us terrified freshers. We do them a disservice if we do not continue the fight to ensure that one of the world's richest educational institutions fulfils its obligation to pay every employee a wage they can live on.

1 **Talk to them.** They vacuum your floor, they clean your sink they've seen every nook and cranny of your room and possibly even you. Have a chat and soon you'll realise that they have a pretty grown up perspective on Cambridge life. As a naïve 18 year old always prone to melodrama, the transcendent wisdom of my bedder can pull me out of an essay crisis and return me to planet earth. I may have just had to deliver 1500 words on the ever elusive UK constitution, but I haven't been up since 6am cleaning the rooms of one hundred sordid freshers – so I probably shouldn't be moaning about how much hard work I've been doing.

2 **Leave gifts and grovelling notes.** Even if it's just a bit of Aldi chocolate there's nothing like old fashioned bribery to win the trust of the person who has the power to get you sent to the Dean.

3 **Use tons of Febreeze.** You could even mix up the scent every few weeks to keep things fresh for your bedder. This will also cover up the unsavoury smell of Wednesday night's VK-splashed leggings.

4 **Panic.** If all else fails, simply stash everything somewhere. This means clothes, crumby plates, and half-finished mugs of tea under your bed. This method should be saved for a real emergency though, as it is only a very short term solution.



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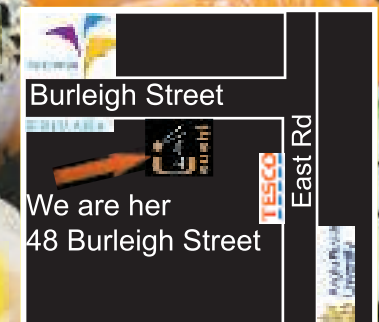
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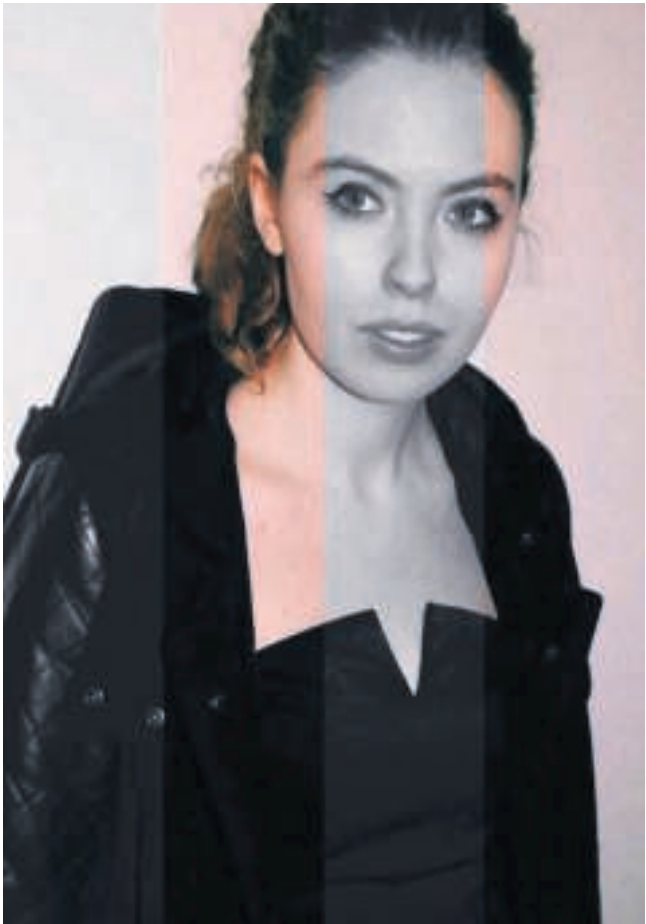
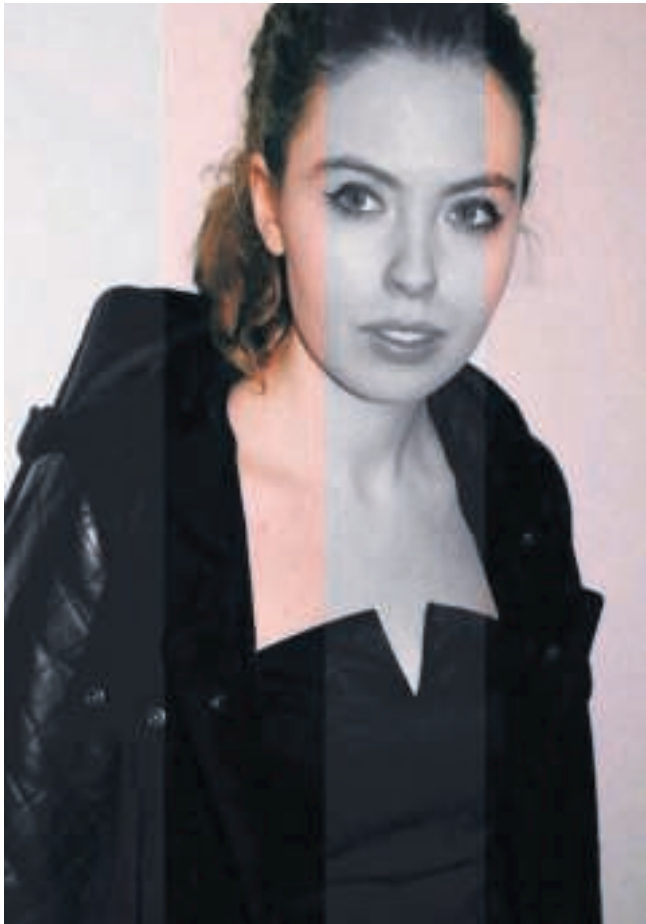
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Naked Talent

Director Peter Skidmore and lead actor Jonah Hauer-King discuss the process behind staging a play as challenging as *Equus*

Peter Skidmore, director, says:



When I mention to people I'm directing *Equus*, one reaction seems to be predominant – that's the one where Harry Potter has sex with a horse. Right. Let's put this straight. Daniel Radcliffe did famously, and to critical acclaim, portray the role of Alan Strang, and yes, this requires nudity. It is true that some of the play's themes draw on a sensual attraction towards horses. But at no point, and I want to make this really clear, does Alan have sex with a horse. I'm sorry. It just doesn't happen, at least not explicitly. For audience members only out to get their fix of equine porn, it'll be disappointing. Just saying.

That's not to say the play doesn't deal with some very dark and taboo subject matter. It was shockingly controversial when first performed in 1973, due in no small part to its graphic descriptions of a confused sexuality and its paganistic rejection of modern society, not to mention its famously disturbing and violent finale. It's the task of any production team taking on *Equus* to ensure that this controversy and shock value is maintained without it losing its edge, and this means devising new ways to approach and present the notorious content.

The play revolves around the construction of a complex and primal theology by Alan, whereby he believes that horses are divine representatives through which he can escape his

humdrum and oppressive existence. Throughout, connections are made to early pagan religion and as such, Alan's world is populated by bizarre creatures and elaborate rituals. The violent and sexual aspects of the play can be framed within this ritualisation, and so the show is able to portray a frightening, but also alluring, fantasy.

So how do we bring this imagined world to life within the confines of the stage? Firstly, we can relate Alan's beliefs to our society's own uneasy memories of a forgotten primal culture. Our overarching aesthetic for the production is one drawing on pre-Christian British traditions, namely those of Anglo-Saxon, Celtic and even earlier cultures.

Whether through invasions or suppression by institutionalised religion, these pagan customs have become lost from the collective folk consciousness, perfectly emulating the conflicts Alan faces when modern society begins to encroach on his beliefs.

Thus we're building a stone circle on the stage, through which the characters will dart and hide, and at the centre of which the famous ritual scene will be performed. The horses, as specified in the script, will be highly stylised: actors in masks based on Celtic pagan designs represent the animals as magnificent, godlike creatures. Finally, we have recruited an extensive chorus who will act as personifications of Alan's

religion itself, so vivid that it becomes a living force with real desires and fears. Through choral music based on ancient British themes, they will accentuate and give colour to a vibrant world that, by the finale, the audience should envy.

The question remains, however, of how to actually represent the violent scenes onstage. Naturalistic depictions work very well – for instance I have seen fake blood used to fantastic effect on the ADC stage, and Cambridge shows are lucky enough to often have professional-quality fight choreographers devise incredibly realistic sequences. However, the magic of *Equus* lies in its stylisation. The horses are not naturalistic; they are abstract, and so too should be the depictions of violence. Through intense physical workshops in which we have explored representations of extreme pain and aggression, we have devised mechanisms by which events become even more disturbing than if they were realistically played out. I don't want to give too much away, but we've all come out of them feeling a bit distressed.

Equus is a unique amalgamation of theatre – part psychological thriller, part high classical tragedy, part social commentary. But, at heart, it is a fantasy. It is a world to which an audience can escape, which has both wondrous and terrifying aspects, and offers an alternative from the prison of modern life. And, very importantly, it has no horse sex. Maybe.

Jonah Hauer-King, playing Alan Strang, says:

It seems that the first thing that everybody associates with *Equus* is nudity; it certainly appears to be the aspect of the play that provokes the most interest and curiosity amongst those who know little about it.

On the one hand, this is warranted; the appearance of the 17 year old Alan Strang stark naked on stage is undoubtedly a powerful image, and a necessary and significant part of the play.

However, it is worth asking why *Equus* is so overwhelmingly associated with this comparatively short scene.

The play reached new levels of notoriety with Thea Sharrock's 2007 production, starring Daniel Radcliffe and the late Richard Griffiths. For many, myself included, this was the first they had heard of Peter Shaffer's work.

At the time, vast amounts of press attention focused on the fact that Harry Potter was finishing with franchise and 'growing up'; he was not only making his first appearance on a London stage, but he was getting undressed in the process. I think regrettably too much was made of this.

Equus became known for its nudity when in fact it is a complex psychological play, exploring religion, institutions and our societal norms and values.

The nudity isn't gratuitous, nor do I think it should be seen as a defining feature of the play as a whole. For me, it complements and highlights Shaffer's vision of Alan Strang's journey, but should not be viewed as the focal point.

In preparation for this part I think it's important not to get too distracted by Radcliffe's famous portrayal. Usually when approaching a role I wouldn't seek out previous examples of how it has been interpreted, as I feel this only limits and may negatively influence my own approach, and that is the case for this production, too.

Indeed, for this reason I have chosen not to watch Sidney Lumet's 1977 film, partly because I would be wary of trying to emulate Peter Firth's performance, and partly because I may feel forced to make deliberate choices not to copy him, when those may have been choices I might otherwise have wanted to make.

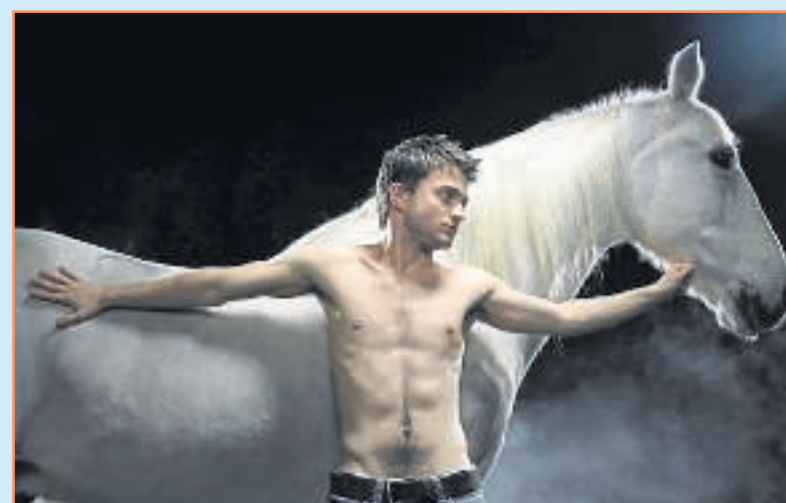
Instead of approaching other productions,

then, the first question that has to be asked is, "who is Alan Strang?" As with preparation for any role one needs to ask what his motivations are, why he does what he does, and try to imagine the background and reasons behind his behaviour.

This is made even more difficult in the context of Alan's extremely shocking actions, feelings and beliefs – a difficulty that audiences will struggle with in equal measure.

How do we find sympathy and empathy with such a character? This is perhaps the most challenging aspect of the role: trying to make sense of and identify with Alan.

It would be wrong to simply label him 'mad'



– though he may well be – and I think finding a certain compassion for him is essential to playing the role.

In fact, as with any good piece of theatre, I hope the audience will go away questioning themselves, questioning to the extent to which they identify with Alan, and feeling unsettled by the extent to which they care for him.



LEAN

Director Robbie Taylor Hunt talks to playwright Isley Lynn on her frank portrayal of male anorexia



Two years ago in the bar of Covent Garden's Tristan Bates Theatre, I stood with my friend ranting admiration about the production we had just seen. Isley Lynn's debut play *LEAN* had premiered and was enjoying great acclaim and an extended run. I had been completely enraptured. It had meaning, challenged preconceptions, was honest and presented a relationship I entirely believed in.

Nearby, a young woman was being praised and we realised it must be the playwright herself. After encouragement from my friend, I went over to give congratulations coolly and professionally. What instead transpired was an awkward and fanatical ramble about how much I loved the play. Pride wounded and expecting a bewildered thanks preceding a quick escape, I was instead met by genuine appreciation of my admiration and a modest shyness.

Ice broken, I asked about how she began writing and she told me a bit about her time on the Royal Court Young Writer's Programme the previous year. She is American-born, now living in London and also writes poetry.

Considering the brilliance of the play I had just seen, I was struck by her humility and sincere interest in my thoughts on the piece. We swapped details and have stayed in touch. As I began directing *LEAN* at the Corpus Playroom, which will show at the end of January, I could not resist the urge to ask more questions about this provocative play.

LEAN is being put on two years after its premiere at the Tristan Bates. "It's a relief, honestly," she tells me. "It sort of proves its initial success wasn't a fluke! It's a big thrill to have your work put on in the first place, but when someone else entirely wants to put it on a second time, and so soon after, it's very flattering."

We speak about her involvement in rehearsals for the original production (which she tells me is quite common for new writing); I assume it must be strange being largely removed from this process, aside from occasional interrogation by the new director.

"It was its maiden voyage so I wanted to be involved in how it would come into the world. But it's been quite nice and exciting not being involved this time around, it's totally different. I'll just show up on opening night and find out what's happened! Every time I get an update it's like a little treat for the day. And of course I'm no longer 'making' the show; the show exists already. It's just getting another incarnation, so it's much more relaxed and I can enjoy it a bit more."

The play focuses around Michael, who is anorexic, and his ex-wife Tessa, who moves back

in with him upon discovering he has stopped eating again. She says that she won't eat until he does, but Michael refuses to get involved in Tessa's game.

Anorexia can be a sensitive topic but Lynn explores it with detailed insight and refreshing frankness. The fact that men are often excluded from conversations surrounding eating disorders makes Lynn's play particularly distinctive.

"My ex-boyfriend was anorexic and his experience was so different to every other portrayal I'd seen represented in the culture around me, so I wanted more to write about that than write about Anorexia with a capital A," she tells me. "A lot of the experience of the disorder discussed in the play comes from his direct testimony, and I'll always be grateful to him for his generosity and support in writing the play."

I applaud her desire to write about something so important and we go on to discuss the ways in which issues like mental health can be explored in theatre. "All art is an empathy machine; it allows you to see the world through a radically different perspective, and I think live theatre is the most radical form of this – you sit in a dark room and share oxygen with a bunch of strangers while you witness the experiences of people from a totally different world to you, people you might otherwise never come into contact with, be that because of their race, age, background, sexuality or whatever. So I think it's a great medium to explore any issue."

The play tackles anorexia, but I experienced so much more than that when I saw it back in 2013. It's no wonder, because, as Lynn explains, "The disorder provides a poetic and high-stakes context for the characters' real problem, their painful history. It's about stubbornness and tough love and desperation and forgiveness and what it means to really love someone so much you'd do anything for them, even if you can't stand to be in the same room as them. And it's about something else pretty major, but that's a surprise..."

With so many hard-hitting, gritty issues and feelings, I imagine that it must have been a tough writing process. "I actually wrote the opening scene for *LEAN* as part of my Drama BA, and as I didn't have to finish it I didn't worry too much about how the rest of the play would function!," she admits.

"So when I decided it was an important story and I should complete the work, my challenge was making sure all the seeds I'd sown in that first scene came to fruit successfully by the end. It meant the piece was more rich and complex than it might have been otherwise, but it wasn't easy!"

I tell her about the rich array of theatre that is

put on in Cambridge and ask her why she thinks people should come and see *LEAN*: "I guarantee you'll look at the world a little differently afterwards. Just a little. You'll see your family differently, your lovers differently, especially anorexics differently. And one thing I should say is no matter how black the humour is, you're allowed to laugh. Because it's funny. I promise." And she's right; I remember how hard it was to stifle frequent laughter while watching the original performance.

LEAN has stayed with me, and I took away a new perception of eating disorders and a

different consideration of the relationships I have with the people close to me.

"I hope people take away some lessons about how to be kinder to each other, even if you think the other person is being an idiot. Even if they really are being an idiot," she adds.

"I'd generally like to see more acceptance in the world of people different to ourselves, and if *LEAN* contributes to that somehow I'll be very happy. Fingers crossed."

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Overlooked American Cemetery

India Rose Matharu-Daley

I felt uplifted after my first visit to the Cambridge American Cemetery, dedicated to some 9000 men and women who fell in the Second World War and just three miles west of the city.

I am a Yank, but it was not just the patriotism in me that rose when I saw the Stars and Stripes in the American Cemetery.

The site, dedicated in 1956, is a masterpiece of architectural, artistic and landscape design. Its rows of white marble crosses and Stars of David stand on a fan-shaped site, designed by the same firm responsible for New York's Central Park. It looks north over the Cambridgeshire countryside to Ely. In the south, three reflecting pools run from a flagstaff to a modernist chapel, on whose mosaic walls and ceiling an angel guides US aircrafts and battleships on their final missions. Inside is a giant mural map of Allied military, air and naval operations in Europe.

Thus the cemetery communicates glory and gratitude, rather than grief and gloom, and in this way the American war cemetery design differs vastly from the solemn pattern adopted by the Imperial War Graves Commission. It also brings to the visitor's attention the unofficial but vital role the USA played in the fight against Nazism before Pearl Harbour. Many of the soldiers whose names are inscribed on the Wall of the Missing lost their lives in the Battle of the Atlantic, during which American support for British convoys kept the Allied war effort alive. A visitor centre opened at the cemetery last year detailing America's involvement in the struggle. 2015 sees the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The fate of the world hung in the balance, lest we forget.



The Ariel Poems by T. S. Eliot



"A cold coming we had of it. / Just the worst time of the year / For a journey, and such a long journey: / The ways deep and the weather sharp, / The very dead of winter."

The opening lines of the opening piece of *The Ariel Poems* may be plundered from Pembroke's own Lancelot Andrewes, but *Journey of the Magi* ranks as one of T. S. Eliot's – and therefore one of literature's – great works, recited at carol services across Christendom.

Supposedly written in 45 minutes in an empty church with the aid of a bottle of gin, the words of Eliot's magus, recalling the only implied manger, mother and child, have the power to chill and resonate even in the same listener: "I had seen birth and death, / But had thought they were different."

Not, and never likely to be confused with Sylvia Plath's *Ariel*, the *Ariel Poems* accumulated over five Christmases as part of a series commissioned by Faber & Gwyer.

They began in 1927 with that line "A cold coming we had of it," and finished in 1931 with "the first coming of the second coming" (*The Cultivation of the Christmas Trees*).

Of the many 'journeys' on which the volume takes us, the journeys from past to future and from birth to death to resurrection are perhaps the most crucial. These poems were conceived in the late 1920s, as Eliot's religious convictions solidified; in this sense, they prepare the way for his 1930 'conversion poem', *Ash Wednesday*.

We witness a second coming of something, at least: this new edition restores the six poems to their original, accompanying illustrations.

American avant-gardist E. McKnight Kauffer was responsible for four of them, Gertrude Hermes for one wood engraving, and David Jones (of *In Parenthesis* fame) for a pencil drawing nearly thirty years later.

Kauffer's angular, iconographic pieces are the most striking, particularly the cross, half-obsured by encroaching polygons, that accompanies *Journey of the Magi*; as well as the cracked portrait of a faceless Roman warrior statue that goes with *Triumphal March*.

But for all their quality, the illustrations are secondary. If the £15 price tag is at all justified, it is the poetry which justifies it.

These poems do not deserve their relative anonymity, which exists possibly a result of their status as occasional pieces, probably a result of their chronological position.

Anything sandwiched between such epoch-shaping works as *The Waste Land* and *The Hollow Men* on the one hand, and *Ash Wednesday* and *Four Quartets* on the other was always likely to be of more academic than popular interest.

This volume might just re-establish *The Ariel Poems* for what they are: conversion poems in more than just a religious sense. The only poem that the notorious critic F. R. Leavis ever described as 'beautiful' is in here: one based on Shakespeare's *Pericles, Marina*:

...What seas what shores what granite islands towards my timbers

And woodthrush calling through the fog
My daughter
Harry Cochrane

Birdman



If there's one thing that I love more than anything else about watching films, it's having my expectations exceeded.

This can come in many forms. An intriguing or unusual performance on the part of an actor or director, for example – something I was certainly hoping for following the excitement of *Amores Perros* but the disappointment of Alejandro González Iñárritu's subsequent features.

A second way my expectations can be exceeded is through innovation, for there is nothing more thrilling than watching a filmmaker doing something genuinely original. *Birdman* achieves both of these.

In a notable departure from Iñárritu's earlier dramas, *Birdman* is a sharp black comedy about the washed-up actor Riggan Thomson, who is famous for his earlier role playing the eponymous *Birdman*, a character who puts on a Broadway play in an attempt to revive his waning career. I say sharp because Iñárritu's previous films have tended to stray on the side of the self-indulgently long, yet with *Birdman* this is decisively not the case.

The script is not only funny, snappy and deep, but also watertight. Like its titular character, the film flies at a rapid pace, making for riveting viewing and, despite its 119-minute running time, not a moment feels unnecessary.

Although I haven't loved all of Iñárritu's past work, I've always admired his ability to draw stunning performances from his actors, and *Birdman* is no exception.

Lead by the ever-incredible Michael Keaton, the entire cast deserves as many awards as they can get their

hands on. Even actors such as Andrea Riseborough, Amy Ryan and Lindsay Duncan, with only a few scenes between them, create three-dimensional, engaging characters in the limited time they are allotted.

Yet despite the star-studded cast, the real star of the film is cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki. I never thought I would become a cinematographer's fanboy, but after shooting masterpieces such as *Children of Men*, *The Tree of Life*, *Gravity* and now this, Lubezki has proven me wrong.

Filming in what seems like one continuous take, Iñárritu has not only taken a big risk (reportedly having been warned not to write and shoot it in that way), but has also done something that feels genuinely new to filmmaking.

The continuous shot approach more than pays off. The constant weaving in and around the corridors of the theatre and the streets of New York gives the film a dizzying, spontaneous feel, reflecting Riggan's fiery character and even his suggested insanity.

Thus the cinematography, Antonio Sanchez's percussion-heavy, jazz-infused score, the lighting and the darkly comedic script all work together to make *Birdman* an incredibly bold and electrifying fusion of new and old, comedy and drama, sanity and insanity and, most importantly, reality and fantasy.

On leaving the cinema I asked my friend what she thought of the film, to which she replied: "I liked it... it was a bit weird though." And yes, *Birdman* is weird, very weird... but in the best possible way.

Will Roberts



Exodus: Gods and Kings



"Well, Yahweh's a bit of a dick," remarked my companion as we exited a deserted showing of *Exodus: Gods and Kings*. So, apparently, is Ridley Scott, for making an extremely dull, CGI-swamped account of the Israelites' trials and triumphs in Egypt. All I really wanted was an entertaining cross between *Gladiator* and *The Prince of Egypt*.

Instead, I sat through a torturous two and a half hours of Christian Bale alternating his facial expressions between 'mildly annoyed' and 'quite annoyed'. The film has courted controversy with its decision to cast white leads, straying from the Biblical text, and Bale describing Moses as 'schizophrenic'. Its greatest sin, however, is surely in managing to make boring one of the great epics of the ancient world.

The film chooses to focus on the decidedly un-Biblical relationship between Moses (Bale) and his adoptive

brother, Rameses (Joel Edgerton), who eventually becomes Pharaoh.

Edgerton is aided in his performance neither by the frequently appalling script ("From an economic standpoint alone, what you're asking is problematic to say the least"), or by an erotic moment with a snake, but even so must take some responsibility for his droning dictator.

As Moses transforms from prince to outcast to prophet, we encounter little empathetic dialogue and instead become mired in cinematic tropes; heavy-handed foreshadowing occurs when Moses berates the *de facto* Jewish leader, Nun (a pleasing turn from Ben Kingsley), such as when he insists that he doesn't believe in prophecies and questions why the Jewish God has failed to help the Israelites.

On the back of some imaginative biblical translation (1 Kings 19:12, "a still small voice"), God's avatar is a young (white) boy, who appears alongside the burning bush and addresses Moses (who, in moment of unintended hilarity, is all but totally submerged in mud).

This scene is an example of one of



the many tropes the film grasps at: the eerie supernatural child, à la Sixth Sense. The intended symbolism is meant to be that of truth and innocence, coupled with a child's ability to be merciless and cruel. Yet the shock value of the child quickly fades, and the audience is left with a slight annoyance at a petulant and whiny God.

“

UNFORTUNATELY, GIGGLES GRIPPED WHAT REMAINED OF THE AUDIENCE

The plagues, richly described and escalating in the original text, translate powerfully to screen; the flies swarm nauseatingly in 3D, the fish rot in blood and hail thunders impressively from the sky. Let's get one thing straight, however: no matter how many pixels and hours of digital rendering you pour into

it, a plague of frogs is still just a lot of frogs.

Alberto Iglesias' score should also be singled out for special ridicule. It is unbelievable that a man who has been nominated for a total of three Oscars in his lifetime could have penned this monotonous wall of sound.

If the foundation-shaking booms sparingly deployed in Inception had been looped continuously, much the same effect would have been achieved. Presumably the idea was a soundtrack suitable for endless panning shots of digitised battles and cities; the back catalogue of the Spice Girls would have been less egregious.

Frustratingly, there were actually a couple of intriguing concepts. Yet, in a fashion that one quickly comes to expect from this film, they were always underdeveloped.

Before the plagues, Moses, with his new background as a brilliant military tactician, begins a campaign of guerrilla warfare (after a training montage with wannabe zealots). For a minute, there was the hint of fertile moral exploration of

'an eye for an eye' and allusions to the modern conflicts and martyrdom that dominate the Middle East today – alas, Yahweh soon waded in and did his thing.

There was also the suggestion that Moses hallucinated his conversations with God; modern theologians have occasionally presented similar theories about the prophet Ezekiel. Rather than delving into psychoanalysis, Exodus was content to leave the question hanging, in the hope of mysteriousness. Serious scenes of Moses talking to a lump of rock became inadvertently humorous (especially when thought of as a deleted scene from American Psycho).

The film ends a little like Return of the King, in that the ending seems to be pushed back *ad nauseam*. The final scene shows an ancient Moses guarding the ark with tablets safe inside; unfortunately, giggles gripped what remained of the audience as Bale, when aged to 120, looked like an unholy cross between a Ringwraith and Jimmy Saville.

Kit Fowler

The Basement Tapes



The release of 'The Basement Tapes' is a landmark in the corpus of Bob Dylan's work, for it includes unpublished material from the original recordings. The collection defies labels. It is a surreal mish-mash of styles from blues to country. Dylan found a freedom here far removed from his personal troubles; songs like 'Million Dollar Bash' and 'Too Much of Nothing' bowl along artlessly. Their strength comes from the unique assembly of musicians. The group of hard, carefree country men, later to become known as The Band, was happy to experiment away from the frenetic public atmosphere that surrounded Dylan.

It is fitting that 'Bob Dylan' is a pseudonym. Various 'Dylans' have been constructed both by his audiences and by the man himself: the Right characterised him as subversive, while the Left embraced him as their own. He was called a 'spokesman for a generation,' a 'prophet,' and yet he repudiated all political allegiance and maintained that he was simply "a folk musician who gazed into the grey mist."

'One Too Many Mornings,' an early song, reflects on the ache of worn out love and marks a particularly powerful moment in the album. One verse lilts: "From the crossroads of my doorstep/ My eyes they start to fade/ As I turn my head back to the room/ Where my love and I have laid/ An' I gaze back to the street, the sidewalk and the sign/ And I'm one too many mornings/ An' a thousand miles behind."

The guitar drifts as the harmonica draws out long lines overhead but his voice sparks and shatters, simultaneously retaining melancholic power. The mundane solidity of "street,"

"sidewalk" and "sign" thuds into the fading of love, the death of the past, and all it held.

However, his recording rams up the backing, giving it a heavy sound and frames the clear melody with musical soup. It sounds forced, thus losing some of its original power. This failure highlights the triumph and tragedy of Bob Dylan; he could never again produce the work of the early sixties.

At the heart of our struggle is the conflict of control and chaos. Control is created by a series of complex artifices that convey different images to the viewer and to one's own heart, all fragile in their own right but when collected and arranged over each other, secure. Folk music is such an artifice. It gives the impression of certain order in the chaos of life, a sense of belonging to the past, roots and ties that bind beyond the individual.

In folk songs, the human spirit burns bright, singing of wars, struggles, love lost, love discovered, the love that lasts a lifetime. The campfire, the singer – these are significant symbols in our imagination. Recurring reference to travelling may be to do with the search for transcendence, for our true home. These efforts portray a Dylan closer to that road with their easy freedom and unforced tone.

These tracks lack some of the resonance of Bob Dylan's earlier work. They are not songs that fire the spirit. However, though they bite less deeply they do, perhaps, bear the mark of a happier man.

Dylan had to retreat into a basement shut off from the world to rediscover freedom in his heart. These are pretty, joyful recordings that are well worth a listen.

Alastair Benn

Books to Inspire You in the New Year

We're all sick of hearing 'New Year, New You' screamed at us from every dieting ad or gym billboard, but you can't deny that the month of January does carry with it a certain sense of hope. Now is the time that we take stock of our lives away from all the worries of 2014, somehow aiming to become a better person along the way. If, like me, you're looking to give your life a bit of an overhaul at this time of year, here's a selection of books to inspire you.

A Hundred Pieces of Me by Lucy Dillon – Hodder & Stoughton 2014 – £6.99

In this witty and uplifting novel, Gina Bellamy chooses to keep only 100 items after moving into her new flat following a difficult divorce. Each chapter tells the story of an item, interwoven with the moving tale of her attempts to come to terms with her new life. When I read this book, I tried to make my own list of 100 items to keep, and found it completely impossible – turns out I'm pretty materialistic. Despite this, the message of the

book stayed with me: that we should all live for the present.

The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom – Little, Brown 2003 – £7.99

This book tells the story of Eddie, who dies trying to save a little girl's life at the fairground where he works. He is led through the afterlife, which is imagined as a place where you meet five people whose lives you touched on earth. Each person explains to Eddie the meaning of his life and how it impacted upon each of them, forcing him to reflect on how the smallest actions have the biggest consequences. This is a book that will make you think about your life and how you treat those around you.

Mindfulness: A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world by Mark Williams and Danny Penman – Piatkus 2011 – £13.99

Whilst self-help books aren't everyone's cup of tea, it would be hard to ignore the current prevalence of mindfulness. Thousands of books seem to be popping up to teach a more mindful way of life, but in my opinion this is by far the best. Co-authored by one of the movement's pioneers, Mark Williams, it includes a CD of guided meditations to help you become calmer and more focused, as well as a foreword by the world-renowned Jon Kabat-Zinn. The best part? It's taught as an eight-week course, so is the perfect goal for the Cambridge term.

Lily Hollins



All in his hair? Hamilton's Big Year

James Dilley reflects on Hamilton's unlikely inspiration

James Dilley

Sport Correspondent

2014 saw big changes to the world of Formula 1. New engine regulations meant goodbye to the roaring V8s of old, ushering in a new era of energy efficient, glacier-boosting racing for the sport's environmentally conscious fans. The return of the turbo meant that the new cars sounded more like lawnmowers than sexy, dirty, carbon fibre ground rockets, but F1 fans were nonetheless sweaty with anticipation for a season that looked sure to throw up more than its fair share of thrills.

As it turned out, the season quickly became a two-horse race between Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg of Mercedes – but boy was it a riveting one. Both drivers were fast, though Rosberg tended to have the edge in qualifying: his average starting position on the grid was 1.68 compared to Hamilton's 4.21. This meant that, on many occasions, Hamilton needed to pass his teammate in the race to gain the upper hand in an increasingly tense battle for the championship title – and more often than not he did.

It is uncontroversial to suggest that the man from Stevenage was the better racer; whenever Rosberg found himself behind his teammate he generally struggled to make a pass. When the



No hair in sight: Hamilton after success at the British Grand Prix

opposite applied and Hamilton found himself staring at the German's rear end (apparently a favourite pastime of his – don't tell Nicole Scherzinger), one got the sense that it was only a matter of time until the leader was overtaken.

Just as importantly, it was Hamilton who won the tense psychological war with Rosberg. Despite numerous jabs from the German, Hamilton played it cool and, to the visible discomfort of his rival, let his racing do the talking. By the end of the season, Hamilton had won an impressive 12 races to Rosberg's five. The BBC had a new

Sports Personality of the Year, and Hamilton had one more world championship to his name.

So how did old Hammy do it? Was it the hair? I for one found the troll doll topping pleasing; only Fernando Alonso's luscious Asturian locks could compete for the Most Rogue Haircut of the Season Award. The bit-more-than-Balotelli helped Hamilton distinguish himself from the perfectly blonde kopf of Nico Rosberg, the Englishman able to emphasise his rugged Hertfordshire roots with an appropriately gutsy coiffure. In a season where mind games played a critical role in the races, the

use of hairstyles to make deep sociological points undoubtedly helped the champion win his mental battle with the privileged Rosberg (son of minted former world champion Keke Rosberg, for all you F1 noobs out there).

Through his hair, Hamilton made amply clear that the German/Monacan was delivered into a paddling pool of L'Oréal conditioner during his Alberto Balsam-sponsored water birth, while young Lewis was born in an alley between a Stevenage Borough Council hairbrush recycling bin and a greasy barber shop.

Fiendish Fritz never faced the

struggles that plucky Lewis had to deal with. His daring hair was Hamilton's way of pointing this out, all while breezing past his teammate in every other race.

Or perhaps it was the return to tranquillity for Hamilton's love life. Fans will remember his torrid 2011 season – when the driver spent more time in the tyre barriers than on the track – when relationship problems with the aforementioned Scherzinger were deemed partly responsible for a disastrous season. In 2014, a year in which the ex-Pussycat Doll secured herself a role in a new production of Andrew Lloyd-Webber's *Cats*, everything seemed tickety-boo in the Hamilton love-nest. Scherzinger turned up to lots of races – as the cameramen made sure we all knew – and Hamilton seemed at peace again.

Maybe we can even make a not at all tenuous link here between the previously discussed haircut and this new found love. A well-known head-growing hobbyist, Ms Scherzinger was undoubtedly enamoured by Hamilton's fresh and trendy look. Perhaps it was this that rekindled the spark in an old relationship. Alas, we will never know for sure unless Hamilton decides to sit for an interview with the editor of *Closer* magazine, a possibility that Paddy Power are currently pricing at 15000-1.

Or maybe the Englishman's success was down to a combination of Mercedes engineering prowess, hard training and an insatiable desire to win on Hamilton's part. But that makes for pretty boring reading, doesn't it?

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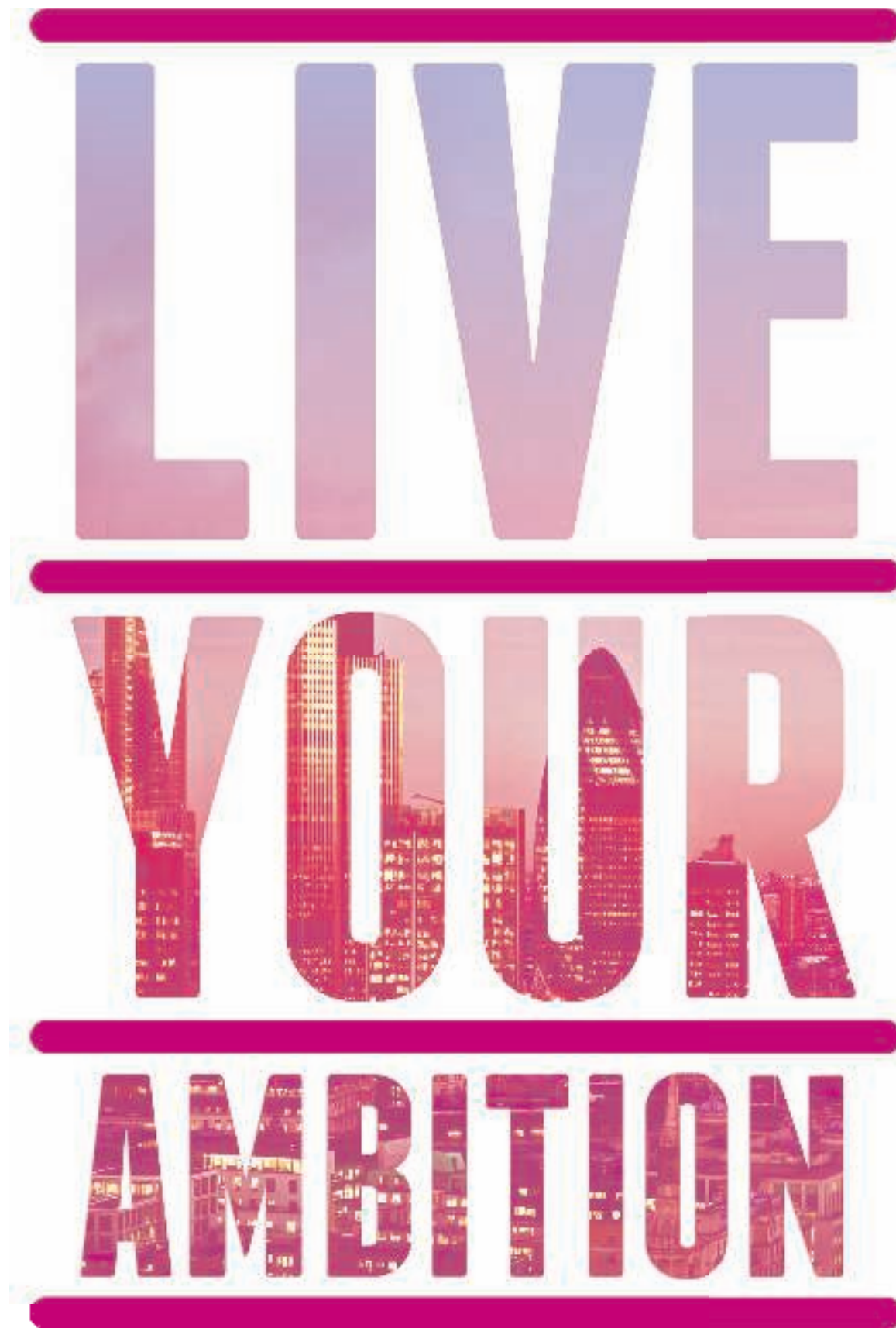
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Lewis Hamilton: all in the hair?

The unlikely reasoning behind his success



Sport

Local Hero

Paying homage to
Liverpool's Steve Gerrard**Nick Jones**

Sport Correspondent

For years, Liverpool fans had been pretending the day would never come. Like the death of an ageing relative — increasingly near yet thoroughly incomprehensible — Steven Gerrard's impending departure from the club which has run through his veins since he was a boy will invoke a spectrum of emotions amongst the adoring fans who have watched him develop from the scrawny teenager making his debut in 1998 into the local hero of today.

Pages and pages could be written about Gerrard's adeptness on the pitch and the wealth of crucial goals he has scored, many of them securing major trophies. He will leave a void, however, not just because of what he means to the team, but because of what he means to the club and to its people.

On 15th April 1989, a young Gerrard was just eight years old and already attracting the attention of the club's scouts when his bond with Liverpool was cemented in the most tragic of circumstances. The Hillsborough Tragedy sent shockwaves around the footballing world and for Gerrard, like so many others in the city, it hit even closer to home with the youngest of the 96 victims being his ten-year-old cousin, Jon-Paul Gilhooly.

One of the first talking points following his announcement was whether

he or "King" Kenny Dalglish holds the accolade of being Liverpool's greatest ever player. For Gerrard, Hillsborough was the beginning; for Dalglish, it was the beginning of the end. Greatness at Anfield is measured not just in talent, goals and performances. Important as these elements may be, both of those cult icons have, in different ways, done much for those families pained with the perennial search for closure.

Liverpool needs its heroes; both the city and its people. Unjustly maligned and similarly stereotyped, Liverpool remains a largely working-class city whose national image comes not from its own misgivings, but from a divide which, for many years, has denied it along with many other great northern cities the prosperity of their southern counterparts. Put eloquently by John Aldridge and Steve McMahon in the 'Anfield Rap' of 1988: "he [John Barnes] gives us stick about the north/south divide 'cos they got the jobs, yeah but we got the side!"

The Hillsborough disaster represents the 'little man' versus the establishment. The crushing of the working-class who, faced with a corrupt and cowardly police force, stood little chance of reaching justice, the battle for which is sadly still raging today, almost 26 years later. In the face of such pain and despair, Gerrard, in his unwavering loyalty, honesty and through his unique bond with the Anfield faithful, has helped define a people who rightly still feel aggrieved. Liverpool Football Club will be lucky to have a player like him ever again. It will be even luckier to have a man like him.



Cambridge gave everything yet were overwhelmed

A Varsity to forget

The Light Blues suffer
an historic defeat at
the hands of Oxford at
Twickenham**Joe Davis-Elkington**

Sport Correspondent

The end of the holidays leaves Cambridge sports followers with a bitter aftertaste.

In a poignant fixture marking the deaths of 55 Blues during the First World War, Cambridge were overwhelmed by a dominant Oxford side, who gained their fifth successive Varsity win with a record score of 43-6, the biggest margin in Varsity history.

Cambridge began the match strongly, and certainly held their own in the opening exchanges, but just when it seemed like they were about to seize the initiative, a promising maul was pulled back for a foul.

It was only a matter of moments later that the villain of last year's fixture, Sam Egerton, weaved his way through the Cambridge defence to open the scoring for Oxford. A man of the match performance followed for Egerton, burying the demons of his sending off last year.

The Light Blues did manage to hit back through two Don Stevens penalties, either side of a Cullen penalty for Oxford. Cambridge competed well in the first half and would have been more optimistic going into half time if it were not for a late Oxford try. The sides went in at 6-17, which was not fully reflective of the balance of play.

Cambridge were dealt a serious blow when Stevens landed awkwardly under a high ball and was stretchered off. Arguably Cambridge's best player,

without the playmaker they struggled to build any sort of pressure for the rest of the game. The rout began hereafter.

Despite a few positive plays at the start of the half, Reeson-Price put the game beyond Cambridge with a cleverly worked try, before Williams scrambled the ball across the whitewash five minutes later, making the score 6-27.

From this point it was a case of playing for pride and limiting the damage, but despite their best efforts Cambridge could not restrain a rampant Oxford. They managed to build some rare pressure, but once again the Oxford defence was resolute, answering every question Cambridge asked of them comfortably. As the Light Blues began to tire further tries for Oxford seemed inevitable.

Cullen scored the fifth try for Oxford, combining well with his half back partner Egerton to carve open the Cambridge defence, inflicting more misery upon the Light Blues. As the Cambridge defence capitulated, the points kept flowing, and this was fully exploited a few minutes later, with Gus Jones crossing the whitewash to complete an emphatic victory, Cullen converting to make it a record Varsity win.

The Light Blues captain, Harry Peck, remarked post-match that the team "couldn't have given anymore", and this was certainly true. It was a spirited Cambridge performance and there are certainly positives to be taken from the first half, but they were outclassed by a clinical Oxford in the second. The experience of the Oxford side was evident throughout the match, not least in prop Lewis Anderson, who became the first player ever to feature in five wins over Cambridge.

37 unanswered points speak for themselves, and this emphatic Oxford victory was thoroughly deserved.

Cambridge seemed to crumble in the second half, dominated by the Oxford pack and exploited by a ruthless back line. Peck did not seem to think that the result would be as damaging to the players as expected, stating that such a game may be "character building" but conceded that it could go on to "define them as characters and individuals".

Either way, it will be difficult for the Light Blues to put the memory of this game to the back of their minds. It's going to be a long 12 months before they can try to make amends.

Better than the Boys?

How women's rugby can
avenge our men's defeat**Peter Rutzler**

Sport Editor

Elite rugby at Cambridge was hit hard by December's historic defeat. A fifth successive loss against the great rival that is Oxford. The biggest winning margin of all time. Things look bleak.

But alas, there is hope on the horizon for all you Cambridge University rugby aficionados, and it comes in the form of our women's side, who are preparing for their Varsity fixture at the end of the coming term, on 7th March.

Unlike the boys, who in the build up to that defeat won just a quarter of fixtures, the girls have a one hundred percent record in their BUCS division, with five wins out of five.

In their Women's NC Division, where they play other Women's Rugby clubs, they've held their own,

recording some superb results such as a 67-7 thumping of the Wymondham Wasps.

It is their sheer domination of their BUCS division that will excite the Cambridge rugby following.

The ladies have a goal difference of 272, which is 175 greater than second place Nottingham University, whom they dismantled 19-0 in early November.

Nottingham got lucky. When Bedfordshire came to Cambridge in late October, they couldn't wait to get on the bus home, having suffered a humiliating 83-0 defeat.

De Montfort University also suffered a similar fate when they came to town, going down 73-0. Ruthless.

The chance to fight for a position on the top table of BUCS women's rugby through a playoff place seems all but assured after a scintillating start to the campaign.

But more prominent on the minds of our formidable ladies will be the fixture against Oxford.

Oxford have had a season that could not be more different to Cambridge's. Sitting joint bottom, with just one win out of six and boasting a goal difference of an embarrassing -421, they look ripe for the picking.

The only saving grace for the Dark Blues is that they play their trade in the highest Division in the South of England, the Southern Premier, one above Cambridge. The standard is therefore higher than what our ladies currently face.

But let's not beat around the bush, they're not coping at all, something illustrated by their last fixture of Michaelmas, a 'respectable' 88-0 defeat to Cardiff Metropolitan.

All of this thrown together leads to a mouth-watering prospect of a varsity between the high flying underperformers and low lying over-achievers. With our Cambridge Women's Team steamrolling every university in sight, avenging the boys' painful defeat at Twickenham looks a real possibility. Oxford will be quaking in their boots.