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VARSITY

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18 Columnists



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30 Autumn Fashion Tips



Line-up: Proctors process into the Senate House before the Vice-Chancellor's annual Michaelmas address yesterday (see p.4)

Borysiewicz delivers warning on Brexit

Sarah Collins
News Correspondent

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge has suggested that British exist from the European Union could disadvantage British scientific research and development.

In a debate held at Downing College, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz warned that the relationship between the university and the businesses and enterprises that enable high-quality scientific research could be irrevocably damaged.

Borysiewicz has previously voiced concerns over the consequences of 'Brexit' in an impassioned address at an event celebrating the 650th year of the University of Vienna.

He has made clear that the future success of British universities such as Cambridge is intimately bound up with continued British membership of the EU. He has argued that this success should not be jeopardised in the name of "short-term electoral success" fuelled by a "political debate on immigration ... based on fear and emotion".

In 2013, Britain received £1.45 billion of European Union funding for research and development. Borsiewicz warned that withdrawal of this funding and Britain's isolation from the Eurozone, with which it does over half of its international trade, would require the University of Cambridge to set up science parks in EU countries which receive the funding, such as France and Germany. He emphasised that such proposals were not scaremongering but a sober assessment of the circumstances following British EU withdrawal. During the debate, he stated that such plans were "not a threat", but instead reflected the "reality of the world" as he imagined it if Britain were to withdraw from the European Union in the upcoming referendum.

CUSU in crisis

Varsity News Team

Cambridge University Students' Union has been forced to seek a bailout from the university in June 2015 in order to plug a funding black hole, a document released in September reveals.

A lack of funds left CUSU unable to fulfil its commitments to students without accepting "emergency funding" under "exceptional" circumstances from the university.

The minutes of a meeting of the Council Committee for the

Supervision of the Student Unions, held on 11th May, reveal the full extent of the discrepancy between the forecasted finances and the true state of CUSU's accounts.

The document quotes CUSU as having requested over £100,000 from the university in emergency funding and "to replace... lost income".

The Council Committee, which includes King's First Bursar Dr Keith Carne and Emmanuel Reverend Dr Jeremy Caddick, noted that it would be "difficult" for the Committee to have confidence in future CUSU budgets.

Despite not achieving its 2014/15 income targets, CUSU has still forecast what the Committee calls "ambitious" income targets in its budget for the next academic year, and has refused to apologise for putting services at risk after "commercial services and fundraising... underperformed".

In the meeting in May, CUSU General Manager Mark McCormack, who as The Tab reported controversially enjoyed an 18 per cent pay rise of £6,500 in 2013, stated that CUSU expected a loss of £67,000 by the end of the 2014/15 financial year.

McCormack has yet to reply to Varsity's request for comment.

The failure of the *Guide to Excellence* to generate the extra expected £40,945 made what the Committee called a "significant hole" in CUSU finances, the document reveals. The minutes state that "[t]he income from external publications contracts provided a core part of the funding on which CUSU relied to support its services for students". The minutes also state that CUSU "failed to achieve its targets for [commercial] income in 2014-15".

Continued on page 4

INSIDE:

TERM LISTINGS, FELLOW JAILED, REFUGEE CRISIS, DANIEL ZEICHNER MP

A Cambridge welcome

EDITOR'S NOTE

"In both my first and second years, I always felt a bit lost. There was a distinct sense of having no control over my life. I thought I was missing out."

So reads part of Shona Whatford's recent on-line *Varsity* article on taking control of her life at Cambridge. It is a far more common sentiment than many students admit. And it is a feeling that occasionally finds its way into the pages of this newspaper no less than it creeps up on many students. Amy Hull wonders whether the fact she missed her offer and was still accepted into Cambridge makes her "good enough" (p. 26); Millie Brierley describes how the opportunity to spend time abroad as a third-year MML student will give her a sense of perspective before she tackles finals (p. 24); even Ellie Coote's parody of #adventuregram culture romanticises an environment that one feels one doesn't quite belong to (p. 18). What is it about university life that inspires this level of self-questioning, manifested in that perennial Michaelmas talking topic: FOMO?

Part of it is down to family members. Being told repeatedly by obscure relatives that university is the best time of your life can put so much pressure on you to enjoy every moment that we can set ourselves impossible expectations, and worry when other people seem to breeze through university far more effortlessly than we do. At an internationally renowned, elite institution full of seemingly perfect peers, this pressure can become unbearable.

Perhaps we should follow Shona's advice, and spend less time worrying about what other people are doing and find what it is we enjoy for ourselves.

Though the nights are drawing in and summer is becoming an ever more distant memory, there is no better time to try something new than Michaelmas. If you are a fresher, welcome to the huge range of possibilities on offer. Take a look at our cultural guide to the city and our listings

spread of the term's unmissable events – as the cliché goes, there really is something to suit all tastes.

But don't be deceived into thinking it's all about the first-years. The Freshers' Fair is far more fun as second-, third- or fourth-year, when the novelty of being at university has worn off and you have a reliable bucket-list of things to tick off before you leave.

And that could include this newspaper. This issue sees *Varsity* return to weekly publication for the first time since 2012, presenting more opportunities to get involved as a writer, illustrator, designer, editor or photographer than ever before.

Cambridge is unique, and so is your experience of it. We hope a glimmer of your personal reality will be reflected in our pages throughout your time here.

NEWS

All change on the River Cam

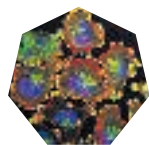
Conservation groups and the city council push for changes affecting rowers and punters (page 7)



SCIENCE

Under the microscope: Cancer

Grace Ding and Petar Mitev take a look at why we get cancer, and what's being done about it (page 13)



INTERVIEW

Professor David Runciman

Just hours after Corbyn's victory, Jack Higgins speaks to the politics professor about the future of Labour (page 14)



COMMENT

College families: dysfunctional?

New columnists Rosie Best and Lana Crowe debate whether the idea behind college families is working (page 17)



FEATURES

Am I good enough?

Amy Hull describes her feelings of inadequacy when she got into Cambridge without meeting her offer (page 28)



REVIEWS

Kurt Vile - b'lieve i'm goin down...

Eddy Wax loves the latest offering from the spaced-out Philadelphian guitarist (page 35)



Varsity Squash

Varsity will be holding a squash for aspiring writers, illustrators and editors on Sunday 11th October at 6:30pm in our offices at 16 Mill Lane.

Come along, or email editor@varsity.co.uk to find out more.

EDITOR Tom Freeman EDITOR@VARSITY.CO.UK **DEPUTY EDITOR** James Sutton DEPUTYEDITOR@VARSITY.CO.UK **MAGAZINE EDITOR** Ellie Deeley MAGAZINE@VARSITY.CO.UK **BUSINESS MANAGER** Mark Curtis BUSINESS@VARSITY.CO.UK **SENIOR PRODUCTION EDITOR** Daniella Mae Briscoe-Peaple PRODUCTION@VARSITY.CO.UK **NEWS EDITORS** Tom Wilson (Senior), Joe Robinson & Jack Higgins (Deputy) NEWS@VARSITY.CO.UK **COLUMNS EDITOR** Bret Cameron COLUMNS@VARSITY.CO.UK **INVESTIGATIONS EDITORS** Julius Haswell & Dermot Trainor (Deputy) INVESTIGATIONS@VARSITY.CO.UK **COMMENT EDITORS** Noa Lessof Gendler (Senior), Nancy Hine, Husna Rizvi & Imogen Shaw COMMENT@VARSITY.CO.UK **SCIENCE EDITORS** Georgi Ruzinov & Saeed Kayhanian SCIENCE@VARSITY.CO.UK **FEATURES EDITORS** Tom Wheeldon & Finny Taylor FEATURES@VARSITY.CO.UK **CULTURE EDITORS** Emily Bailey-Page & Shefali Kharabanda CULTURE@VARSITY.CO.UK **THEATRE EDITORS** Jonathan Shamir & Sarah-Jane Tollan THEATRE@VARSITY.CO.UK **FASHION EDITORS** Meg Honigmann & Hannah Parlett FASHION@VARSITY.CO.UK **REVIEWS EDITOR** Amelia Tudhope REVIEWS@VARSITY.CO.UK **SPORT EDITORS** Katie Hurst & Angus Satow SPORT@VARSITY.CO.UK **INTERVIEWS EDITORS** Eddy Wax & Naomi Obeng INTERVIEWS@VARSITY.CO.UK **ONLINE EDITORS** Luisa Callander & Ellie Matthews **CHIEF SUB-EDITOR** Eliza Jones **PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR** Simon Lock PHOTOS@VARSITY.CO.UK **ILLUSTRATORS** Meggie Fairclough, Ben Waters, Daniella Mae Briscoe-Peaple **VARSITY BOARD** Dr Michael Franklin (Chairman), Prof. Peter Robinson, Dr Tim Harris, Michael Derringer, Michael Curtis, Talia Zybutz (VarSoc President), Tom Freeman, James Sutton, Ellie Deeley



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Wolfson fellow jailed for financial fraud

Keir Baker

Senior News Correspondent

A fellow of Wolfson College has been jailed for fraud after stealing almost £240,000 destined for research.

By forging names and signatures, Dr David Barrowclough, 48, manipulated the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) into giving him money reserved for providing financial support to archaeological projects.

Dr Barrowclough, who pleaded not guilty to the charges, used the money to help pay for premium bond investments, to pay off his mortgage and to purchase a brand new Italian sports car, all while maintaining the pretence that the funding was going towards fake projects in Preston, Winslow, Pendleton and Ely.

Having begun the scheme in 2005, Dr Barrowclough continued to receive unwarranted payments from the HLF up until 2013.

Suspensions about the legitimacy of his activities were not raised until as late as 2012, when a misaddressed letter detailing an £18,500 payment to Ely museum for a project about which no staff members had heard found its way to the museum's confused curator.

Dr Barrowclough, a former undergraduate at Wolfson where he studied Archaeology and Anthropology, had abused his position as a board trustee at the museum by claiming the money was required for an 'Origins of Ely' project. Upon confrontation in a

board meeting, Dr Barrowclough rebutted any accusations of dishonesty; Judge Peter Murphy heard that he had claimed the money was not for personal gain.

But prosecuting counsel Luke Blackburn suggested otherwise, calling Dr Barrowclough's actions "an abuse of his position... and a sophisticated offence for which there was significant planning".

Judge Murphy agreed, sentencing the academic, whose interests revolve around the long-term cultural developments of North West England and lowland East Anglia, to six years in prison. Having heard all the evidence, he described the guilty verdict as "more than justified in light of the evidence."

Judge Murphy also added that if the letter intended for Dr Barrowclough had not been sent to the wrong address, then the amount the Don manipulated away from the HLF could have been considerably larger.

Despite having already paid back over £70,000, the fellow could also face further financial penalty, as HLF announced that they would be seeking reimbursement of the money through legal means "where it is cost-effective to do so".

Judge Murphy's court also heard further revelations regarding Dr Barrowclough's past criminal behaviour that he had concealed from Wolfson College upon applying for the job; no declaration of past criminal convictions was required during the application process, which asked



Barrowclough faced eight charges of fraud and one of deception after taking almost £240,000

interested applicants simply for a copy of their CV and an accompanying covering letter.

Unbeknownst to college officials, in November 1997, Dr Barrowclough had been convicted for 12 counts of theft, sentenced to four years in prison and struck off as a solicitor.

Further information which came

to light during court proceedings included Dr Barrowclough's use of antidepressant medication and a past attempt to commit suicide.

Prosecuting, Mr Blackburn explained that it would have been "very unlikely he would have got any of these positions had [the college] known," a suggestion substantiated by

the removal of Dr Barrowclough's online space on Wolfson's website.

This is not the only recent example of fraud at Cambridge college. Earlier this year, a finance officer at Pembroke College was jailed for 30 months after she admitted to stealing almost £300,000 of college funds to fund her online gambling habit.

Graduates' prospects best in a decade

Jack Higgins

Deputy News Editor

Vacancies and budgets have increased at top graduate-recruiting firms, with median starting salaries hitting £30,000 for the first time, a recent study into the market has shown.

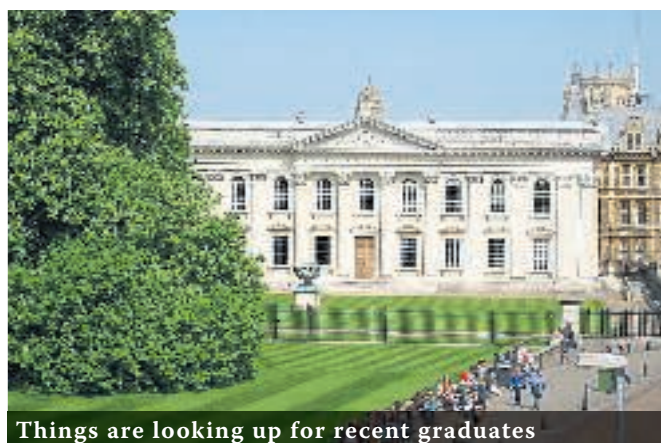
The report, published by High Fliers, found more opportunities this year mean that graduate recruitment has overtaken its pre-recession peak in 2007. It found that in 2015 there will be the highest number of graduate vacancies than at any time in the last decade.

Last year saw an increase of 7.9 per cent in the number of graduates hired by Times Top 100 Graduate Employers – corporations which offer the highest average starting salaries at approximately £30,000.

Entry places will rise further this year by 8.1 per cent, with the country's leading organisations increasing their budgets for graduate recruitment.

The fact that 700 places across all organisations were left unfilled despite high demand is said to indicate a positive environment for those who left university this summer.

The universities most targeted by prospective employers



Things are looking up for recent graduates

are Cambridge, Manchester, Nottingham, Oxford and Warwick, and the largest graduate recruiters over the next year will be Teach First, PricewaterhouseCoopers and Deloitte, each offering over 1,000 places.

Banking and law currently offer the highest median salaries, which hover around the £40,000 mark. However, increasing wages can be found across a range of sectors. More than a quarter of top graduate programmes will offer £35,000 and above.

The highest starting graduate salary is offered by supermarket chain Aldi, who pay an average of £42,000 to their trainee managers, as well as offering an

Audi company car.

Increases in graduate salaries do not reflect increased tuition fees, but are said to demonstrate increased confidence among corporations in the UK's economic recovery.

The report also emphasises how internships and work experience have become vitally important to the recruitment process, with an "unprecedented" 13,049 paid positions available this year.

Nearly half of recruiters surveyed, however, warned that graduates completely lacking work experience were unlikely to obtain a position on their summer programmes, and have "little or no chance" of receiving a job offer.

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CUSU requests “significant” bailout from uni

Continued from front page

If the university had not intervened, CUSU may have had to compromise the services it provides, including the second Student Advice Service officer who CUSU has been paying from its own funds, in order to “reduce its expenditure and protect its position in the first half of the year”.

The Committee, reflecting on the £40,945 rescue package CUSU had received from the university to keep services afloat, was keen to emphasise that they would not subsidise the failure of future CUSU commercial projects.

The minutes noted that its “support for this request should be regarded as exceptional” and that it “would not expect to support any application for emergency funding in the event that CUSU’s commercial ventures failed to achieve the anticipated levels of income”.

In response, CUSU President Priscilla Mensah told *Varsity* that CUSU had just “finished its fourth year in surplus”, with money which went into CUSU reserves providing a “pre-emptive financial buffer”.

This is corroborated by the publicly available CUSU accounts submitted to the Charity Commission, the last of which, dated 30th June 2014, shows reserves rising from £350,194 in 2013 to £376,832 in 2014.

However, despite these surpluses, the minutes of the Council Committee meeting also reported that CUSU, when asked if they had considered a loan, claimed that they had, but “further thought would need to be given to whether it would be possible to repay it”.

The Committee was also highly sceptical of CUSU’s “ambitious” plans for 2015/16, given that it had projected an income for this academic year greater than the missed targets for 2014/15.

This led the Committee to express doubts about whether CUSU could achieve its expected income. If it did not, the Committee stated that it would be “difficult” to have confidence in future CUSU budgets.

It also questioned whether the CUSU Board of Trustees, part of the

charity’s administrative apparatus, “could be confident of CUSU achieving the forecast surplus” for the next year.

A university spokesperson did not respond to *Varsity*’s request for assurances that the university would not provide future bailouts for CUSU, stating only that “[t]he university is assisting Cambridge University Students’ Union in considering its financial situation”.

Mensah denied that any “financial mismanagement” had taken place and declined to issue an apology on behalf of CUSU for the situation because CUSU had continued to “contribut[e] to its reserves”.

Despite the minutes referring to CUSU having “failed to achieve its targets for [commercial] income in 2014-15”, she insisted that “[t]he minutes do not say that the publication [the *Guide to Excellence*] failed”.

Though the termination of the *Guide to Excellence* contract produced a “significant hole in the CUSU finances”, Mensah stated that “an opportune moment was presented to discontinue links to the *Guide to Excellence*”.

The *Guide* was discontinued because the publication was not seen as “in line with CUSU’s widening participation efforts”, according to Mensah.

Although the draft 2015/16 budget states that 2014/15 was a “mixed year”

for CUSU, Mensah believes that no damage had been done to CUSU’s “financial reputation”, stating that “CUSU is audited by a reputable auditor from which it receives positive reports”.

However, the minutes of the meeting reported that CUSU had received an unspecified number of complaints relating to the publication.

In addition, the bid of £60,000 to “replace income from the contract for the publication of the *Guide to Excellence*” had been made conditional on the contract for that publication being wound up, in recognition of “the risk to the reputation of the university”.

At the same time, the minutes of the meeting reveal administrative difficulties at the Graduate Union, which operates a shop in addition to organising events.

The Committee noted that in the GU’s draft budget presented to the meeting, expenditure was listed for events without corresponding income.

Furthermore, the figure listed in the budget as being their “shop income” was in fact their gross margin, after taking account of shop expenditure.

This means that the GU mistook gross margin – which represents sales minus the costs of goods sold, divided by sales – for the gross income, which is the total income from the shop.

Khaldoon Bushnaq, Treasurer of

the Graduate Union, is yet to respond for *Varsity*’s request for comment.

The meeting also included discussion of the GU’s strategic plan for the future and its re-registration as a charity with the Charity Commission.

The document reveals how the GU and CUSU intended to continue their collaboration, but that CUSU’s announcement of a merger with the GU had been made “without formal discussion” with the latter.

VC stresses importance of ‘partnership’ in start of term address

Joe Robinson
Deputy News Editor

Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, emphasised the theme of ‘partnership’ in his annual 1st October address at the Senate House on Thursday.

The event, at which university proctors were also elected, marks the first official day of Michaelmas term and offered the Vice-Chancellor an opportunity to reflect on the year that has passed, as well as looking forward to the coming year.

Reflecting on the past academic year, he paid tribute to the way in which the university had adapted to new challenges such as the Office for Fair Access targets for widening participation in admissions.

He noted that the university’s intake was “at its most diverse, with state sector and minority ethnicity admissions at a 30-year high” which had been achieved “without compromising standards”.

Evoking British statesman and political philosopher Edmund Burke, Borysiewicz described how the university strived to serve society as “the most important partnership of all” and highlighted the essential continuity of the university’s efforts to serve “the whole of mankind” in the past, present and future.

The Vice-Chancellor also spoke about partnerships for “knowledge creation”, such as the newly-founded Alan Turing Institute, of which Cambridge is a leading partner alongside Edinburgh, Warwick, UCL and

Oxford.

He addressed partnerships with industry, such as Cambridge’s links to pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca as part of the provision of 80 PhD scholarships and eight clinical lectureships over the next five years.

The address underscored the university’s commitment to international partnerships in order to “jointly tackle some of the major challenges we face”, referring to the ongoing refugee crisis to demonstrate that “there has never been a more vital time for this point to be made”.

“**THE UNIVERSITY’S INTAKE IS AT ITS MOST DIVERSE**”

Borysiewicz referred to the university’s provision of postgraduate scholarships for students from sub-Saharan Africa, claiming that these places constituted an investment in “the leaders of the future – in research, in industry, in government and in civil society”.

He continued: “This is a real investment for the future, and a clear example to me of what partnership is about”.

The Vice-Chancellor also spoke about the importance of philanthropy to the provision of long-term stability in the face of political upheaval in the higher education sector, enabling the university to “tackle the many problems that beset society”.



Cambridge to offer mindfulness course

Peter Lloyd-Williams
Associate News Editor

The University of Cambridge is launching a new study into the effectiveness of mindfulness as a means of preventing depression. Mindfulness is a type of meditation which was originally developed to help patients who suffered with chronic pain conditions, but has since been recognised and clinically proven as a way of helping people deal with depression, anxiety and stress.

From October, undergraduates and postgraduates will be able to register for a free eight week programme called ‘Mindfulness Skills for Students’, which has been adapted from the book *Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World*, written by Mark Williams and Danny Penman.

Students who register will be split into two groups. The first group will receive the course this year, the other group in twelve months’ time. This means that some final year students may not be able to take part in the study if they are randomly placed in the second group.

Participants will be required to attend eight mindfulness sessions, with home reading and practice required as part of the course. Students will be asked to record their experiences through three online questionnaires. Those who take part in the Lent and Easter sessions will also be asked to download a smartphone app, which will send them notifications to record their experiences at certain points over the course of the term. The app will automatically record the physical activity and sleep patterns of participants in order to measure to the extent to which students’ routines are disrupted during exam term.



The mindfulness programme seeks to tackle stress

The programme is part of an academic study being funded by the university’s Vice-Chancellor’s

Endowment Fund. The study is not part of the regular services offered by the University Counselling Service,

but is being rolled out as a part of efforts to improve mental health provision in Cambridge. The University says that this is an opportunity to for students to secure a guaranteed place on a mindfulness course within the next twelve months, which will operate in future with a waiting list.

Regular support will continue to be offered through the University Counselling Service, one of the best funded facilities of its kind in the country. The UCS provides counsellors and mental health experts in addition to the provision made available by colleges, such as nurses and chaplains. In the past year, 1,500 Cambridge students received counselling, which is about one twelfth of the student population. UCS and college services will be unaffected by the study.

It is thought that this new ‘Mindfulness Skills for Students’ programme will be the largest programme of its type in any UK university.



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All change on the River Cam

Proposals to cull swan eggs to manage numbers

Joe Robinson

Deputy News Editor

Plans to kill unborn baby swans in order to control bird numbers and protect punters on the River Cam are under consideration.

The Cam Conservators, the organisation responsible for the management of the River Cam, have developed the proposals after moving swans' nests to other locations failed to adequately control numbers.

This measure followed several aggressive encounters between punters and the Cam's swan population.

One swan, dubbed 'Mr Asbo', had to be moved to a secret location 60 miles away from Cambridge in 2012 following repeated reports of violence against punters.

In 2014 his son, named 'Asboy', appeared to take after his father as he launched a campaign of terror against punters. This year, a young swan nicknamed 'Asbaby' was seen chasing boats and devouring punters' sandwiches during the Easter Bank Holiday.

However, Natural England (NE) have raised concerns about the plans, arguing that the measures have "significant welfare implications".

Now Natural England have argued that 'pricking' or 'egg oiling' as means of killing swan embryos are more humane solutions to the problem of the burgeoning swan population.

NE experts advocate coating the eggs in liquid paraffin, a substance which is harmless to fully grown swans but which blocks the pores of the egg shell and starves the embryo of oxygen. The NE website states the technique is "easy to carry out, 100 per cent effective in preventing hatching and does not adversely affect the

sitting bird".

An alternative method is egg pricking, which has been suggested by government officials who have visited the river. It involves piercing the egg with a pin and moving it around inside the egg rapidly in order to kill the embryo before returning the egg to the nest.

However egg pricking is a riskier strategy than oiling, as the mother is more likely to notice that the eggs are damaged, and may desert the nest and lay another clutch.

Jed Ramsay, River Manager for the Cam Conservators, highlighted the issue of swan violence in a report after meetings with officials from the

“

"I WILL BE WORKING TO COME UP WITH A BETTER SOLUTION"

Cambridge Rowing Association, the Cambridge University Boat Club and Natural England officials.

Earlier this week, Mr Ramsay described how "[k]eeping the balance between use of the river for people and swans is quite a challenge".

He made clear his opposition to egg oiling, adding: "I'm strongly against oiling swans' eggs, and I will be working to come up with a better solution".

John Torlesse, NE's manager for Cambridgeshire, commented: "We have advised the Cam Conservators and rowing clubs that the most effective way of reducing incidents between swans and rowers on race day is to temporarily corral some of the swans on the river".

The Crown retains the right of ownership of all unmarked mute swans in certain stretches of the River Thames.

In addition, it is an offence to injure, take or kill a wild swan under the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is now classed as criminal damage to kill any swans under royal ownership on the Thames.



Life Jackets part of crackdown to improve punt safety

Punters on the River Cam must provide tourists with a safety demonstration similar to those seen on airlines or face a six-month ban from the water, according to new regulations, *writes Joe Robinson*.

Boatmen must be able to perform an 'emergency stop' on the river and are banned from the consumption of drugs or alcohol before working.

They will also be mandated to carry a lantern for dark conditions in order to prevent collisions with other punts, and must also be prepared to jump into the river to rescue any passengers who end up in the water.

Self-hire punts will now be required to display five health and safety signs and to provide life jackets, either as required or upon request.

These provisions follow a crackdown by Cambridge City Council on illegal punters operating out of the slipway at Garret Hostel Lane, which is owned by the council

and is not a recognised punt location. Its use posed both legal concerns and health and safety worries.

Illegal punters were responsible for increased punt congestion on the River Cam, which led to increased waits for punts to get on the river, in turn blocking the busy pedestrian and cycle routes along the river.

Many of these illegal punters, whose services took business away from legitimate punt operators and weakened existing provisions for health and safety, attract customers through promoters on King's Parade, Petty Cury and in the market square.

Their touting tactics have led to complaints from locals, as they are seen to project a poor image of Cambridge to visitors.

These new regulations are intended to remedy this problem and return legitimacy to punt chauffeurs, while protecting members of the public from punters who are

operating outside the law.

Operators must keep accident records open for inspection by Cam Conservators, and any issues could be taken to the police.

Punt companies must have a designated health and safety officer, and the lashing together of punts is banned, except when empty punts are being moved at off-peak times of the day.

Jed Ramsay, River Manager of the Cam Conservators, said: "The revised code of conduct will bring improvements in safety for everyone who enjoys punting".

However, Sam Matthews, operator of the Traditional Punting Company, doubts the effectiveness of the new regulations: "I don't think a new shiny sticker on a chauffeured punt is going to improve the chances of a self-hire novice punting in a straight line, or on the correct side of the river."

Libyan sex-attack soldiers in new asylum row

Tom Wilson

News Editor

Three Libyan soldiers who were jailed after admitting to multiple assaults on women in Cambridge last year are now seeking asylum in the UK.

The attacks, carried out last October on three women near Corn Exchange Street, were carried out by soldiers Mohammed Abdalsalam, Ibrahim Naji El Maarfi and Khaled El Azibi after stealing bikes and cycling 10 miles from Bassingbourn Barracks, where they were being trained.

Two of the men, Abdalsalam and El Maarfi, who also admitted to indecent exposure and threatening behaviour to police respectively, were jailed for 10 months, whilst El Azibi was jailed for 12.

But Cambridgeshire Police have now said that having served their sentences, the men are applying for asylum in the UK.

Although the possible grounds for

asylum have not been released by police, experts say that they could claim that there is a "fear of persecution" as a result of bringing Libya into disrepute.

“

"IT'S A... BLOW TO THOSE WHO HAVE SUFFERED PRETTY HORRIBLE ATTACKS"

The move has been met with dismay from one of the three victims. Solicitor Richard Scorer said: "It's difficult enough to recover from a situation where you're set upon by a stranger and sexually assaulted."

"But if you have to do that in the knowledge that that person has now come to this country and is trying to build a life here, I think that is very,



The three men were jailed following the attacks last October

very, very difficult to deal with, and completely wrong and unacceptable.

"I think it's a breach of their human rights and really we can't allow this to happen."

Cambridge Labour MP, Daniel Zeichner, has also expressed concern. Speaking to BBC News, Zeichner said: "Most people would be astonished

that people who committed sex crimes be rewarded for it. It's a pretty bitter blow to those who have suffered pretty horrible attacks."

However he also added: "Everyone has the right to be treated the proper way," while attacking the Ministry of Defence for the "appalling mess" that led to the attacks

being committed.

The Home Office, although saying it would not respond to individual cases, said that those from abroad who break British laws "should be removed from the country at the earliest opportunity".

The controversy comes after a string of attacks in Cambridge last October that made national headlines, following which two other Bassingbourn soldiers, Moktar Ali Saad Mahmoud and Ibrahim Abugtila, were jailed for 12 years for the rape of a man in his 20s on Christ's Pieces.

The attacks resulted in the group of 300 Libyan soldiers training at the barracks being sent home, and plans to train up to 2,000 Libyan soldiers in Cambridgeshire over the course of 15 months being scrapped.

The soldiers were being trained with the ultimate aim of being sent back to Libya to support the new regime, following the fall of Muammar Gaddafi during the Arab Spring in 2011.

Building delays cause disruption at Fitz

James Sutton
News Correspondent

Refurbishment of an accommodation block for incoming freshers at Fitzwilliam College has caused disruption, as returning second-, third- and fourth-year students are being asked to share rooms in an effort to temporarily accommodate the new arrivals.

In an email sent to returning students, the Senior Tutor has requested that students with rooms deemed large enough to be 'twin rooms' volunteer to share with a friend, so that freshers who would have been housed in the block undergoing refurbishment can take up the empty rooms.

The college insist that the move is "temporary", citing delays with the building work which could mean that the redeveloped block is not ready until week two or three of the new term, despite the work having begun in June.

JCR President Alex Cicale, speaking on behalf of the executive committee, stressed that the work is "in its final stages", although at the time of publication wires were still visible from the outside of the building, suggesting that the electrics, redecoration and possibly more remain uncompleted.

The contract the builders signed with the college includes penalties for late completion of the work.

“

“CHOOSING TO SHARE WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO”

The returning students affected by the move are due to be reimbursed by the college, and alternative arrangements for storage will be made.

For Cicale, the fact that the college has now managed to secure enough volunteers to house the displaced freshers indicates that "many students sympathise with the unfortunate nature of the situation, and believe that the deal being offered is fair."

One third-year student who has volunteered to share a room describes how she was "very worried" when she first received the request from college, "especially given the short time-frame that we were given to make a decision."

However, she says that "choosing to share was the right thing to do given I am already settled into college life,

and the incoming freshers are not."

The room sharing plan was developed through discussions between the college and members of the JCR in early September as a contingency against delays. Conscious that the disruption will occur within the important first few weeks for the new arrivals, the JCR has "tailored its entire Freshers' Week programme to this situation," but denies that the affected freshers may struggle to integrate with their peers as a result, on the grounds that "a divide between years and cohorts within the Fitz community simply does not exist."

Cicale claims the planned move will minimise the disturbance to both freshers and returning students, ensuring that relocated second-, third- and fourth-year students will remain close to their friends, while displaced freshers will be within walking distance of the rest of their year group.

The redevelopment of the accommodation blocks – originally designed by Sir Denys Lasdun whose works include the National Theatre, which was famously compared to a nuclear power station by Prince Charles – is the latest in a series of significant changes.

Work began last summer, and some of the college's squash courts have already been converted into new gym facilities. Major internal remodelling of the accommodation has taken place since June, with only the shell of the Lasdun design remaining in the new layout for the first of several freshers' blocks.

Architects RH Partnership, who recently finished an extension of the



Building works continue in the race to get the rooms ready

Møller Centre at Churchill College and are behind the ongoing construction of postgraduate accommodation on the North West Cambridge Site, are behind the project, and aim to bring the quality of the accommodation into line with the college's newer blocks. The building work will create new common rooms and kitchen areas, as well as more spacious wheelchair accessible ensuite rooms, integrating disabled freshers with the rest of their cohort for the first time.

The same firm is also involved in a proposal to extend The Grove, the Grade II-listed former home of Charles Darwin's widow, which is within the college grounds. The plans, which have not yet been approved by

the local authorities, include a 'garden pavilion' which will contain a lounge, meeting room and reception room for the college's postgraduate students.

The heritage report submitted to planning officials describes how the proposed extension's contemporary design will "distinguish this new element from the main building of The Grove", although Cicale insists that the design put forward for planning permission is a set of "extremely early-stage proposals."

According to the report, the expansion of the postgraduate community has made the extension a necessity, and Cicale adds that it is "important that both the JCR and MCR have their own spaces."

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Cambridge unites to support refugees

Joe Robinson

Deputy News Editor

Both Cambridge City Council and college JCRs will be dedicating time and resources to enable Cambridge to support refugees fleeing from violence and persecution in the Middle East.

Councillor Lewis Herbert, Chair of Cambridge City Council, announced that the council intended to play the fullest part possible in helping to re-settle Syrian refugees in Cambridge.

He claimed that while the council could not yet commit to a specific number of refugees, it was necessary to consult with local organisations and community foundations “to ensure that we have the right programme in place that meets the specific needs of the refugees”.

In particular, Cllr Herbert highlighted the need to ensure proper provision of services such as access to school places, educational support, in addition to health and social care. He stressed the need for a “planned approach”, with groups arriving “in phases”, in order to ensure the gradual introduction of refugees into the Cambridge community.

He highlighted the diversion of the foreign aid budget to fund local services as being crucial to the sustainability of public services under increased usage, noting that “in the first year central government will meet the cost of the arrivals in terms of integration support, health and education costs and staffing to cover administration”.



Support for the plight of the refugees has been evident in protests across the country

Cllr Herbert also praised the willingness of the Cambridge community to be involved with helping refugees. He said that the council “look[s] forward to working together [with the people of Cambridge] to achieve a warm welcome for any new arrivals”.

Eddie Stadnik, the CEO of

Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum, said: “Cambridge has a long history of welcoming those who have had to flee persecution and intolerance from around the world.”

“This has also ultimately contributed immensely to our society.”

College JCRs from St John’s and

Emmanuel have also organised a collection of donations for those living in refugee camps in Calais.

College members are being asked to donate whatever items they can, including clothes, blankets and toiletries to St John’s JCR during the first two weeks of Michaelmas Term.

A list of items most needed can be found on the CalAid website, in addition to a Facebook event entitled ‘Calais - St John’s and Emmanuel College Collection’.

It lists the items most in need as including men’s trainers, tents, and travelling bags.

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NEWS IN

BRIEF



Cambridge engineer takes aim in forgery “arms race”

A Cambridge engineer has devised a new method to prevent counterfeiting, a crime which costs businesses worldwide an estimated £1.1 trillion per year. Dr Damian Gardiner has spent 10 years developing a unique liquid crystal substance called Illumink which can be applied to any valuable product targeted by forgers, including banknotes, DVDs and pills.



Ousu in Freshers' Fair fees row

Although not on the same scale as CUSU's financial woes, the Oxford University Students' Union has drawn criticism online for their policy of charging student societies, regardless of size, upwards of £40 for a stall at the Freshers' Fair.



Groundbreaking: The Vice-Chancellor cuts the topsoil on the Storey's Field phase of the North West Cambridge Development on Tuesday

Daniel Zeichner MP: five months on

Harry Curtis

Senior News Correspondent

Nearly five months have passed since Cambridge returned perennial parliamentary candidate Daniel Zeichner as its MP.

Standing for parliament for the fifth time, the former councillor ousted Liberal Democrat Julian Huppert with a majority of just 599 votes.

With his career in the Commons off to a start at last, it would be hard to imagine a more eventful first few months as a Labour MP.

There is, of course, a larger story to tell about the Labour Party's summer, but it is perhaps not surprising that the newly-elected Zeichner has had more than just a cameo role, given that the party seems to be trying to cut ties with the Blair-Brown years.

In July, the Cambridge MP was one of the 48 Labour MPs to vote against the government's Welfare Reform Bill, defying acting leader Harriet Harman's order to abstain.

Reflecting on the vote, he called the government's proposals “unfair” and “economically unsound”, saying they would “penalise low paid people living and working in high-cost cities like Cambridge.”

Among the other Labour rebels that day was Jeremy Corbyn, at that time still something of a fringe figure. In the leadership contest of which Corbyn eventually emerged the victor, Zeichner backed the then Shadow Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper.

Unlike Cooper, however, he remained open to a front-bench role in a Corbyn-led party. Now a Shadow Transport Minister, he was enthusiastic about Labour's decision, saying: “I think the country's looking for something different, looking for a change.”

When he was first chosen as Labour's candidate for Cambridge in 2006, Zeichner described himself as “socialist in a modern context”, and would certainly appear to be a more natural ally for Corbyn than many within the current Parliamentary Labour Party.

Despite this, Zeichner was surprised when the new leader offered him a portfolio encompassing cycling, infrastructure and public transport in mid-September, saying he “wasn't expecting it,” but nonetheless welcomed the “fantastic opportunity.”

The new Shadow Transport Minister hopes to use his position to press the government towards the re-regulation of bus services, having previously identified transport as one of “the big challenges facing Cambridge” following his election.

Never too far away from the frontline of Labour's leftwards shift, Zeichner used Jeremy Corbyn's eagerly anticipated

first PMQs on 16th September to question David Cameron over NHS funding.

Zeichner asked when the Prime Minister was going to deliver on his promise of an extra £8 billion of funding, saying that the resignation of Addenbrooke's chief executive Keith McNeil was at least in part symptomatic of the “financial crisis that is engulfing our health service”.

Outside the House of Commons, Zeichner lauded both Dr McNeil and the staff of Addenbrooke's Hospital, attributing the “basic responsibility” for the former's resignation to financial pressure being put on the NHS by the government.

This was not the only occasion in his first few months as an MP that Zeichner has directly criticised what he has perceived to be serious government failings.

Zeichner recently took Armed Forces Minister Penny Mordaunt to task over issues surrounding the stationing of Libyan personnel at Basingbourn Barracks, 10.6 miles from the city. This came after two Libyan soldiers were charged with the rape of a man on Christ's Pieces last November.

He particularly criticised the lack of transparency from the government over the end

of a policy which required Libyan personnel to be supervised outside the barracks, and called for the Ministry of Defence to apologise to the people of Cambridge for their “negligence”.

The King's College alumnus also invoked his constituents during the Budget debate at the start of July as he took issue with George Osborne's plan to remove maintenance grants.

“

“THE COUNTRY'S LOOKING FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT”

“The Chancellor boasted yesterday that students from poorer backgrounds had not been put off going to university, but as honourable members have pointed out, that was partly because these maintenance grants existed,” he said to an uncrowded House of Commons.

Among other issues that have received Zeichner's attention this summer are what he called the “appalling housing crisis” in Cambridge, the campaign to lower the voting age to sixteen and the current refugee crisis in Europe.

The Cambridge MP is the primary sponsor of a motion that calls for the government to accept “many more thousands of genuine and desperate refugees” and proposes a voluntary register of homes willing to accommodate them.



PETER LLOYD-WILLIAMS

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Decanting the chemistry of wine

Madeline Kavanagh hits the bottle, for science, at the Cambridge Alumni Festival

"Oakey, with a long finish", "full-bodied, with fruity flavours", and "richly coloured with 'good legs'". With comments like these you could be forgiven for thinking you were at any generic wine tasting event, right? Wrong. When safety goggles and lasers appear, and terms such as anthocyanins, malic acid and light-scattering start getting bandied about without anyone blinking an eye, something must be up.

The room was full; tastebuds expectant; shining glasses waited to be filled

with mysterious liquids from masked bottles. The three 'expert' wine connoisseurs readied themselves at the front of the room, checking over their revision notes one final time, while some less experienced guests sipped on tannin-rich tea before the tasting commenced. This was no average wine tasting event: this was the Cambridge Alumni Festival "Call My Bluff" Wine Tasting extravaganza! Four rounds of wine tasting, country-of-origin identification and a factual quiz, all

guided by an expert panel from the Department of Chemistry comprised of the current Head of Department Professor Daan Frenkel, Professor of atmospheric chemistry John Pyle, and materials chemist Dr Silvia Vignolini.

The experts provided entertaining commentary – although possibly of doubtful accuracy – throughout the evening, with Professor Frenkel demonstrating the sometimes spurious relationship between observations and deductions, remarking in Round

One that as the wine had "no reflection" it must "come from the country of Dracula". Furthermore, supporting Frenkel's optical data, a wine sporting "the opulent aroma that the Prince of Darkness loves so much" led to the conclusion that the mystery wine could only be a Pinot Grigio from the Carpathian mountains.

The incoming Head of Department, Professor Pyle, took a rather more sophisticated approach when drawing his conclusions, although hardly any

more scientifically robust. Brandishing red, blue and green lasers – while appropriately attired in safety spectacles of course – Pyle concluded from the different levels of light absorption that the wine must contain a high proportion of sulphites and was thus likely to be of low quality. Sulphites, like sulfur dioxide, are chemicals that are produced naturally by yeast during the wine fermentation process, but they are also typically added to wines to kill bacteria, to improve shelf life, and to prevent oxidative processes that cause discolouration. A range of other valuable scientific techniques were demonstrated throughout the evening, including Dr Vignolini's innovative use of pH indicator strips to assess the acidity of the sample, and more modern technologies, such as various smartphone apps to unsuccessfully "research" the answer.

Guests were educated throughout the event on the numerous finer points by which chemistry impacts wine production. From the overall flavour and palate of a wine, which is predominately influenced by the balance of sugars (glucose and fructose), acids (malic, tartaric and lactic) and organic compounds (called phenols) to the various esters, terpenes and other volatile aromatics which contribute to the aroma of a wine. Other factors include the effects of atmospheric chemistry and climate change on grape maturation, the fine balance that exists between "good" microbes (like the yeast required for fermentation or the *Botrytis* fungi responsible for giving a sauternes its sweetness) and pests (such as the dreaded grape blight, caused by the *Phylloxera vastatrix* aphid, which threatened to wipe out the French wine industry in the mid-19th century).

As the evening drew to a close and the teams jostled for top-spot on the score-board, bonus points were awarded for completing "feedback" questionnaires. The 100 per cent return rate clearly demonstrated that striving for a first is not a characteristic Cambridge graduates grow out of. So, with the sun setting, the bottles rapidly emptied, and our experts' ability to identify grape varieties diminishing at the same rate, it's clear that the success of this first-time event for the Cambridge Alumni Festival will surely lead to a repeat performance. Perhaps it's no coincidence that chemistry fellows are over-represented amongst college wine stewards!

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Under the microscope: Cancer

Why do we get cancer?

Grace Ding

Science Correspondent

When I asked my friends studying arts subjects about their understanding of cancer, “a mutated cell” was a common response, beyond which they admitted knowing very little about the science behind the disease. The majority of cancerous tumours do indeed originate from a single mutant cell that, as a result of changes to its DNA known as ‘mutations’, has increased cell division and growth.

The simplest of mutations can arise during DNA replication, with a change in a single ‘letter’ of DNA’s four-letter code. A change in this sequence may result in a non-functional protein being produced when the cells ‘read’ the altered DNA code. If the affected protein is involved in regulating cell division, then this process can become uncontrolled, resulting in the cell dividing more often than it should. This leads to the development of a tumour. Tumours that can spread to surrounding tissues are classed as ‘malignant’.

Mutations occur frequently in our DNA; they are an unavoidable consequence of the limitations in the accuracy of our DNA replication mechanisms. It has been estimated that during a typical human lifetime, mutations will have occurred on 10 billion separate occasions in each of our genes. When confronted with a figure that large, it’s a wonder the incidence of cancer isn’t much higher. This is because, thankfully, most mutations are harmless and there is an extensive network of DNA checking and repair mechanisms in place to minimise the risk of harmful mutations remaining in the code. A cell can even commit

suicide (a process known as apoptosis) when the DNA damage becomes too great to repair.

Tumours will only form following a very specific sequence of mutations; a single mutation alone is insufficient to cause a cancer. These mutations have to occur within sections of DNA that regulate cell proliferation. As mutations arise randomly, only a small minority of them are potentially cancerous. However, if we all lived for an infinite length of time, everyone would inevitably develop a cancer of some sort. DNA replication is not 100 per cent accurate and it is only a matter of time before a mistake occurs in a gene that regulates division and growth, and that’s why cancer is more widespread among the elderly.

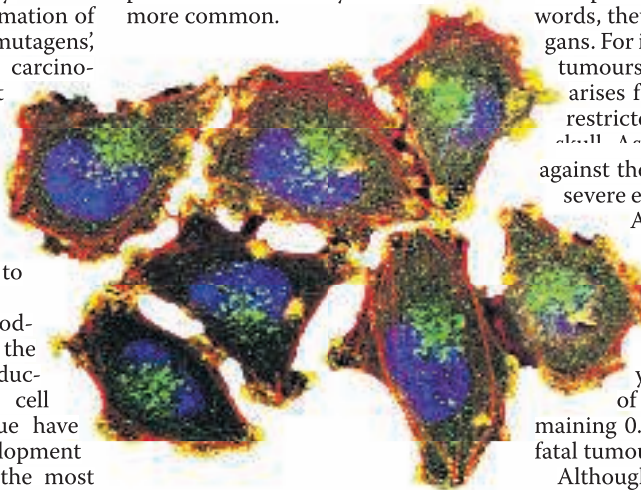
Factors promoting the formation of mutations are known as ‘mutagens’, and many of these are also carcinogenic. Tobacco smoke, burnt toast and sunlight are all known to contain carcinogens. Prolonged or repeated exposure to these substances increases the risk of certain cancers as they induce changes that cause damage to DNA.

Intrinsic aspects of our bodily processes can also elevate the risk of cancer. Female reproductive hormones controlling cell proliferation in breast tissue have been linked to the development of breast cancer. Some of the most powerful carcinogens are chemically inert when they enter the body and are converted to a mutagenic form by metabolic processes. A common carcinogen activated in this way is benzo(a)pyrene, one of the most dangerous chemicals in tobacco smoke.

Aside from lifestyle factors, our genetics also influence our susceptibility to specific cancers. Angelina Jolie opted for a double mastectomy after testing positive for a mutant form of the

BRCA1 gene. Carriers of the mutant form of this gene will produce less or none of the protein aiding the repair of DNA damage. As a result, carriers will accumulate mutations more rapidly, significantly increasing their risk of developing certain cancers. Because we inherit our genes (including the potential for mutations) from our parents, our risk of developing certain types of cancer may depend upon which ethnic group we are born into, even once environmental and lifestyle factors have been taken into account.

In a way, cancer is a natural by-product of ageing, accelerated by various factors that are still not fully understood. But as populations worldwide continue to age rapidly, this complex disease will sadly become more common.



My take on cancer

Petar Mitev

Science Correspondent

There is a slight disagreement among scientists regarding the definition of cancer, in part due to the fact that cancer is not a single disease. Rather, the

term is a catch-all definition applied to more than 200 different diseases arising as a result of more than 30,000 different mutations. That said, a good working definition is that cancer is “a group of diseases generally characterised by genomic instability and uncontrolled cell division leading to invasion of surrounding tissue.”

The majority of tumours, especially in their early stages, are forced to grow in suboptimal conditions; they have restricted access to certain nutrients. To remedy this, the growing tumour re-routes surrounding blood vessels to gain access to nutrients, a process referred to as ‘angiogenesis’. Tumours are not aggressively destructive by nature; the main problem they cause is a simple matter of logistics. In other words, they push other tissues and organs. For instance, in the case of brain tumours, the pathological problem arises from the fact that there is a restricted amount of space in the skull. As a tumour grows, it pushes against the brain until the pressure is severe enough to affect its function.

A benign tumour of this sort can simply be removed. Malignant tumours, however, invade and grow, spreading to other organs. As a result, even if you remove 99.9 per cent of the cancerous cells, the remaining 0.1 per cent can spawn new, fatal tumours.

Although this view of what we know about cancer and its voracity may seem daunting, the fact that we are starting to understand cancer ever more profoundly means that we are able to open hitherto inaccessible therapeutic avenues, even if we are quite far from comprehending all of its complexities. I spent a year at the Institute of Cancer Research being frustrated and challenged like never before, but also experiencing profound satisfaction from my work. I was examining the role of

a protein called NFκB-1 in the laboratory of Dr Chris Bakal. The protein has recently been linked to the necessary regulation of oxidative stress (a situation where the body is unable to detoxify the effect of free radicals), the failure of which can produce various pathological consequences, including cancer.

What makes Bakal’s lab different from others in Cambridge and across Europe is the fact that it possesses two high-powered Opera microscopes. When looking at a particular protein, the cell in question can be ‘stained’ with fluorescent antibodies which target a specific protein. The problem one faces in most labs is that if you want to look at “stained” cells, ordinary microscopes let you only look at a few cells at a time, which makes population level observations a laborious task, and rarely allows for computer-based quantification of certain features. However, with these top-of-the-range microscopes, it is possible to acquire more than 50,000 images within a matter of hours. Each day, one can work with a population of a few thousand cells for each experimental condition, and thereby gain a much clearer insight into the way in which proteins such as NFκB-1 can influence the development of the wider cancerous body. In combination with revolutionary software, also employed in the lab, it is possible to quantify a number of features including nuclear area and roundness, number and relative distribution of mitochondria, as well as measuring the intensity of the fluorescent signal for any given protein. This makes findings not only easy to acquire, but also statistically robust.

While my findings regarding the importance of NFκB-1 are unlikely to play a direct role in the development of a novel cancer drug in the near future, I hope they will one day turn out to be a piece, however minor, of the puzzle that is the cure for cancer.

Wearable tech: feelgood or to be feared?



TECHWATCH
WITH
CHARLOTTE GIFFORD

Technology increasingly allows us to narcissistically document every aspect of our lives. Fitness-trackers like FitBit and Basis are taking this to a new extreme. With these devices, we can log how many hours we’ve slept, how many steps we’ve walked, as well as our blood pressure, stress level and skin temperature. It seems we may

soon be monitoring our biological clock as obsessively as we check Facebook.

And wearables are only getting weirder. Bondara’s SexFit is the world’s first sexual fitness tracker, measuring the number of calories you burn, as well as thrusts per minute. You can then share this information on social media, for anyone who’s ever thought: “I want the world to know how peak my performance was there.” And then there’s Nixie, perhaps the most extreme selfie-taking invention yet. A wrist-mounted drone with a camera that leaps into the air to grab your action selfie won’t make you look like a pretentious twat at all.

But perhaps wearable technology’s most revolutionary development is in its potential to measure our moods.

I doubt I’m the only one who bought a mood ring as a child – but for anyone who’s never heard of them, mood rings are novelty gifts that claim to change colour depending on your mood. Mine was dark purple, and stayed dark purple whenever I wore it. This apparently meant that I was constantly feeling “mysterious”. Since I’d been expecting my ring to display a whole spectrum of colours

throughout the day, this was a bit of a let-down, but otherwise I was pretty satisfied with its assessment. Looking back, I now realise that ten-year-old me probably wasn’t all that dark and elusive, and it was only purple because it cost me about one quid. But jewellery and headgear that change colour to tell you your mood are becoming increasingly intelligent. For example, fashion company The Unseen have created a jewelled headdress that lights up as it detects changes in your brain activity. These gadgets come at a much heavier price than the old mood rings, but with good reason, as they use biometric sensors to measure your emotional state.

Companies claim these inventions will help people to increase their self-awareness. But many are taking this even further, contemplating the uses of being able to identify each other’s emotions from these new devices. Mindshare is one such company interested in using wearables as a marketing tool. The thinking behind this is that if advertisers knew when hearts were racing and when consumers were at their happiest, then in theory they could know when consumers would be most likely to buy, and what

they’d be most interested in buying. Creepy, right? I mean, there’s a lot of things you think about buying that you don’t necessarily want popping up on TV all the time. Imagine being the dad of a teenage girl in a world of targeted advertising, and having to awkwardly work out for yourself why pregnancy tests keep coming up in the ad breaks.

Of course, people would have to opt in to having their data shared in the first place. But some argue that we’re more willing to do this than we realise. Scrolling through any form of social media serves as a reminder that we’re not exactly shy about posting emotional statuses, so would broadcasting the readings from our wearable tech really be so different?

If monitoring and uploading moods does catch on, we could be made constantly aware of how others are really feeling. You might be the one turned down at a job interview on the basis of having a higher stress response than your rivals. Arguments might be a lot more frequent. Dating agencies could utilise it pretty well, matching partners based on their temperaments – though, admittedly, that might kill romance stone dead.

Wearables are poised to take over as the latest technological trend. But we should be wary about what exactly we’re strapping onto our wrists. Privacy issues aside, I personally worry a bit about them malfunctioning. Monitoring bodily functions sounds like it could lead to a few unnecessary panic attacks of thinking “Is this the end?” every time your heart rate kicks up for no apparent reason. For the most part, a lot of us would find them hugely beneficial, but will get no closer to buying one until the price drops and wearables become, well, a little more wearable. As things stand, it’s unfortunately a little difficult to own a smartwatch without looking like a total knob.



VARSlTY INTRODUCING: Rrose Sélavy

The third-year MML student (real name Jade Cuttle) has sung on BBC Radio, drawing inspiration from the modernist French paper she studied last year.

Can you explain your pseudonym Rrose Sélavy? What does it mean?

When writing my dissertation on Surrealism last year I stumbled across a Robert Desnos poem called 'Rrose Sélavy etc'. It is a made-up French

name which is a pun that can be pronounced in different ways to give different meanings. It sounds like "Eros, c'est la vie" but could also be "Rrose sait la vie". Though the name is unique, ironically I keep having to type the word 'cliché' into Word so I can access the 'é' accent.

How would you describe your music?

Poetic-folk, an artistic experiment

which translates poetry into musical performance. I aim to explore how our human world weaves into the natural one. For example, I sing about a shard of ice lodged in the crack of a mountainside wishing it was as free as the sea, lamenting that the sky spat it out and will not take it back.

Your songs are also heavily influenced by the modernist French paper you studied in second-year, which includes writers like Samuel Beckett and New Wave cinema.

That's right. I wrote a song inspired by Agnès Varda's film *La Pointe Courte* which we studied last year. In one scene the slats of a rotting ship seem to reflect the internal landscape of two characters. One can imagine the rib-like ship as the chest of the couple whose love has turned stale. It's like they're perched inside their own rotting ribcage, unable to escape their emptiness.

Was it difficult to balance work with making music last year?

I wrote the song during the solitary confinement stage of the dissertation deadline, barely leaving my room for the first week of Lent. I lived on tins and nearly went insane but at least the dissertation went well! On another

dissertation deadline I attempted to artistically turn all the furniture in my room upside down. It didn't quite work.

Do you find that being at Cambridge is a help or a hindrance to your creativity?

It certainly impacts my drafting process. Last year, on my bike rides through pretty meadows and a herd of cows heading to lectures from Homerton, I'd make syllabic adjustments to songs, almost always out loud.

I wonder if there's a surrealist element to the way you structure or perform your songs. I've heard of surrealist painters and poets but not singers...

When I started writing I began playing with expectations and testing the limits of traditional songwriting, creating chaos within the constraints by using a mathematically jarring number of lines. I also use an extended poetic-melodic narrative structure that does away with choruses, allowing the song to take charge of itself.

You've got rid of choruses?

Perhaps I see creativity as a

power struggle... Ultimately it's a power struggle against myself. If we question the creative laws we become less subservient as songwriters. I questioned the place of choruses and more often than not found them unconvincing so I ditched them after my debut EP *I Am Like The Tree*.

So how did your music come to be played on BBC Radio?

It was after winning the BBC Proms Poetry Competition, where I was interviewed on Radio 3. I'd written a poem called *The Art of Splinters* which was inspired by Bach's *St John Passion*. After that, I started translating poems into songs which led to BBC Introducing inviting me to play a live session. My next BBC Introducing session, with more of a focus on poetry, is in January.

You played at Homerton May Ball last year and warmed up for Stephen Fry at the Sidney Arts Festival. When can we next see you live in Cambridge?

I'm currently on my year abroad, studying in Paris, but I'll be back for the Gorton Spring Ball and hopefully a May Ball or two in the summer!

Jade was speaking to Eddy Wax

Why Corbyn is not the man to lead Labour

Politics Department head **Professor David Runciman** chews over Jeremy Corbyn's leadership victory with **Jack Higgins**

"We are living in a period where the seemingly impossible is becoming possible."

Three months ago, Cambridge's professor of politics David Runciman may well have laughed if he had heard that Jeremy Corbyn would secure the Labour leadership in a landslide. When we spoke the day after the Islington MP's triumph, it was a reality.

Professor Runciman heads the department of Politics and International Studies, frequently contributes to *The Guardian* and the *London Review of Books*, and has been praised as a writer for his "lucid analysis of very big questions".

"We live in a time where individuals and groups can push more for disruption," he says, citing Syriza's stint in power in Greece. But is this amount of political upheaval good for Corbyn's party?

"Disruption is the last thing Labour needs," he says. "Divided parties do not win. If they can't agree amongst themselves, how can they rule?"

Runciman argues that gaining public support is simple: parties need to display competence, but they can't do that when they're divided and Corbyn faces the challenge of maintaining unity in a party where he has long held a position on the ideological fringe.

So how does he explain the general election, for which he correctly predicted the result?

"2015 was the victory of a more plausible prime minister over a less plausible prime minister."

These concerns over unity and

competence are behind Runciman's belief that Corbyn is likely to do serious damage to the Labour "brand".

Indeed, since we spoke, the Shadow Chancellor has publicly apologised on Question Time for comments about murdering Margaret Thatcher, and Corbyn has become the first Labour leader to score a negative approval rating in his debut poll.

"DISRUPTION IS THE LAST THING LABOUR NEEDS"

But if there are such strong concerns about him as leader, how does Runciman explain the Corbyn's triumph in the leadership election?

"It was an old-fashioned organisational coup," he explains. "People are simply sick of conventional politics. Corbyn articulates a wide range of policies absent from the mainstream."

However, the professor seems keen to stress that connecting with "frustrated individuals" is not enough to get him into Downing Street, noting that Corbyn "at most" has the support of a quarter of the population. Corbyn needs to offer more to the rest of the electorate, especially the elderly who are more inclined towards the Tories.

"Electability is the key feature of politics," he tells me, adding that while Corbyn has indeed got a lot of other praiseworthy things going for

him – his commitment to his values, his personable nature, his links to the grass roots – to place these on a pedestal and ignore how central elections are to politics is "crazy".

"It is wrong to think Corbyn will transform rigid institutional politics and it is hard to see how he could be the person to lead Labour."

When I ask Runciman whether he thinks the Tories have acquired a monopoly on what is politically possible, he is dismissive of such a simplification of public opinion.

"Cameron and Osborne cannot simply colonise the centre-ground and take it over," he argues, believing that while the Conservatives have been successful in their "clever spinning of the truth" in attributing blame to Labour for the financial crisis, such a narrative is not hegemonic. He reminds me that "plenty of people still blame the banks".

I ask Runciman about a recent Andrew Marr article proclaiming the death of the British state. Does he endorse such a view?

"I think Corbyn's election makes it more broken than it was 24 hours ago," he argues. The Islington MP's rise to power could be interpreted as "an advert for seizing the opportunity" that may empower Scottish nationalism. It is no coincidence that talk of a second referendum has been floating around lately.

Runciman isn't convinced that Corbyn could rescue the Union by bringing the Scots back to Labour, describing him as an "incredibly London politician, he is the London politician,

without much appeal to Scotland." What does he mean by this label?

"What I mean is that his policies may only appeal to a few metropolitan areas." He is unsure of how far north Corbyn's appeal can stretch.

When it comes to Scotland's independence, Runciman considers the likelihood of a 'yes' vote in a second referendum "unclear" and believes problems of "institutional reality" such as changing currency significantly weaken the SNP's support.

"CORBYN'S ELECTION MAKES BRITAIN MORE BROKEN THAN IT WAS 24 HOURS AGO"

The greater issue hanging in the air for Runciman is Europe, which he sees as the "key question for British politics". At this point, his voice grows particularly energetic as he seeks to impress upon me what an enormously "pivotal" moment it will be for the UK.

Furthermore, he argues that Tory confidence after UKIP's electoral woes is strongly misplaced, with the referendum offering a "huge opportunity" for UKIP to mobilise their forces and perforate Labour's stronghold of northern England.

Ultimately, however, he doesn't think we should be pessimistic about

the fate of the British state. Runciman thinks that "the break-up of the union isn't the end of the world," and that while the Tories could "easily last 15 years" in power, it is equally true that people soon become sick of those in power.

Runciman calls Corbyn a "megaphone politician", and is highly sceptical as to what impact he can realistically have.

He even mentions that some are calling for Corbyn to announce a second leadership election for 2018. "He can democratise the party, try and change PMQs, bring new ideas in, but also signal long-term stability."

Though he accepts that he would "need to be a hard-nosed politician to do this" he emphasises that Corbyn's ascent to the Labour leadership is proof that "anything's possible".



DAVID RUNCIMAN/DEPT OF POLS

Comment

Cynicism has no place in radical activism



Chris Waugh

If you want something done, do it. Don't sit around complaining

There's a quote from socialist author and journalist Paul Foot which comes to mind whenever I think about campaigns. Foot writes (and I paraphrase): "It is impossible for a radical to be a cynic. A sceptic, perhaps, but a cynic, no." What Foot seems to be saying is it's normal for radicals of all breeds to be pessimistic. Who can blame them? We're trying to change an unfair world and getting abuse for it, but cynicism would suggest we know before we've even set up the Facebook event for that first meeting (inevitably in the Chetwynd Room in Kings), that the project is a failure and we might as well all be playing Candy Crush, rather than trying to sort out absurd archaism that characterises Cambridge.

I bring up Foot's quotation because one of the most common arguments against student radicalism goes as follows: What's the point? We're all only here for three years plus, and we're part of an educational institution which looks at a glacier and says to itself "Ooh, steady on, mate, you're going a bit quick", so what real, palpable impact can we have? There is a sad element of truth in this – student protest groups tend to come and go. I've been at Cambridge since 2009,

and in my time here I've seen great, vibrant radical campaigns spring up, cause a stir and then fall apart. I've been involved in several – inevitably, the driving political force behind these campaigns graduates and then it all falls apart. Also, let's be blunt, political campaigning is exhausting. I fluctuate in my political involvement, mainly because I'm a disabled man and the last time I got too political, some fascists tried to burn my house down (true story).

David Graeber makes the point that all activists go through periods of "semi-retirement." Most do, eventually return to the political fold, but in a context like Cambridge, where campaigns are often driven by a handful of key individuals, a few people taking an understandable step back can cause the whole thing to grind to a halt. A good example was the End Week 5 Blues campaign, an initiative set up to combat poor mental health provisions and campaign for a reading week. I went to several meetings, and it was deeply ironic (though completely understandable) that our campaign to end mental health discrimination lost momentum because everyone got depressed, myself included.

But is cynicism then the right

perspective for these groups? The cynical argument comes before the more annoying argument, which is that Cambridge is totally perfect and people who want to change it are ungrateful/trying to avoid work/Maoist infiltrators (seriously, I've been accused of the latter, but I heard it as Meowist, so spent the rest of the day wondering if cats were out to get us). Everyone will have their own unique experience of this place, but that doesn't erase structural flaws, institutional problems and inequalities. You might love Cambridge from the bottom of your heart, you might have King's Chapel tattooed over your heart, but you can't honestly say that it's perfect. It's an old institution, and like many old institutions, it can lag behind society and what is reasonable.

What is good about campaigns – be it CDE, Cambridge Speaks Its Mind, Whose University – is that they start a conversation, and that in itself is a radical act. And sometimes people listen. The Women's Campaign, for instance, gets a lot of flack, but it has had a palpable impact on Cambridge students' life. Does your college have a decent sexual harassment policy? That was WomCam. Have you walked over Parker's Piece and felt

safer because of the lights? That was WomCam. Welfare-based campaigns like CSIM and WU have caused students to question if their colleges are supporting vulnerable students; Cambridge Defend Education has done exceptional work exposing the real, palpable impact of cuts on university life. The list goes on. It's a hard drag being an activist, but far too often people will claim that campaigns fail because, I don't know, the outcome of that last meeting wasn't full intersectional communism and free fairy cakes for all. Show me one political campaign that achieved its aims overnight. Show me one political campaign that didn't involve long hours of hard work and months, even years, of commitment. In fact, show me anything in life that doesn't require time and energy – the fact that your goals may not be achieved immediately is not an argument against starting, or trying.

So yes, I'm pessimistic, I'm sceptical if change can be achieved. But am I a cynic? No. And neither should you be. If you care, go out, get involved, do your bit. And look after yourself. What you do now will benefit future generations. And that, ultimately, is what matters.

Welfare in Cambridge: a personal account



Hesham Mashhour

It's not a complete catastrophe, but the university still has a way to go

One of the songs in Troye Sivan's new album *WILD* perfectly captures the difficulties some students face when moving away from home to an unfamiliar and seemingly hostile new place. The lyrics tell how Sivan, on the phone with his mum "down to [his] skin and bones" struggles with his new life and finds no one around to confide in.

It's unfortunate how much the song resonates with the experiences of students at Cambridge, but perhaps it's hardly surprising. University is a massive leap for a lot of people, moving away from family and friends, effectively starting afresh without any real support network, can leave students feeling alone and vulnerable. University can also reveal the sort of things that quiet domestic life kept well hidden. As your friends enjoy a sweaty Sunday night at Life or spend it busy in the library, you begin to explode with all your mental health concerns.

My personal experiences of student welfare at Trinity last year were very positive. My tutor was compassionate and understanding. He made himself available whenever necessary, and provided guidance despite his lack of experience (it being his first year as tutor). Meanwhile the college nurse became a kind of friend (she really, really cared, which was great; perhaps what you need most when going through a mental health crisis). Trinity also has a chaplain, and even its own counselor, who are both available to students should they need them.

I also visited the University Counseling Service a few times last year. If you ask around you'll learn how the UCS is a bit hit and miss, and I'm afraid in my case it was mostly 'miss'. My counselor appeared uninterested, and was quick to recommend counseling as potentially harmful for me after our first session. The Senior Mental Health Advisor then saw and assessed me and felt that my counselor had made an error. She recommended I continue counseling with the UCS and assigned me back to my original counselor; the same one who believed I shouldn't receive any counseling. Needless to say, after another session with her I didn't go back to the UCS. It wasn't

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IN OUR SECOND MEETING MY COUNSELOR WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS TO DISCOURAGE ME FROM SEEKING ANOTHER SESSION

because I took a stand – in our second meeting my counselor went to great lengths to discourage me from seeking another session. I was told I should perhaps only book one if I felt things were getting really bad in Easter term.

I'm a realist; I don't think the UCS

could possibly succeed in providing help for every student walking through its doors. However, my experience with the UCS wasn't just unhelpful, but also rather damaging. I walked into my counselor's office feeling rejected and walked out feeling even more rejected. For most of that day I wrongfully doubted the intentions of Trinity's welfare staff, wondering if they really card, thinking that after all "I'm little more than just a burden." The consequences of my thinking could potentially have been catastrophic, had I not pulled myself out of it.

Whilst I've been lucky with my college, having heard stories from other students, there are obvious disparities in welfare provision between colleges. It's a combination of those provisions, the resources available and their general interest in helping their students that sets some colleges apart. I'm certain other colleges have staff who are exceptionally motivated to help, but who are limited by a general lack of resources. The UCS probably faces similar issues, with a lack of resources being compounded by oversubscription. Perhaps the counselor I was assigned isn't a horrible person, just part of the machine trying to do the best she can in a difficult situation. She's probably overworked and jaded; it's hard not to feel jaded when you see so many young people's lives collapse as they fall through the cracks.

Colleges clearly need to raise money to address the lack of resources available for student welfare, but

where will this money come from? Trinity puts great effort into raising money through alumni events over the summer; perhaps other colleges should do the same.

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I CAN'T REMEMBER WHEN I HEARD OF THE UCS BUT IT DEFINITELY WASN'T DURING MY FIRST TERM

In the meantime, it's worth exploring options that don't require additional resources. It's important to identify issues early on before they become difficult to solve. There needs to be more awareness of the services provided. I can't remember when I heard of the UCS, but it definitely wasn't during my first term, and I only heard about our college counselor in my second year. This seems to be a great time to change that, though, with the new wave of incoming Freshers. There is also an awful amount of stigma, which prevents people from discussing their problems with friends or colleagues, which in some cases makes matters worse. Students need to feel that the atmosphere around them is open and understanding, allowing them to speak freely and in as much detail as they wish about their mental health.

Union: Yes or no?

Imogen Shaw

Freshers: unless you caved in to the relentless Facebook promotion more quickly than I did, right now you're probably wondering whether it's worth shelling out nearly two hundred pounds to join the Cambridge Union. You're also probably wondering about a multitude of other things related to starting university, but I don't have the column inches to help with those.

Sticking to the Union, then, I'm going to weigh in with 'probably not, actually'. I personally haven't got my money's worth out of my membership and, especially in my first term, this wasn't for lack of trying. If there's anyone particularly famous – or infamous – scheduled to appear, you can forget about ensuring you're free from 7pm to go and see. If your college isn't central, expect to be clearing your diary from half-four, so you have time to speed-walk into town as well as join the impenetrable queue.

If it's a very popular event, there's still a chance you won't get in and will end up watching it on Livestream with a bunch of people who aren't even members but enjoy the same experience as you for zero cash. If last year was anything to go by, the speakers booked for the initial 'open period' non-members can attend are generally the biggest names of term. If you join after that and anticipate similar going forward, expect to be disappointed.

However, the reason I chose to become a member of the Union had little to do with the speakers and debates on offer. I joined because almost everything advertising Union membership described it as some variant on 'the social hub of Cambridge'.

I know a lot of people who joined for the same reason; it would take an unusual level of confidence for an incoming fresher not to feel even slightly compelled to pay up, when the alternative is apparently exclusion from their university's purported centre of social events.

For some people, perhaps the Union is the social hub of Cambridge. I haven't met these people. Even friends who not only feel their membership was worthwhile, but also take active part in organizing Union events and debates, don't see it as their primary source of social activity or friendship.

If your main concern about not joining the Union is that it will render you friendless and alone of a Thursday evening, whilst the masses flock to hear Lembit Opik *again*, you can rest easy in your bed.

All of that said, there are some of you who will really like the Union. That's great. If you love formal debating, or you're that person who was on every possible secondary school prom committee, I can see it being for you.

Just as you shouldn't feel obliged to join the Union for fear of being left out, if it's something you're happy to spend the money on, don't be scared off by miserly second-years writing articles for student newspapers, or the accusations of elitism that surround most Cambridge institutions.

I don't mean to say accusations of elitism are unimportant or unfounded. But you shouldn't take from them that you should, for whatever reason, discount yourself as someone whose contributions would be welcomed. Finally, those who do decide not to join take note: you can still frequent the Union bar without being a member. They do a really good daiquiri.



Westboro Baptist Church activists campaign against equal marriage

Propaganda lessons from the Westboro Baptist Church



Bret Cameron

Though absurd and hypocritical, the group's hateful song parodies achieve a calculated effect.

There is no message too hateful to become the centrepiece of a catchy pop parody, the Westboro Baptist Church would have you believe. The infamous evangelical group has created more than 150 pop song parodies, focusing on themes of hell-fire, homophobia and divinely-incurred wrath.

No musical territory is sacred to WBC, whose parodies include hymns, Christmas songs, contemporary chart-toppers and old classics. For a group that abhors so much of popular culture, their attempt to reach out by parodying popular music is one that seems very much at odds with their philosophy and message. In fact, they reserve particular venom for the media and celebrity culture; they own a website entitled "God hates the media" and they are regularly seen brandishing signs with the slogan "God hates your stars". It is in regards to the media, that, to me, the actions of WBC seem to be at their most hypocritical.

The god of the Westboro Baptist Church hates a lot of people, but the group's members aren't ever seen running around imitating drunkards, homosexuals or the British (all objects, apparently, of divine ire). And yet, through their effort to rebrand more than a hundred popular songs and their great attention to detail in parodying every line of these songs,

they imitate a group of people they claim God hates, and in this way the Westboro Baptist Church panders to a culture that they pretend to despise. It is far from the group's only hypocrisy, but it is one of the most overt. So prolific are the Westboro Baptist Church that they must really like doing it, or else they must be convinced their method works.

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TO MY HORROR, SOME OF THE LYRICS HAVE SUCCEEDED IN BEING GENUINELY CATCHY

I was introduced to these songs by a friend of mine, who's gay and a devout Christian, and we listened feeling a mixture of amusement, bewilderment and despair. The shoddy singing, poor production quality and all-pervasive hypocrisy are laughable, but, for one reason in particular, it was a regrettable experience.

To my horror, some of the lyrics have succeeded in being genuinely catchy. In my memory, the dominant version of Disney's 'Let It Go' is the appalling, homophobic one whose lyrics include, "don't give the fags any

more" and "kick them out and slam the door". The lyrics are abhorrent, imbecilic, crass and yet, in a small way, the Westboro Baptist Church has triumphed by infiltrating my psyche with their hate, calculatedly harnessing the catchiness of Disney's award-winning song.

I don't agree with a word of it, but here their words are, floating around my psyche, bumping out Idina Menzel's joyous message of self-exoneration with a much more sinister alternative. Disney's *Frozen* will forever, through no fault of its own, remind me of the homophobia of the Westboro Baptist Church. The group haven't been in the news recently, but they force themselves into my mind every time I hear a song that they've parodied.

For an organisation that revels in controversy, there really is no such thing as bad publicity. The great success of their propaganda is that, once you have seen (or heard) something shocking, the more difficult it becomes to forget; the harder you try to unsee it, the more firmly it establishes itself in your mind's eye. By parodying songs, the Westboro Baptist Church aren't winning converts to their cause, but through their ridiculous, odious, tawdry parodies, they are increasing their presence. And, if they wish to cause a stir, that's the only thing they really need to do.

Pro-union campaigners need to rethink their tactics



Tom Wheeldon

Europhiles need to learn the lessons of the Scottish referendum if we are to defeat Europhobes

Just over a year ago, the 'Yes' campaign came unexpectedly close to breaking up the UK in the Scottish independence referendum. In 2011 YouGov polling concluded that just 28% of the Scottish population were in favour. Yet two weeks before the referendum a YouGov poll put the 'Yes' side in the lead, and Scotland voted to stay in the Union by a much slimmer margin than one would have expected in 2011 – 5 per cent. And, most shockingly, Glasgow – Scotland's largest city and a century-long Labour stronghold – opted to leave the UK.

Why? Because Yes Scotland – the official campaign effectively led by the SNP – planted a narrative of optimism at the core of the public discourse on their side in the referendum. The opposing campaign, Better Together, didn't help itself – as epitomised by its nickname 'Project Fear', privately used by its own members. Its dominant message was negative: Scotland couldn't afford to go its own way, politically or economically.

Thus it was easy for Nicola Sturgeon to claim that the pro-Union campaign was based on a notion of Scotland as "too wee, too poor and too stupid" to be an independent country. And it was easy for the Yes campaign to communicate an overwhelmingly positive idea of an independent Scotland. In one of the most left-wing nations in Europe – in which the Labour Party had taken for granted the huge swathes of working-class voters who had felt for so long a

deep loyalty to it – the SNP fashioned a narrative of the 'Yes' vote as a step towards a social democratic utopia.

They would free Scotland of what many regarded as the oppressive straitjacket of austerity, abolishing welfare cuts including the so-called bedroom tax and using oil revenues to ramp up spending on public services. And whenever 'Westminster politicians', to use the 'Yes' campaign's unjustly derisive epithet, sounded perfectly reasonable warnings that in practice Scotland would drive away the economic dynamism needed to fund any decent system of state services, the SNP could frame them to the Scottish electorate as the out-of-touch British Establishment doing Scotland down.

Now the UK as a whole faces a referendum on its EU membership by the end of 2017 – and the campaign to leave has learned lessons from Yes Scotland. In terms of political philosophy, with his pseudo-intellectual "libertarian" nonsense, UKIP's sole MP Douglas Carswell is "a stupid person's thinking man" – to quote the eminently sound *Times* columnist Matthew Parris. Yet the plethora of speeches he gives on Europe evince a clever kind of animal cunning as they weave a narrative of British exit from the EU as the progenitor of a freewheeling, economically vigorous Britain, ripping apart the constraints of the EU in order to trade with the rest of the world. Carswell has an almost monomaniac fixation on this

idea, but his proclamations merely epitomise the discourse emerging at the centre of British Euroscepticism: even prominent Tories including Liam Fox and Boris Johnson are lining up to assert that we should feel optimistic about the future of Britain if we leave the EU.

It's a right-wing version of the left-wing narrative fashioned by the SNP, tailored towards English voters who gave Cameron his famous victory this year – who make up 84 per cent of the UK population. But, most importantly, it is a message based on an idea of hope – however dubious that idea might be in practice. And as the campaign to stay in the EU alerts the country to the potentially dire consequences for British jobs and prosperity – not to mention Britain's influence across the world – in the event of Brexit, it is not difficult for the anti-EU campaign to ramp up rhetoric lambasting this as dismal scaremongering as opposed to rational cost / benefit analysis. They will make it look like the British political class is pushing a negative, unpatriotic argument that the UK is, if not too poor, then at least too wee and too stupid for life outside the EU.

As a member of the endangered species of Europhile Tories, I consider it to be one of Cameron's worst decisions to cave in to pressure from UKIP and his rabidly Europhobic backbenchers by committing a Conservative government to a referendum on British EU membership.

There are many Tory MPs left who have varying degrees of affinity for the European project, but who recognise the economic and geopolitical benefits of being in the world's largest intergovernmental bloc.

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IT IS NOT DIFFICULT FOR THE ANTI-EU CAMPAIGN TO RAMP UP RHETORIC LAMBASTING THIS AS DISMAL SCAREMONGERING

They need strong cross-party co-operation with Labour to take on the Europhobes; but it is of gargantuan importance that their united campaign is the polar opposite of Better Together, racked by squabbling between the main UK parties and negative campaigning. They need to create a positive vision of a Britain outside the eurozone but taking a leading role in using the vast resources of the EU – with its half a million people and a quarter of the world's GDP – to create further leaps forward in prosperity and to uphold liberal democratic values against Islamist extremism, Russian revanchism and authoritarian China's ascendancy.

College families: the system is broken

In their first argument of the term, Rosie tears into the college family system, while Lana defends it to the death.

Rosie Best

Lana Crowe

College family, a concept which is not as loving as it sounds. With the arrival of the newest batch of freshers imminent we must put our broodiness aside and consider whether a college orphanage may be a healthier, happier place for them.

For most, the Cambridge student is a mysterious breed; their way of life seems foreign and exciting. For me, the introductory email from my surprisingly ordinary parents robbed me of this illusion. The discussion of mundane

topics such as supervisions and reading lists, while helpful, brought me back down to Earth with a thud and I no longer felt elated at the prospect of joining what I considered the

academic elite, but that the daily grind was already beginning. Sadly, this is the case for many new students every year.

The college family can also be misused – affording new students a safety blanket which encourages the evading of character-building experiences that should be a natural part of anyone's first term. Warning: introducing your child to other freshers, guided tours, and so on

provides them with a sheltered upbringing and may cause overdependence in the future.

Another inevitable flaw of this system is parental favouritism. The implementation of college families encourages forced friendships with people you might otherwise have avoided and, for the majority of college families, this results in the neglect of one child who is 'forgotten' when the other sibling is taken on a punting trip or on a family night out. In this case, your family are the friends you cannot choose.

Becoming a college parent, or college married, can also be a shockingly disappointing experience. At what point do we decide that the 'marriage' metaphor has been extended far enough? First-years compete with their peers for the most extravagant proposal and it has become an accepted practice to change one's status to 'engaged', making Facebook friends cringe as they scroll through their news feed. The start of second year also marks the birth of new children and the receipt of emails is eagerly anticipated. But every day another child makes the decision to reject their college parents and, this time, it is the parents who are disillusioned with their 'happy families' ideal.

Please, take a chainsaw to your own family tree and safely dismantle the monstrosity before it inevitably bears the rotten fruit we will all eventually be forced to taste.

Joining Cambridge is the closest I will ever get to an induction into the mafia. After being made an offer that you can't refuse, you are introduced to a system of indestructible hierarchy (only Dons can walk on the grass), feuding powers (there's clearly some unfinished business between Trinity and John's) and foreboding euphemism – because a trip to the Van of Life is not as innocent as it sounds. And at the heart of all of this – as any fan of mob movies will know – lies the family.

The college parenting system usually provides every fresher with their first point of contact with the student body. It emphasises, to someone who only knows Cambridge from an icy interview experience and defamatory articles in the Daily Mail, that to join a college is to become part of a close-knit community who eat, sleep, work and play together. Having someone there to answer questions before you arrive is not only helpful, but removes some of the mystery of 'the Cambridge undergraduate'. We're not all guffawing, port-drinking, Bamber-Gascoigne-looking geniuses fresh out of *Brideshead Revisited*. Being in a 'family' is an ice-breaker: a ready-made relationship to rely on when you can no longer cope with awkward introductions. Plus, it's a great conversation-filler when mingling in Freshers' Week – a

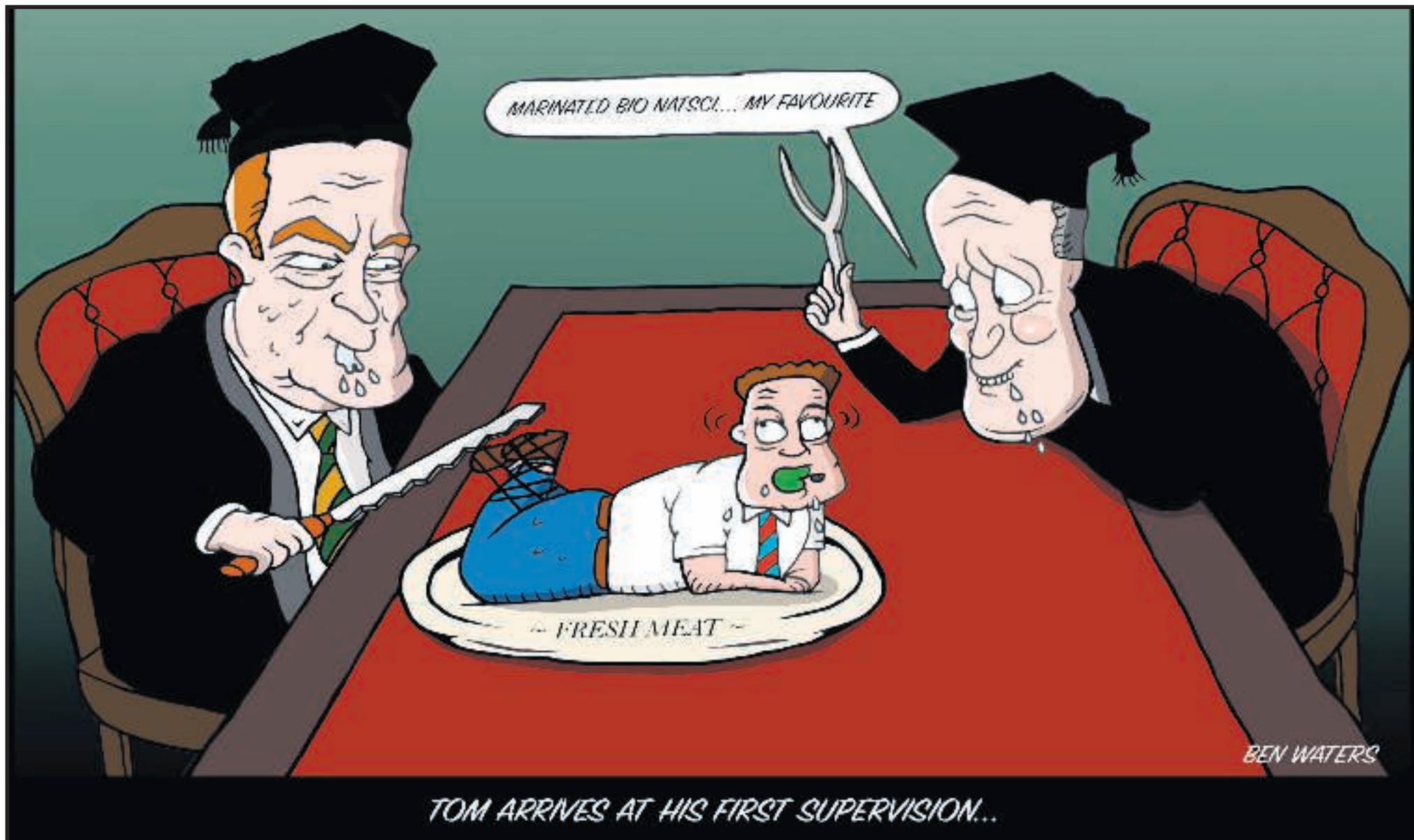
smooth follow-up when you have already established

what your names are, what you study, where you're from and where you're living in college.

Being college parents can be as beneficial as having them. It's a great opportunity to take on a role of responsibility: becoming someone that others can look up to and rely on is a challenge, and to give someone the same guidance that you once received is satisfying. I have reflected on the difference between myself as the college child and myself now as the parent; I'm happy to say I'm pleased with the comparison. I'll organise the teas and answer questions proudly, knowing that the fearful fresher of my past is gone. And I won't be surprised when some smashed school-leaver I hardly know shouts "Mum!" and leaps into my arms in Cindies on Wednesday night. We've all been there, my child.



ROSIE + LANA



The Secret Diary of Katrina Kettlewell

Columnist **Ellie Coote** recently uncovered a diary buried beneath the floorboards of an undisclosed room in an undisclosed college. In this remarkable extract, we are given an exclusive insight into the world of Chelsea socialite Katrina Kettlewell, who seems unaware of her diary's discovery and shows every intention to continue writing. Names have been changed to protect the innocent.

bellows "welcome home, Kat!" LOL! #Tradition #MorningFlap. Cambridge is so random!

So after a totes lavish breakfast I'm out for my digestion stroll and I litro bump into my cousin Sierra! Okay so like she got pooled from my college (uh, wannabe much?) and it's litro SO AWKS 'cause there we are, like, standing outside this frickin' castle let's be honest that's litro twinkling in the sun like a stony angel giving Sierra ridick jealousyitis! I'm actually whispering under my breath the whole time, like, "stop it, you amorous piece of architecture, you magnificent erection, stop your twinkling!!" LOL! So #cringe!

We're defs No. 1 desirable college, like ten out of ten everyone would. Dad calls it the workers' college 'cause, like, if you work really hard and get a first you literally get a three-storey house with a hot tub and an actual dachshund #WorkHardPlayHard. Mum was like, "what happens if you can't work really hard?" Dad was all "ROFL, what conspiracies have you been reading? Have you been hanging with Corbyn again?! LOL!" So anyway, Sierra's like really offended that she was pooled. I'm like, sorry but we're actually full? Call border control LOL! I swear it's stuff like this

that makes me think we could totally branch out, y'know, like litro just cut the Cambilical cord. We already have our own brand of wholegrain snacks (we all have such good digestion here it's actually bizarre #Fibre).

So like on my way to the library I literally bump into Charlie, like full on crash into him, LOL #Clumsy #WhatAmILike... "Hey there, Katrina! How about #Hameron #Piggate, eh?" he sniggers. I look blank. OMG I swear to Instagram three weeks in the Canaries has me like "WHO wore a leather vest and WHERE?!" So #Shameful. Litro can't even see the loop from the Canaries.

I get Charlie to catch me up on current affairs. "So like, the 'Auxiliary' Place is seriously lagging in the tables," he says, "The crux is now, right, we're all thinking, like, it might be time to shoot the Ox in the legs, or whatever they do to horses. Cut the 'Ox,' y'know, 'Bridge' is SO in right now." And he's right, it IS in. Other than sounding like a super cool hipster baby name (mentally adding 'Bridge' to the list) we are literally top bananas #LiveItLoveIt.

While I'm like totally spaced out brooding away on baby names, Hugo

arrives... "Hello, earth to Miss Kettlewell?" ... "What?" I say absently. He chuckles. "Are you, like, coming out with us later?" he smirks. "Us?" (I blush) "who's us?" I say in a shaky voice that screams "OMG I LOVE YOU." "The usual gang" he says, ruffling his hair, "the Titans, the Eskimos and the Banana-STDs." "Will

there be chanting?" I flirt. "You know there will be..." he growls #Flirting #EyeContact... "I'll try and make it," I say nonchalantly, walking away. "Nice doing business with you, Miss Kettlewell," he calls after me...

OMG so, like, litro just wait for it to be continued #NextWeek...



Cam is, like, sooo glam

EUGENIA TANAKA

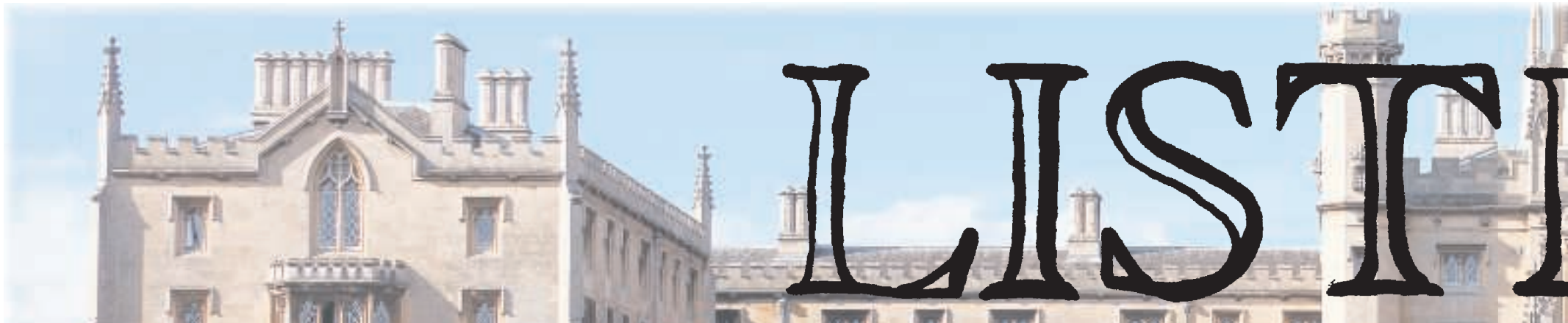
1st October
Down
OMA (oh my academia LOL) SO good to be back! Literally just awoke to the sound of, like, a really loud flapping noise coming from the street outside...? Peering out of my like super old actually crumbling away ancient window I see a troupe of academics cycling past with their gowns litro billowing in the wind. "The source of the racket!" I declare in a mock-detective voice and then litro just #blush... there's actually like no one here, LOL! I pick up my handkerchief and wave it at the cyclists. One of them looks up and like actually



Vulture

CULTURE ■ FEATURES ■ FASHION ■ THEATRE ■ REVIEWS

See page 24 for *Varsity's* interview
with renowned Cambridge student
photographer, Johannes Hjorth



The definitive Varsity guide to what's on this term: pull it out and pin it up!

Michaelmas term. The term of exploration in the wake of a long and (hopefully) restful summer. As the nights draw in, Cambridge students explode out in into theatres, the Union and sticky-floored dungeon-cum-clubs.

Michaelmas is a favourite term of many; Freshers will be forming sometimes embarrassing, sometimes self-affirming memories that will stay with them longer than they will realise right now; second years will be fulfilling the "you only live once" mantra; and finalists will be frantically ticking off bucket lists that have been building for over two years. Varsity's advice to all of our readers is to keep the term in perspective. Come June, you are not going to remember the set text which you slaved over in Week 2 of Michaelmas, and you most probably will have to re-read it regardless of your first time effort... so make sure you go out and explore all the weird and wonderful events this beautiful place has to offer. Make this a term of putting yourself well and truly out there.

A good way to start is to come to the Varsity Squash on Sunday 11th October; get your name immortalised in print and make some great friends along the way.

Please note: all details on this page are correct at the time of printing but may be subject to change. Check events prior to attending.

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

MUSIC



Hot Chip

21ST OCTOBER, 7PM, CORN EXCHANGE, £22.50

While expensive tickets rule out most undergrads, Cambridge still boasts two reputable pop venues in the Corn Exchange and Junction. The gig includes one Jesus and two Sidney graduates in its ranks, bringing their raucous popdisco to the town they were born in.

Mitsuko Uchida

26TH & 29TH OCTOBER, 5PM, WEST ROAD, FREE ENTRY

Renowned pianist and Humanitas Visiting Professor in Chamber Music will be giving a series of free lectures drawing together Mozart concertos and Beatles pop. Entitled 'On Keys and Music', this is essential for anyone looking to expand their musical horizons and watch a true master at work.



THEATRE

Pippin

14TH-17TH OCTOBER, 11PM, ADC THEATRE, FROM £5

Following a five star review from Varsity at the Edinburgh Fringe, CUMTS brings the story of a young prince on an extraordinary adventure to Cambridge.

These Walls

21ST-22ND OCTOBER, 8PM, KING'S CHAPEL, EMAIL SHOP@KINGS.CAM.AC.UK FOR TICKETS

Part of a series commemorating the 500th anniversary of King's College Chapel, the event lauds itself as "an immersive performance that leads the audience through the entire chapel, incorporating light, sound, music, voice and movement". A unique event in the Theatre calendar.

Frankenstein

27TH-31ST OCTOBER, 7:45PM, ADC THEATRE, FROM £7

Toby Marlow as the Creature itself promises to be a captivating performance in this adaptation of Mary Shelley's gothic classic. Prepare yourselves for a tumultuous and disturbing Halloween.

"Men in The Cities" & post-theatre discussion

4TH NOVEMBER, 7:30PM, THE JUNCTION, £6 ENTRY FOR PLAY, DISCUSSION IS FREE

Trekking down Hills Road will be worth it to catch this exploration of the damage wreaked by patriarchal-capitalists with the no doubt emotive discussion group that will follow.

TALKS



Tristram Hunt

20TH OCTOBER, 5-6:30PM, LOCATION TBC

Cambridge University Labour Club welcomes the MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central. Born and bred in Cambridge, including undergraduate and research stints at both Trinity and King's, Hunt promises to engage and entertain – he is, after all, a former Footlights star.

Ruth Davidson

22ND OCTOBER, TIME & LOCATION TBC

Cambridge University Conservative Association hosts the leader of the Scottish Conservatives to discuss key contentions, including the upcoming Scottish elections, the threat and record of the SNP, and what Conservative members can do to increase Scottish support.



FILM

Breakfast Club

11TH OCTOBER, 8PM, CHRIST'S FILMS

A special 30th Anniversary screening of the iconic high school film. Freshers get in for only £2.

Love the One You Love + Q&A

16TH OCTOBER, 6PM, ARTS PICTUREHOUSE

The Cambridge African Film Festival kicks off with a genre bending film from South Africa, followed by a Q&A with the director.

Ghostbusters

25TH OCTOBER, 1PM, ARTS PICTUREHOUSE

"Who you gonna call?" Catch the original ghost-busting phenomenon before the all-female reboot hits cinemas next year.

The Room

31ST OCTOBER, 9PM, CHRIST'S FILMS

The notorious cult classic practically defines "so bad it's good". Find out what all the fuss is about at Christ's annual screening. This romantic drama will certainly whisk you away from the horror of Halloween.

COMEDY

Churchill Smoker

11TH OCTOBER, 9PM, CHURCHILL BAR

Acts have yet to be announced, but event organisers promise "Cambridge's finest comedians"... you can be the judge of that.



Newnham Smoker

23RD OCTOBER, 8PM, NEWNHAM BAR

The self-defining "only student run feminist comedy night" in the University is an important and hilarious night of must-see upcoming and established standup in Cambridge.

Corpus Smoker

2ND NOVEMBER, 9:30PM, CORPUS PLAY-ROOM, £8/£6

Seeing the comedy acts battle the unusually shaped performance space will be worth the entry itself. Usually involving a good range of acts, the hits are sure to outnumber the misses.

PICKS OF THE TERM

Film



Monty Python and the Holy Grail, 14th October, 8pm, Vue, £9

A one-off screening of the former Cantabrigian comedy group's first "proper" film, starring all six original cast members.

Talks



Building a Greener University – with Rowan Williams, Barry Gardiner MP and others, 19th October, 6pm, Keynes Hall (King's)

'Tis the season to be green, as the world prepares for the UN Conference on Climate Change in Paris this December. Come along, see some big names and find out how what you can do to help change.

Theatre



The Master and Margarita 20th-24th October. 7:45pm, ADC Theatre, from £7

This hotly anticipated adaptation of Bulgakov's masterpiece promises to impress in its exploration of a diabolic visit to an atheistic twentieth-century Moscow.

Talks



Paddy Ashdown 27th October, time TBC, Cambridge Union

The political veteran visits Cambridge to promote the long-awaited fight back from his party in the wake of their general election loss. #LibDemFightback



Week 5



Sweeney Todd

10TH-14TH NOVEMBER, 7:35PM, ADC THEATRE, FROM £9

CUMTS hits the ADC again in this infamous tale of the demon barber of Fleet Street. Escape from Week 5 blues in this cannibalism-fuelled musical involving mad beggars, deceit, and lots of dodgy pies. It looks to be a show of epic proportions if the production team is anything to judge by!

Week 6

CUMS Lunchtime Concerts

EVERY TUESDAY, 1:10PM, WEST ROAD, FREE ENTRY

Perfect post-Week 5 relief comes in this free lunchtime concert series, showcasing soloists and chamber groups from around the university. The Sidgwick Site venue makes for a perfect, weekly meditative break between lectures.

Week 7

Cambridge Jazz Festival

19TH-29TH NOVEMBER

Returning after a 46-year absence, Cambridge will host a ten-day jazz festival featuring local and international artists in both public and university venues. Expect some added modernist sparkle coming to the town's streets as the days grow longer.

Week 8

Beethoven's Second Piano Concerto

28TH NOVEMBER, 8PM, WEST ROAD, STUDENT TICKETS FROM £5

The crowning jewel in this term's CUMS already outstanding schedule. Howard Shelley will be conducting the Cambridge University Chamber Orchestra from the piano, performing Beethoven, Mozart and Mendelssohn in a packed programme.

Alternative nights out (escape the cheese)

Fever: Horse Meat Disco + Space Dimension Controller

8TH OCTOBER, 10PM-6AM, KUDA, FROM £7

Turf: Hunee + Tama Sumo

11TH OCTOBER, 10PM-6AM, BALLARE, FROM £7

The more discerning clubber will probably want to pay attention to the Fever and Turf series of events. A strong lineup has already been announced, providing a welcome dose of proper house and powerful techno to an otherwise cheese-stuffed scene.

ARCSOC's Bauhaus Metal Party

15TH OCTOBER, 9PM-3AM, FEZ, £6

Abstract, shiny and metal are all to feature heavily in the latest congregation of Cambridge's wackiest and most kreative koolkidz.

Itchy Feet

18TH OCTOBER, 11PM, LOLA LO, FROM £7

Get on your dancing shoes as the masters of rock n' roll are back by popular demand. Make sure to buy tickets beforehand as this is sure to be a sellout event.

DIVE: Conch

7TH NOVEMBER, 10PM, KING'S BUNKER, £2

Cambridge's LGBT+ scene is strong and active, but the Union-organised nights out are pretty grimy and leave a lot to be desired. Cambridge's clubbing scene is strong and active, but almost all nights out are pretty grimy and leave a lot to be desired. Enter DIVE – just three hours of sweaty, vicious, thrilling techno in the basement of King's College. That it happens to be LGBT-friendly is a massive bonus. The night returns with the title CONCH: COME OUT OF YOUR SHELL. Good advice, every once in a while.

Turf: Max Graef + Glenn Astro

3RD DECEMBER, 10PM-6AM, KUDA, FROM £7

Probably the best way to see out the term: a night of jazzy, enjoyable house music in Cambridge's traditional home of trashy debauchery. Go for it, you've earned it.

Palestinian Ambassador

9TH NOVEMBER, BATEMAN AUDITORIUM, CAIUS, 7-8:30PM

Caius Politics Society invites Prof. Hassassian, the Palestinian Ambassador to Britain. His speech will concern the current situation in Palestine, followed by a Q&A, with an emphasis on "audience participation and discussion".



Lisa Nandy

24TH NOVEMBER, 7PM, LOCATION TBC

The MP for Wigan visits CU Labour Club in their final speakers' event of term. Serving under Corbyn in as the Shadow Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, Nandy may give an interesting inside into the shadow cabinet under Labour's new leader.



Citizen Kane

10TH NOVEMBER, 1PM, ARTS PICTUREHOUSE

Arguably the greatest film of all time, Citizen Kane is a must-see.

Me and Early and the Dying Girl

15TH NOVEMBER, 7PM & 10PM, ST JOHN'S PICTUREHOUSE, £4

This indie dramedy caused a big splash on the festival circuit, and for good reason. Don't miss it!



Bridgemas Film

28TH NOVEMBER, 9PM, CHRIST'S FILMS

A Christmas film chosen by you! Voting will open in November. Like the Christ's Films Facebook page for details.



Panopticon

17TH-21ST NOVEMBER, 9:30PM, CORPUS PLAYROOM, FROM £5

Robert Oldham, Tom Fairbairn and Oliver Taylor are experienced on the Cambridge circuit. There are guaranteed laughs in an evening of paranoia, uncertainty and hilarity.

Footlights Smoker

25TH NOVEMBER, 11PM, ADC THEATRE, £8/£6

This hour will fly by in a whirl of songs, sketches, monologues and standup. Varsity have called previous Footlights Smokers "uproariously funny". The audience will be merry and raucous; you would be silly to miss it.

Robin Hood

25TH NOVEMBER-5TH DECEMBER, 7:45PM & SOME MATINEE PERFORMANCES, ADC THEATRE, FROM £11

The CUADC/Footlights Pantomime 2015 nearly sold out before term even started. Every Cambridge student must see at least one of these legendary annual pantomimes in their time here.

Head out



Arcsoc & Turf
30th October, 9pm, secret location

Shrouded in mystery, techno promoters Turf are teaming up with the Architecture Society to put on what is bound to be a singular and very popular event. Expect fancy dress and a strong sense of aesthetic superiority.

Explore



Bonfire Night
Boat Houses and Midsummer Common, from 7pm
Find out if your College Boat House is hosting a special event (usually involving food), if not then head down to the jam-packed Midsummer Common or find your own viewing point around the city (Varsity recommends Castle Mound).

Bridgemas



Iceskating
20th November-4th January, Parker's Piece, £9.50
Take your Michaelmas crush on a date to Bridgemas' most romantic activity. In theory you will look cool and impressive skating along at a lightning pace... reality may be more like Bambi on ice. Still cute though, right?

Holiday!




Varsity Ski Trip
5th-12th December, Val Thorens
Party (and ski) with The Other Place high in the sky at the world's oldest ski event. Don't forget to watch the Light Blues dominate the Varsity races for another year. Infinite fun crammed into one crazy week.



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Be greater than.

Varsity's Cultural Guide to Cambridge

Make the most of your year with our guide to Cambridge's top culture venues



MEGGIE FARCLOUGH

1. Although it is one of several colleges that regularly puts on events open to students university-wide, Clare's weekly **Clare Ents** are arguably the most popular. Taking place in Clare Cellars, this can be a great chance to catch student bands.

2. The **ADC** is the mainstay of culture in a city where theatre is king. Performances range from musicals to Shakespeare, and with two productions occurring most nights, the only issue is choice. Arrive a little early for the show to grab a drink in the bar. Also highly recommended are the fortnightly Footlights Smokers, a great showcase for student standup.

3. The **Cambridge Arts Theatre** features the wide variety of touring productions which visit Cambridge. Mike Bartlett's Olivier-award-winning *King Charles III* arrives on the 19th October after a sell-out run at London's Almeida, although equally exciting are the *Horrible Histories* shows arriving in the last week of the month.

4. **G David's Antiquarian Bookshop** is, quite simply, a bibliophile's paradise. First editions can be picked up for around a fiver, but it's worth visiting this hidden gem just off the market square for the atmosphere alone.

5. The **Corpus Playroom** is essentially the ADC's younger, indie cousin, for whom normal stage layouts are too mainstream. The tiny seating capacity gives drama productions a really intimate atmosphere, although this also means that, at a standup show, you're far more likely to be picked on.

6. The **Corn Exchange** functions as the hub for the big names visiting Cambridge. Bill Bailey's November show has already sold out, but tickets remain for *The Maccabees* and Sarah Millican, among other delights.

7. For when Vue Cinema just won't cut it, the **Picturehouse** offers a wide range of films, from new indie releases to showings of classics like *The Graduate*. Monthly events to watch out for

are *Reel Women*, a night focusing on the work of female directors, and *Queers in Shorts*, a showcase of queer-themed short films from around the world.

8. The **Fitzwilliam Museum** has a great variety of fine art, from the ancient to the contemporary. Don't miss the Impressionists' gallery; there are some gorgeous Monets and Renoirs. Temporary exhibitions are always varied, this term ranging from *Power and Resistance in pre- and early Roman Italy* to the work of famed satirical cartoonist Ronald Searle. It also boasts a superb gift shop and cafe in the super-modern, glass-enclosed courtyard, although both are a little pricey: take your mum when she comes to visit.

9. And now for something completely different: **The West Road Concert Hall**, located just next to the Sidgwick site, offers a variety of performances for classical music fans. Tickets are more in the range of £15-20, but it's definitely worth a try, even if you only go once!



PETAR ON FILM
Petar Lekarski
unpicks the latest
releases

THE UNCONVENTIONAL ROM-COM: PART 1

Confession time: I love romantic comedies. What's more, I refuse to be apologetic about it. I don't 'have a soft spot for them' or consider them 'guilty pleasures' (the standard qualifications when you admit to enjoying that Katherine Heigl film). I like their predictability — boy meets girl, boy and girl fall in love, boy and girl live happily ever after (presumably; that part tends to happen post-credits, in my imagination). The rom-com formula is well and truly tried and tested. I find it reassuring and comfortable, like curling up on the sofa with a cosy blanket and a mug of hot chocolate—okay, large glass of red wine—on a chilly autumn evening. Alas, most film critics disagree. These days 'formulaic' is the last thing a rom-com wants to be. Cue several recent releases which have experimented with the standard features and structure of the genre, with mixed results. I want to highlight two: *Mistress America* (the subject of part two) and *Trainwreck*. One uses the classic conventions of the rom-com to tell a complex story about growing up and navigating the adult world. The other uses the classic conventions of the rom-com to shame women's choices and preach monogamy as the only viable life path for the modern woman. Let's start there.

Trainwreck stars Amy Schumer as Amy, a pot-smoking, binge-drinking, casual-sex-having magazine writer. Told at a young age by her father that "monogamy isn't realistic", Amy flits from one sexual encounter to the next without any shame or internal conflict. The trailer says she's "not your typical girl"; the trailer means "she's not your typical rom-com protagonist". At work, Amy is tasked with writing an article about a high-profile sports doctor, Aaron - you can guess what happens next. It's all well-trodden rom-com territory: the romantic montage, the fight, the grand gesture. And it works, of course. It worked in *When Harry Met Sally*, it worked in *10 Things I Hate About You* and it worked in *The Proposal*. Why wouldn't it work here?

Here's why. When Amy and Aaron face their obstacle, as all rom-com pairings are obliged to do, that obstacle is not some screw-up or small misunderstanding: it's Amy's character. To get her happy ending, she has to prove to Aaron that she is deserving of him; she has to change. She—not he—must make the grand gesture. Unfortunately, in trying to be progressive by flipping the genders, *Trainwreck* instead ends up saying something really regressive. That being an independent woman who likes booze and casual sex makes you a train wreck unworthy of happiness (or at least romance). In this way, *Trainwreck* renders itself more groan-worthy than any traditional rom-com could hope to be.

Amy, who begins the film wanting for nothing, is gradually shown the error of her ways. By the end of the film, she repents, turning her life around in pursuit of a monogamous relationship. "Ladies, even if you think you're happy single, you're really not," the film argues. And because the formula works, we buy it: we swoon at the grand gesture and see how happy Amy is and yeah, okay, maybe single women can't really be happy. This message is a direct result of the clumsy attempt to tweak the formula. In a standard rom-com, we get the happy ending without the insidious condemnation. We're told in the trailer that *Trainwreck* is not "your mother's romantic comedy". Would that it was.



The man behind the lens

Ella Whiddett speaks to the enigmatic presence behind Cambridge's most well-known photographs

If you haven't heard the name, you've seen the photos. Johannes Hjorth has shot some of the ADC's biggest and best posters in the last year as well as offering his photography services free of charge to students who share in his interest in creating innovative and diverse shoots. Born and raised in Stockholm, Johannes continued his studies in developmental neuroscience in Amsterdam until a postdoctoral opportunity arose in Cambridge in mid-2011. Splitting his time between studying and photography, Johannes became the university's unofficial resident photographer, frequenting theatre show shoots and the Facebook timelines of Cambridge students. Now back in Sweden, Johannes explains why he wishes he'd entered the theatre scene in Cambridge as soon as he arrived, which his favourite college is and why he's so sad to leave.

How did you get into photography initially?

I had been interested in photography since I first started using the family camera as a kid. I started photographing using a film camera, and later moved on to digital. The photos I took while growing up were mostly of my friends and family and our dog! There were a few occasions when I went out with the sole purpose of photographing, for example on one cold winter night I went out with a borrowed tripod and stood freezing knee-deep in snow to try and capture long exposure photos of cars driving by, their head lights making trails on the photos. In Amsterdam I did the odd photoshoot with some of my colleagues, and one of the photos ended up on the cover of the British Neuroscience Association's magazine, but it was not until I came to Cambridge that things really took off.

Why photography in Cambridge?

In Amsterdam I had been working in a large lab, but in Cambridge our group was quite small, so to meet new people I joined Phocus (the photography society). During my second year in Cambridge I helped organise events for Phocus, and also joined the PdOC committee where I became the official photographer. Fast-forward to 2014, and there was a request for a photographer for the opera *Don Giovanni* on the Phocus mailing list. I had started my photoblog the same year, and was more actively looking for things to photograph, so I emailed a link to my blog and offered to come and photograph their dress rehearsal. About two weeks later there was another request on the email list to photograph the dress rehearsal of *Thing with Feathers* at the ADC. After doing that I was hooked.

What has your relationship been like with the students of Cambridge?

I remember the first dress rehearsal I did at the ADC Theatre. I didn't know or speak to anyone; I simply stood in front of the stage and took photos while they performed. Afterwards, I think the director or producer thanked me and asked when the photos would be ready. Over time I got to know the people at the theatre much better, which has made it a very rewarding experience. I have made many friends, and I hope to keep in touch with them.

Why did you decide to move back to Sweden?

The short answer is that my research contract ended. When I first moved abroad my intention was always to move back to Stockholm afterwards, but over the years it became less certain. In the end I did move back home, mostly because I have my family back here in Stockholm. If there had been another year on my contract then I would have loved to stay on! After my postdoc contract ended in April I stayed for two more months in Cambridge before moving back to Stockholm. During that time I photographed pretty much daily.

What will you miss most about Cambridge?

It is the people that make Cambridge what it is, and I will miss them the most. I liked all the little everyday adventures that we had. My biggest inspiration comes from the people I photograph; being immersed in the theatre society means there are both driven and creative people around you.

Whether in Stockholm or Cambridge, what is the most important part of a photo?

Every photo needs a subject, something that catches your attention and you want to capture in return. With theatre I try to anticipate what will happen and frame the photo to best capture the subject, preferably with some context to make the viewer see what I saw. I go through the photos and only keep a fraction of the ones I took. It is interesting to go back and look through old photos and see how my choice of "good photos" has changed. I have become less concerned with having everything sharp and in focus, and some photos that I previously rejected are now my favourites.

Sometimes you incorporate special effects into your photos - how much do you believe these can add?

Some photos are all about the effect, while in other cases it's more subtle and the effect only enhances the photo. For example, you can switch the coordinate system from cartesian to polar, and create a mini-planet of a panorama, or you can photoshop out a person, leaving only their shoes and shadows. Those are examples of effect-driven photos. It is more subtle if you adjust contrast or colours to draw attention to a certain part of the photo, or if you clean up some wires or lights in the background. Finally you can use the effects as a crutch - you have a photo that failed, and you just play around with it to see what you can make. For instance, you might have a really busy photo of some acrobats, where they are lost against all the branches in the background, but by desaturating the background you make the colourful acrobats pop out.

So what's been your favourite shoot?

This is a really tricky question, there have been a lot in the last year. My favourite location shoot was probably King's College Chapel roof. I had been trying to get up there for a few

years and had almost given up hope. But when Emily Newton and I were talking about possible locations for the poster photoshoot for *BARE* I suggested the chapel roof, and I have no idea how she did it, but she managed to find a fellow to take us up there.

Another favourite was the Seven Sins, partly because of how it evolved throughout the photoshoot. When we started out it was just me and Bethan Davidson, but we bumped into Flo Best and Will Bishop on the way, and our small band grew. While playing around with light and costumes, Flo suggested we should do the seven sins. It took an embarrassingly long time just to enumerate them, but then we made a plan, and even sent a runner to buy some candy and pastries for the gluttony photo. One of the things I really like about the photoshoots is the creative process, especially when everyone gets involved and we start to build on each other's ideas.

People can find all of these shoots on your website which you treat as a diary - are you going to continue posting?

Absolutely. Before 2014 I photographed a few times each month. When I started my blog I tried to do at least one thing each week. I am finding new things to photograph in Stockholm, but I am also returning to Cambridge for short visits to photograph. I hope to make several trips during the next two years while I still know people there. My next visit is at the end of October.

Sepia or black and white?

Black and white

Outside or inside shoot?

Would a derelict building without a roof count as indoors or outdoors?

Cambridge or Stockholm?

Cambridge

Favourite college?

People - Homerton. Architecture - St John's.

In front of the lens or behind it?

Behind the lens, but it is good to step in front of it once in a while.

Visit Johannes's blog to keep up with his travels and work at: <https://photo.johanneshjorth.se/>



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VARDAGS

Doing a one-woman Fringe show and conquering the fear of failure

Isla Cowan

Having grown up in Edinburgh, I am a frequent Fringe-goer and enthusiast. This year, however, was different. I put on my own spoken word show for a week's run – producing, writing, performing: the lot. And, while I could, very easily, make this article a self-indulgent exposition of my performance experience, I would much prefer to explain a lesson I learnt about rejection.

The show wasn't a flop – it got four stars in fact – and getting audiences of 12 to 15 people for a “performance poetry” show was pretty decent. It was a success. However, I don't actually know what motivated people to come to my show because not one single person that I flyered came along. Maybe people found the show in the Fringe guide and liked the look of it or heard about it through a friend or through Facebook. Maybe flyering is just a dying art.



ISLA COWAN

Still, it was desperately disheartening. I flyered last year as a summer job for numerous Fringe shows, and that was bad enough. But this time, I wasn't just plugging some random show in which I had no personal investment. I was basically selling myself – not in a sexual way, obviously, but in a “come and see me pour out my soul” kind of way. I had managed the organisation of the show, written all the material, memorised it, designed flyers and had them printed; the flyers had my face on them, for goodness' sake! So, each “no thanks”, each shake of the head, each feigned ignorance of my existence as I shoved flyers at people was a form of personal rejection. Even if I was promoting a show I was in, it would have been different. I would have been part of a cast of actors; I wouldn't be selling me, I'd be selling the play. I wouldn't be all on my own.

I flyered for my show whenever I could, and always for two hours just before the show. The shattering rejection I received is not the kind of pre-show prep I usually go for – it doesn't exactly boost your confidence. But I was forced to deal with it. The first flyer of the day was always the most difficult. I wouldn't

have said before that I had a fear of rejection, but I suppose we all do. It comes from a survival instinct to avoid being ostracised from the tribe. It's the root of the nerves we get before meeting new people, before opening an important letter, and before going on stage – the acceptance only comes when the final applause begins. After a while, I learned to laugh at people's rebuffs and smile to myself when people who said “yeah I'll come” never showed up.

There's a theory that small doses of rejection every day help us to become more confident, secure individuals, not reliant upon external validation. Some people, following this, seek out rejection on a daily basis – for example, asking other people insignificant questions which they know will provide a negative response. I recently watched a video of someone deliberately ordering pineapple at a fast food restaurant – a seemingly strange clip but one which effectively demonstrated this point. The staff member said they didn't serve pineapple and that was that. It was a little embarrassing but there were no dire repercussions. It wasn't life or death. For the customer, it was liberating to know that it's okay to be told no, to be rejected – like accepting that it's okay to fail.

It's slightly different, though, when the success of your own show, six months of work and two years of writing, hinges on a “yes” or “no”. Really, I was relying on people's humanity and trust: asking strangers to take a chance on an unknown poet and a debut show. The stakes weren't very high – it was a free show that only lasted 45 minutes – but it was still a risk. And, even though I was disheartened by those who rejected me or took a flyer and barely glanced at it, I was also overwhelmed by the audience members who did take a chance on me: both those who walked in off the street thinking “why not”, and those who had a specific interest in poetry – and particularly those who left generous donations!

I suppose it's the “yeses” that count, and that's what I should remember. There are so many occasions in life where you're told “no” – especially in the performance industry – but it just takes one “yes” to make a difference. You have to think of rejection not as your own loss, as the person who has been rejected, but the loss of the person who has rejected you.

The people who didn't see my show missed out. Everyone has to start somewhere and, when I'm a famous writer and actress, those who binned my flyer will have passed up the opportunity to say years down the line, “I saw her before she was famous” (and I thought this slant wouldn't be self-indulgent). Regret is definitely worse than rejection. Putting on my own Fringe show was hard, but I don't regret it.

I said yes to an opportunity which has enriched my life. And winners aren't those who get told “yes” but those who say “yes”.

How a Year Abroad will be the making of me

Millie Brierley



STEVE COULS

It has been a month since I moved to Belgium, and Cambridge might as well be a lifetime ago. There's no value judgement intended there. I don't think of it as a step forward, nor a step backward – more like a step into an alternate universe, where everything is just different. That's it. Not better, not worse – just different.

While you all barrel headfirst into another year (or maybe your first) at Cambridge, I'm doing the same thing – only in Brussels. Inhabiting, as I now do, a world without supervisions, lectures and essay all-nighters, it seems strange to think that I am still a student. But I am. Because, somewhere in that transition from gown to new-and-foreign town, I became a third-year.

For one year only, my language degree is offering me a snapshot of life beyond Cambridge. I will spend the coming months straddling two worlds: that of a student – with a dissertation to do, and a supervisor to stay in contact with (theoretically) – and that of an employee – nine-to-five job, salad at my desk, money in my account. If this Year Abroad is C. S. Lewis's wardrobe, half of me is nice and cosy, swathed in coats and fur, while the other half is shivering in the Narnia winter. Which is which is anybody's guess.

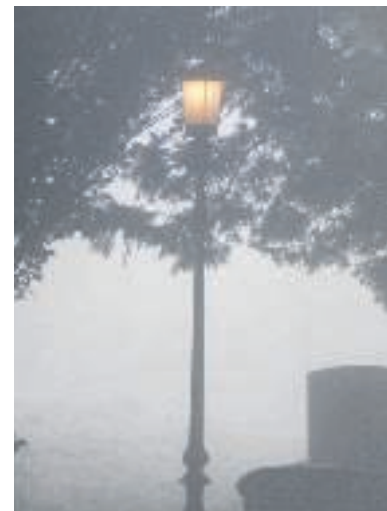
Just as arriving in Cambridge two years ago meant getting used to cobbled streets, ancient buildings and cyclists. Bloody. Everywhere. Moving

to Brussels now has brought lots that's new with it, too. Daily commuter trains, full of warm commuter breath and stale commuter farts. PIN machines that won't accept Visa, and a bank that won't give me a card. (It's been a frugal few weeks...) And a city with a Brit-dar so perceptive, I have barely spoken a word of French since I got here: I am pipped to the post with a “Hello, can I help?” every time.

I have never seen so much barbed wire in my life, nor so many police officers. In the few weeks that I've been here, farmers have used the streets as a tractor park, taxi drivers have held protests, and world leaders have had meetings. In every instance, the po-faced Belgian police have been out in force, checking passes, sealing roads with barbed wire, and closing metro stations. They are the kind of officers – in their little sailor-boy blue hats – that, when I asked one how I might get to the office (given that all the roads seemed to be closed, even to pedestrians) I felt justified in worrying I might be bundled without hesitation into one of the ten police vans apparently parked on every street.

And coming from the UK, a country where being able to speak just one language is often thought impressive enough on its own, I note with disappointment that my multilingualism is absolutely no big deal here. In fact, it is the norm. Because

almost all information in Brussels is given in at least three languages – French, Flemish and English – often four, with the addition of German. A woman asked me for directions the other day (I know: so retro), and my immediate response was, “Which language?” But then, which language do you ask the question in? It's all very baffling – in a different way to how Cambridge is baffling.



BJ CULLEY

Because Cambridge definitely is baffling, too. When I left home, fresh out of school, to start first year, that world seemed big and scary and sometimes overwhelming, just as this new one does to me now. I was a nervous, shy 18-year-old, a bundle of anxiety, full to bursting with fears about whether I was old enough, good enough, clever enough to deal with all I was about to face.

Now, my circumstances seem wildly different, but my worries have changed very little. Will my French hold up? Am I capable enough? When will my boss work out he picked the wrong person?

So far, so good on that front. Four weeks into the job, I still have a desk, and I now have the money in my account to prove it. (Without a Belgian bank card, I still can't access that money, but one step at a time, right?) And the two years at Cambridge I have under my belt must have done their job (in part, at least), because, even though all those familiar niggles are still swirling around my head, they do seem quieter now, somehow. All of which gives me confidence. Because maybe it means this half-and-half year – part student, part worker – will manage to turn them down to almost-silence in time for life after Cambridge.



MILLIE BRIERLEY



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I didn't meet my offer for Cambridge – am I good enough?

Amy Hull

First hurdle: interviews. Second hurdle: results day.

Like most, I reckon I thought about those all-important grade requirements every day since receiving my offer, and honestly they scared me a little. I needed an A* in French, which seemed a very daunting task to me at times.

The terrifying brown envelope handed to me on the morning of results day informed me that my hopes of accomplishing this were dashed; I had fallen short of the A* – well short – and my heart sunk with the realisation I had not quite lived up to expectations.

So it was with sheer amazement that I sat bleary eyed and read and re-read my Cambridge acceptance confirmation which arrived by email. Somehow they had still let me in. Somehow I was still heading to my dream university.

So why did I feel like a fraud? Why was the word 'failure' still bouncing around in



my head? As October approached and more and more emails and letters flooded in, some emblazoned with the imposing college stamp, I greeted them with equal measures of pride and trepidation. The mention of reading lists, class allocations and lecture timetables made my stomach churn.

Crazily, I felt that my place would eventually be re-considered, my file would be stumbled upon again and with a regretful sigh the admissions tutor would realise that I really shouldn't have slipped through the net in the first place. I was the lucky benefactor of a statistically low year of applicants for my course and someone somewhere had taken pity on me. Perhaps the rightful owner of my place was wallowing in sorrow, and here I was happily riding the wave of short lived success.

This feeling subsided a little once I saw my name written in clear, bold letters above my door on the first day of fresher's week. Surely if they had gone to this effort and left it this late then things must be for definite?

I worked as hard as I could throughout the first couple of weeks of term to exude as much confidence as possible, to offer what I felt were somewhat intelligent utterances in supervisions and to agree with those around me that yes, of course that lecture was extremely straightforward to understand.



However it was only a matter of time until my grammar teacher would catch on to the fact that I just was not up to scratch. I most definitely felt I had something to prove: that I deserved to be here, and could stay close to the level of everyone else doing my subject who

had obviously had no trouble at all getting that A*.

I felt as if I belonged to a fairly exclusive group of students who felt this way, who were still convinced they had to demonstrate something more, and that missing the specified grades somehow devalued their worth to something far

below 'true Cambridge standards'.

Therefore it was with surprise and sheer relief that in a quick conversation with a friend I realised that several others in my subject had also missed their grades, and did not all boast an A* in the subject I had concluded I was so pitifully unprepared for.

I know my story is not unique, nor is it even the most extreme case. Many students come to Cambridge despite missing the grades that had been expected of them. Some even experience the torturous experience of having to begin at a different university, come to terms with a different scenario than what they had originally envisaged, only to then be called back again by Cambridge. This experience undoubtedly creates feelings of inadequacy, of never having

been good enough in the first place, and a long, painful process of proving to yourself that you have a right to be there.

Yet I now know what I wish I had known back in my first term.

Cambridge is extremely hard to get into, let's not forget that, and grades form only a small part of the application process. Cast your mind back to those fateful interviews, back in December when the mist was clinging to the Cam and you stood outside that imposing oak door waiting to be called in to your impending interrogation. Well, clearly you passed that test if you were given an offer. A Level grades or equivalents are only a small piece of the jigsaw which you just didn't quite get slotted in perfectly.

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Victoriana

A severe throwback is occurring. Expect to see high-necks, ruffles, sheer blouses, silk slips, lace, and a lot of velvet. From gothic glamour at Givenchy and Zara to romantic florals in jacquard embroidery at Valentino and Warehouse, both designer and high street have this trend covered. Get this look on a budget at ASOS, Topshop and Zara.



'70s Suede and Rodeo

It was a big hit for AW15, and '70s love does not seem to be dissipating any time soon. Suede, fringing, glitter, colour and clashing prints are to be found everywhere. SS16 has evolved from AW15 '70s, with Rodarte referencing female rock icons Stevie Nicks and Kim Gordon and Gucci refracting the decade through an Italian lens. High-street brands are following fast. H&M's '70s pieces have sold out remarkably quickly, and Mango's Kate and Cara iconic campaign is cementing the trend.



SS16 Trends: GET THE LOOK

Frills and Frivolity

The Molly Goddard SS16 show was a whimsical, playful treat of frills and childlike smocks. The dresses illustrated a sense of power in the typically 'girlish' form of femininity from which it took inspiration. Think delicate fabric, ribbons and structural freedom. River Island, Boohoo and New Look are all offering takes on this key 2016 look for a fraction of the cost.



MEG HONIGMANN

The first week of Cambridge life goes by in a haze – a haze that within two days sees you trussed up in a billowing gown, ready to swan past towering gothic architecture, over crenelated bridges, and into a great hall to revel in your own majesty and eat things you couldn't previously pronounce. What first appears a film set (Harry Potter is the obvious reference) with lashings of CGI quickly fades into normality. A dash to Sainsbury's before

hall to grab wine in your gown meets not with the incredulous stares you would attract back home, but indifference – or at best a knowing nod of sympathy. Not only do people not notice your strange attire, but you find that you yourself cease to notice certain anomalies. That the cyclists do not wear streamlined Lycra, but are more often found in tweed or corduroy; that a swarm of ten-year-olds in white surplices appears commonplace; and that the multi-coloured array of blazers are not worn for their designer labels but as a badge of honour of organised alcohol consumption. Of all of these phenomena, the gown is the most interesting

because it is paradoxical: it hides your identity as you blur into a mass of Cambridge students, but when you are alone it marks you as different. To an alien onlooker, the gown means nothing – it is usually referred to as a "cloak" – but to a knowing insider, it denotes your degree level, your university, even your college.

Cambridge fashion is at times more glamorous than most universities, but notwithstanding one-of-a-kind May Ball dresses, the majority of days necessitate comfort and warmth (not two words that often grace the pages of fashion magazines). Your money isn't saved to buy

the next It-bag or pair of shoes: a bike becomes your most coveted accessory of choice. Whatever your first impression might be of Cambridge, the dramatic costumes that first excite and bewilder form a small percentage of the average outfit. When making wardrobe choices students tend to favour practicality: a coat that gets you to lectures through the almost-inevitable rain, a shabby second-hand bike that doesn't get stolen within the first week, and a bag both large enough to fit all your books as you traipse from library to library, and comfortable enough not to cripple you. Anything else can wait for the summer.

The Cambridge Costume Cupboard

A Varsity Guide to shopping in Cambridge

Shopping for clothes can often seem like an unrealistic luxury for a student. Cambridge, however, is home to a number of fantastic shopping opportunities; this guide explores Varsity's picks of the best areas and events for student-friendly fashion.

Hannah Parlett

WHERE

Mill Road: Home to some of the best Cambridge charity shops, this is the best budget-friendly shopping spot in the city. Check out local favourite Sally Ann's. £

The Grafton Centre: A five to ten minute walk from the city centre, the Grafton is a great place to pick up a bargain. Visit for Primark and an impressive array of charity shops. Varsity recommends the particularly well-stocked British Heart Foundation. £

Trinity Street/ Rose Crescent: Along the cobbled streets of one of Cambridge's most picturesque areas sit Whistles, Jaeger and French Connection. A Jack Wills also temptingly awaits just across the road. Hardly within usual student budget territory, these stores are perfect for a spot of indulgence, some retail therapy when an essay crisis is imminent, and for special occasions, such as May Ball shopping. £££



CHRISTOPHER YOUNG



ROBERTO TROMBETTA

EVENTS

The Grand Arcade's Student Night

Wednesday 7th October, 4.30pm

A few days after student loans come in, and for one exciting night only, the Grand Arcade in the centre of town opens its doors to offer exclusive student discounts from some of the best high street shops. Students can receive 30 per cent off retail prices in Levis, and 20 per cent off in Topshop and Ted Baker. There will also be free hand massages to soothe your bag-laden fingers, free lash extensions and the chance to eat at Ed's Diner at half price. Post-shopping milkshake, anyone?

Judy's Affordable Vintage Fair

Saturday 17th October, 10.30am-4.30pm, The Guildhall

Judy's is perhaps the most exciting fashion event in Cambridge. The £2 entry is well worth it as the Guildhall transforms into a vintage paradise, with countless stalls selling everything from original Fred Perry shirts to decadent sequined jumpsuits that look as though they have come straight from Studio 54. Charming 1920's brooches are displayed on tables decorated in a WW2 tea-party aesthetic. Vintage Yves Saint Laurent scarves have been available at £20. Get there early to find the best hidden gems.

INDEPENDENT SHOPS

ARK

Prepare to be transported back to the fifties; pastel kitten heels and cashmere gloves adorn shelves, alongside displays of ornate tapestry handbags. Although not the most budget-friendly of shops, a purchase from ARK is sure to be a classic and a charming addition to any wardrobe.

Nomads

Often described as an 'Aladdin's cave', Nomads on King's Parade is one of Cambridge's most coveted independent havens. Inside it holds a range of stunning Asian textiles and home furnishings, making for unique present opportunities. Highlights include silk scarves from the Kullu Valley and authentic gemstone jewellery that gives any outfit a bohemian lift.

Jemporium Vintage

Featuring original pieces from every decade since 1950, this is an unmissable second-hand treasure chest tucked away in the Grafton Centre. Don't let the 10 minute walk out of town put you off; the range of individual, authentic pieces is exceptional, and led to it being noted in Vogue's list of the best vintage shops outside of London in April 2015.

The Cambridge Satchel Company

Founded by Caius alumna Julie Deane, The Cambridge Satchel Company has developed a cult following, with celebrity fans including Alexa Chung and Zooey Deschanel. An ideal investment for any student looking to combine elegance and practicality. If you time your shop right, last season's stock can appear in sales of up to 50 per cent.



MARTIN FETTER

CAST TOUR 2015: The Taming of the Shrew

CAST is one of the largest international theatre tours in Cambridge University and aims to spread Shakespeare across the eastern United States. The cast and crew discuss their experience:

How are you finding the touring aspect of the show?

Alex Cartlidge (Tour Manager) - "It's exciting, each venue and each state enjoys different aspects, and that means we aren't allowing the show to grow stale, it's evolving and adapting throughout the tour, and our final home run will be a very different show from the one we previewed in August."

What was the most surprising aspect of American culture that you came across?

Robbie Taylor Hunt - "Firstly, the sheer quantity of food. A blessing and a curse. At lunch at Homerton I will eat up my friends' leftovers happily, but here that desire not to waste food by finishing others' meals is a dangerous game. Also, we were surprised by how some of the high schools are just like you see in films. The cafeteria with a table of cheerleaders, a table of jocks, a table of IB kids, was weirdly similar to what you'd see on the big screen. The theatre kids ate in the drama studio..."

Good to know.

How did you find performing to American audiences? Are there any differences between British and American audiences, or even between different states?

Will Peck - "The challenge with Shakespeare always comes in getting across the sense: ensuring that your audience can understand well enough to keep up with the pace of the play. With such a fast-paced production, that challenge is present irrespective of audience. Within workshops we were often asked if we found Shakespeare easier than our hosts did, and our consistent response was 'no'. With respect to content, however, there was some slight modulation depending on the venue: we anticipated Catholic high schools wouldn't take well to dick jokes and so those were dropped."

Aoife - "A big myth we've had to dis-

pel amongst American students is that British people have some sort of magical affinity with Shakespeare. We've put a lot of work into diction and clarity across the play as a whole, especially when introducing regional accents to differentiate between characters. The structure of the verse and the archaic language present just as much of a potential barrier for audiences either side of the pond."

Cambridge productions usually only run for a week, how did it feel performing the same play for over a month?

Will Bishop - "It never feels like the same play! The usual after-show notes session would always offer places to improve for every performance, but we never say that we have a finished product. We are always seeking to change the show through reworking certain relationships, trying out new jokes, adopting different tones (and accents), and generally making mischief onstage. We never get bored, we never get stale, we never perform the same show twice."

What have been the main challenges of touring a Shakespeare play?

Alex - "From a tour manager perspective, handling 19 people is tricky work, but luckily we have a great group and a show we love and find very fun. I think if we were doing *King Lear* it would be very draining on our energy"

Laura - "When Alex and I got the show, our first thought was that we have to craft a show to please American student audiences who can't understand our accents and might be more interested in our actors than our production. So you have to tailor the show to that audience which obviously risks alienating the Cambridge audience we return to"

Alex - "This is different for us all in that it is not a show crafted specifically for a Cambridge audience, but the feedback we have been receiving makes us confident that our show is funny - and silly - enough

to entertain everyone of all ages. Men in drag, innuendo, and extravagant French accents, they're Pythonesque. It doesn't matter which century you're performing in, or setting your play in, the fact is that penis jokes will never get old."

How does this production handle the inherent misogyny in the text?

Alex - "One of the main challenges is how to bring out the humour but not to avoid the subtext."

Laura Sedgwick (Tour Manager) - "If you go down the avenue of misogyny in a Jacobean society you could end up with a hard hitting show, but what you would take away would be straightforward."

Kennedy Bloomer (Director) - "And if you make *Taming* a straightforward play about misogyny, you end up with the idea that misogyny is in itself straightforward and resolvable. It isn't - misogyny is complex and reacted to in different ways by different people. In our version this is acknowledged. The Hollywood romance of Lucentio and Bianca is arguably more problematic than the Petruccio/Kate relationship, because it is so shallow and seemingly perfect."

Alex - "It'd be easy to create a version with a definitive answer and that's not what we want, and that's not what Shakespeare would have wanted. It's a problem play, on a face level we have created a farce, a play with music, with fight scenes, slapstick, silly accents, men in drag, and lots of laughs. And this is great because we are taking a show to American schools, to some venues where students attend for credit and often walk out at the interval or spend the whole show on their phones. The way to get their attention was to make this show funny, bright, and loud. It sounds simple but it's worked, I think. It's not to patronise or to pitch beneath, but to work out your audience in advance and level it to them."

Kennedy - "And as a result the misogyny is pushed back in the textures of the play, but it hasn't disappeared. It's still there, in a subtle way, but you have to search harder for it than you might in some productions."

Laura - "And hopefully the audience will leave having laughed and having enjoyed the comedy on its face level, but they can look deeper and analyse further and see the misogyny there. We aren't making these issues funny, but we are surrounding them with jokes and with comedy."



Cambridge's Alternative Theatres

Theatre editor Sarah-Jane Tollan explores Cambridge's more unfrequented venues

Broadway, the West End, Cambridge. The latter may appear out of place, but hidden in between the gilded chapels and green pastures is a town brimming with struggling actors and jazz hands. Cambridge has been a cradle for theatrical talent, nurturing the likes of Ian McKellen, Richard Ayoade and Trevor Nunn in an environment bursting with playhouses and drama societies. Yet, while being a town that embraces the fervour for theatre within it, it is unfortunately easy to narrow the scope of your vision to the realm of student theatre and become a slave to the two heavyweights of the student scene: the ADC and the Corpus Playroom. Cambridge has a bounty of venues and auditoriums staging a cacophony of productions this term, being performed by both amateur and professional actors, cast and crew. For a wider appreciation of the town's zeal for bright lights and prop failures, book a red, soda stained, somewhat velvety seat in one of the many venues beyond Park Street and King's Parade.

The Cambridge Junction

Housing three different performance venues by the town's railway station, the Cambridge Junction hosts an eclectic range of live music, comedy, dance and theatre. Contemporary and urban, with a determination to provide a space for the up-and-coming, the Junction is an essential venue in Cambridge's more established and traditional theatre scene, despite being better known by most students as a club venue for nights like Boomslang. Highly regarded for its stand-up comedy – the shows are incessant, with two usually on the calendar each week – this term will see Andy Parsons of *Mock the Week* fame and “professional grumpy old woman” Jenny Eclair gracing the stage. In terms of theatre, *The Notebook*, a tale of twin brothers during World War II, and the wonderfully titled *Disco Pigs*, featuring “trash TV, Disco beats, and a load of cheap booze” as two teenagers struggle between reality and fantasy, will be sure to extend the Junction's reputation.

The Cambridge Arts Theatre

Founded in 1936 by John Maynard Keynes, the renowned economist with a penchant for the arts, this traditional theatre venue is located on the same small street as the Corpus Playroom, and yet has a capacity and style that can compete with the smaller theatres in the West End. Indeed, Michaelmas term opens with *An Inspector Calls*, the multi-award winning West End production directed by Oscar nominee Stephen Daldry, and is followed by further London-led plays: the Olivier-award-winning *King Charles III* and *Bad Jews*. In between is a night with David Starkey, who will discuss the Magna Carta, and *The Odyssey* Simon Armitage's new foray into theatre. Of course, the conclusion of Michaelmas term brings forth the theatre's annual pantomime, *Cinderella*, set to warm Cantabrigians despite the chill.

The Mumford Theatre

Anglia Ruskin's flagship venue in the centre of the university's campus was opened in 1970 and continues to host a range of productions by professionals as well as students and the local community. This term, the occupants of its 270 seats will be delighted by a schedule dominated by literary adaptations, including *The Great Gatsby* and a comedic spin on Dante, *A Divine Comedy*. Literary aficionados should pay heed to Moliere's *Tartuffe* in early November, as well as *Phoenix Rising*, an original production reflecting upon the influence that drove D.H. Lawrence to pen his masterpiece, *Sons & Lovers*. Escape the bubble without travelling too far.



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Food & Drink: The Top 5 Freshers' Bar Crawls for Non-Drinkers

Sometimes you may need a little more than a coffee from a tourist-filled cafe on King's Parade, but don't want to get your buzz from a few pints or shots at a club or bar. Never fear, Cambridge is a great place to grab a drink on a night out that will leave you both bubbly and able to walk in a straight line. Here are my top five places to head to for the non-drinkers who want to remain alcohol-free whilst still having a good time.

1) Las Iguanas

This is a Latin-American inspired restaurant near St John's. The atmosphere is just fabulous, and smiles abound from all of the waiters. Whilst the food and the 'real' cocktails may be extortionate, if you plonk yourself on a barstool with a cooler, you can happily spend the evening transported into this salsa-dancing, guitar-playing world without forking out too much. There's a wide choice of non-alcoholic cocktails, and best of all it's all 2-for-1, 12pm to 7pm and 10 til late. My favourite is 'The Naked Nut' – you can't get a better innuendo, and who wouldn't feel like they are on a beach when they're drinking from a coconut!

2) La Tasca

Although this establishment is

known for other drinks, the non-alcoholic options are much better than a Coke at crummy bar. It all feels very classy, but I found that when ordering something that kept me completely sober I was met with surprised faces from the staff. Anyhow, despite the undeniably limited choice of only two mocktails, you can never go wrong with 'Sunshine Mountain': a tangy drink with a kick that'll perk you up even in the rain.

3) Revolution

There's plenty of choice here, with really funky names, and you should make it your mission to try everything. The best mocktail in my opinion is the Daquiri, but I would avoid the 'Superfruit Nojito' unless you need something to keep you going for an all-nighter in the library. Quite honestly though, the 'proper' cocktails, fully loaded with booze, will also blow you away if you ever so desire it. So if you ever find yourself needing a Margarita or Cosmopolitan, head here first.

4) All Bar One

On walking through the doors you will instantly feel imbued with the maturity of a fully-fledged adult, as students tend to be rather out of place here. All Bar One is a local

haunt, like Wetherspoons, but offers good mocktails if you don't fancy drinking. The staff are lovely and happy to share the recipes with you. Certainly a civilised retreat if you want to dress up in heels for a posh night out.

5) Browns

Many are scared away from here because it's considered the sort of posh destination to only be visited when the parents are around with their credit cards. Its interior design is beautiful, and they offer a huge range of virgin cocktails, from Marys to Mojitos. Surprisingly though, Mr Fitzpatrick's Cordial Fizzes are absolutely divine and something a bit different – an old fashioned tippie is sometimes just what's needed! There are loads of yummy nibbles to try while you are at the bar too.

Don't worry if you are not an all-out student drinker when you get to Cambridge. Getting smashed isn't a necessity for Freshers' week and it can be pleasant and refreshing to have a drink and chat with new faces without getting hammered!

Meggie Fairclough

Books: What If I Got Down On My Knees by Tony Rauch

Tony Rauch's *What If I Got Down On My Knees* is a compilation of short stories about, essentially, the human condition. It's no light read, and if you're a fan of a steady and continuous stream of dramatic narrative, this is not for you. However, there is a certain charm about the random disjointedness of the separate narratives, with no apparent link between them. Some are tragic, some are laugh out loud; all of them are gripping. At first I was not entirely keen, but Rauch's mixture of styles for each individual tale and the sympathetic and unique characters he creates with equal flare for each little snippet ultimately drew me in.

The opening story, *In The Dust*, at first thwarted my expectations because the protagonist was called Elmer; however, once I got over my searing disappointment that the character introduced was a grizzled, human dog-knapper, as opposed to the fictional rainbow elephant of my childhood, I began to enjoy what turned out to be a heart-rending tale – and *In The Dust* isn't the only one to tug at the heartstrings.

However, the real beauty of Rauch's literary masterpiece is his ability to effortlessly blend humour into an otherwise quite sombre book. His gem, *Let's Get Sad*, for instance, details the plight of a bunch of sexually frustrated teenage boys who bawl their eyes out at *Bambi* in order to

get the sensitive, arty-type girls to like them, which is guaranteed to give you at least a few laughs.

The problem with short story collections is that they tend to be rather hit-and-miss, and unfortunately Rauch's anthology is no different. There are certain instances in which he pushes the need for humour too far, and the result leans towards the ridiculous and rather strange: for example in *Lesser Gods*, where an unlucky (this is truly an understatement) man gets tangled in the harness of a horse-drawn carriage bearing his prospective date, somehow ends up in a fire, jeered at by some yobbish teenagers who also have the vocabulary of characters from a Jane Austen novel, and roundly insulted by the socially-impaired woman of his dreams, whom

he re-Christens 'Monkey Butt' as waiting staff tend to his First Degree burns. Some are really thoroughly odd, like *Congratulations*, in which a man magically produces a baby created from his own stomach fat – if there's a nuanced underlying meaning here, I'm missing it.

Nevertheless, while *What If I Got Down On My Knees* is subject to fault, much like most other books, its flaws should not be allowed to cast a pall over what really is, in parts, some exceptional writing. Despite not normally being a fan

of literary romances, *Debra* is an absolutely exquisitely written piece about a teenager of undefined gender in hopeless unrequited love in the Bible Belt of America. The author uses stunning turns of phrase, and none of the clichéd and often nauseating tones that tend to feature so heavily in the modern romance trope.

Rauch's stories are engaging, and most importantly, very readable – there's not one ounce of pretentiousness or self-indulgence in his writing, and the varying lengths of the extracts are perfect for the student readership who, like me, have an incredibly short attention span and want to flit through a few pages of a novel at a time to procrastinate from yet another essay.

Rauch must also be credited for how he makes his characters noticeably distinct – through their accents, gender, aims and ambitions – even though every story is written in the first person. Significantly, the protagonist of each narrative is never once called by their first name by the other characters, nor mentions it himself, which allows the reader to immerse himself even further in the story, and impart the author's point that despite humankind's fundamental differences with each other, everyone is essentially held together by the same desires, needs and human frailties.

For short-story lovers, I would definitely recommend it.

Amelia Tudhope

**TV: This is England '90**

Following its 2006 release, few thought that the film *This is England* would have a sequel. However, over the past nine years, Shane Meadows's drama has documented seven years of British history. The first face we see in the film is Margaret Thatcher's, and it is not lost on Meadows what a fitting year 1990 would be to conclude his story. The opening episode's introductory montage is scored by The La's 'There She Goes', and ends with Thatcher's resignation. It is a series seen by many as a document of life in Thatcherite Britain, its political potency arguably a result of its apolitical approach.

Where *This is England* soars is in the naturalism of its performances, the believability of its characters, and the emotional devastation which it explores.

However, beneath the period politics and dark drama, what is frequently forgotten about *This is England* is how funny it can be; something that these first two episodes remind us of. Like the film that preceded them, the two mini-series to date have started light, before inevitably descending into darkness. The opening episode of *This is England '90* is no exception. Each episode is a season of the year and the only real drama in 'Spring' is a scuffle between Shaun (Thomas Turgoose) and the new boyfriend of his ex, Smell (Rosamund Hanson).

It is during 'Summer' where the fuse is really lit. An attempt to take part in the rave scene naturally doesn't go well for our characters. This is first played for laughs as the gang gets lost, and they are forced to turn to the thankfully upgraded and even more hilarious Flip (Perry Fitzpatrick) and Higgy (Joe Dempsie). However, after they stumble across an alternative gathering, an extended sequence begins that, while joyously



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Kurt Vile - b'lieve i'm goin down...



With his shoulder-length hair and spaced-out vibes, it is easy to see Kurt Vile as just another stoner guitarist. His music, you might think, merely serves as the soundtrack to American teenagers smoking pot in their basements. But there is much more to him than that. With depth, charm and a healthy dose of existential malaise, *b'lieve i'm goin down...* is Vile's most rounded album to date, showcasing the best of his talent and pushing him into new territory.

The former War on Drugs member from Philadelphia sings with a distinctive twangy drawl but the slacker-rock label attached to his music comes from the profound sense of reflection he manages to conjure up on, for example, 'Wheelhouse' and 'All in a Daze Work'. Vile appears as a solitary figure, deeply curious about the world that is spinning around him; he is the shy, talented boy in the corner peering at the world from behind his thick curtain of hair, and we are invited to join him in his reverie.

After the full-blown existential crisis of 'Pretty Pimpin', where he fails to recognise his own reflection, Vile is "*an outlaw on the brink of self-implosion / Alone in a crowd*" and later muses that "*you gotta be alone to figure things out sometimes / Be alone when even in a crowd of friends*". In a world where we are constantly being pressured to connect more, to share and to broadcast every thought, Vile offers a refreshing alternative to our technology-added lives.

Though, of course, this is no manifesto and his thinking is never quite as explicit as that. The fuzzy, reverb-heavy haziness of his music keeps these thoughtful meanderings on the plane of pure contemplation and some of the album's strength comes from his reluctance to offer us any answers. He is just as confused as the rest of us; as he sings in 'Dust Bunnies', "*There ain't no manual to our minds / We're always looking, baby, all the time*".

If this all seems a bit heavy, do not fear – Vile deftly handles these existential meditations with lashings of humour and self-deprecation. He survives the unsettling horror of struggling to recognise himself in the bathroom mirror by laughing and saying "*Oh silly me, that's just me*". He even mocks the idea of himself as a drug-taking rock star in 'That's Life, tho (almost hate to say)', singing "*When I go out, I take pills to take the edge off / Or to just take a chillax, man and forget about it / Just a certified badass out for a night on the town*".

But while we are used to his trademark tongue-in-cheek humour, it is the introduction of a whole new range of instruments that marks a turning point for Vile. Now his guitar finds itself accompanied by a lush instrumentation of piano, banjo, lap steel and synth. He can still hold your attention with the delicate, beguiling intricacies of his guitar playing as in 'All in a Daze Work', but, with its prominent percussion and instrumental experimentation, this is certainly Kurt Vile's most captivating, thought-provoking and musically rich record yet.

Eddy Wax

Carly Rae Jepsen - E-MO-TION



What's a girl to do when the world insists on remembering you as a one-hit-wonder? Carly Rae Jepsen had two options when 'Call Me Maybe' gave the former *Canadian Idol* singer 2012's defining pop song. She could either quickly attempt to capitalise on that success (witness the rush-release of *Kiss* and the chintzy single 'Take a Picture', released as part of a promo deal with Coca-Cola). Or, failing that, she could attempt to find a real vision. Over 100 recorded songs and a scrapped folk-pop album later, she brings us a near-perfect pop album.

No small part of the phenomenal success of 'Call Me Maybe' stemmed from how Jepsen so effectively embodied the cutesy character demanded of her. A lesser performer would have clumsily stamped an artistic brand on what could have been – and has been – dismissed as vapid pop. Jepsen instead created a Youtube megahit conspicuous by the self-effacement of its singer. She is pop's everywoman, tapping into the universality of puppy-love through inoffensiveness.

E-MO-TION sees Jepsen honing the strategy, fully exploiting the plastic versatility of her voice, from the breathy, Timbaland-aping opening of 'Gimmie Love' and warm urgency in 'Run Away With Me', to kitsch ebullience in 'Let's Get Lost' and surprising power in the chorus of 'Your Type'. It's not a perfect formula – dark sensuality and her girlish timbre make strange bedfellows on 'Warm Blood', Vampire Weekend's Rostam Batmangli's chugging electro wonder; it is standout production, just not for Jepsen's voice. The album also includes strange lyrical moments: it's an odd choice to include media critiques like "Buzzfeed buzzards and TMZ crows / *What can I say that you don't already know?*" on 'LA Hallucinations' when Jepsen's greatest strength lies in eschewing the usual pop trappings – false antics and relentless self-branding – and being confident enough to let the music do the talking.

And how that music talks. The cream of pop talent is here – Ariel Rechtshaid, Dev Hynes, the Swedes, Greg Kurstin – each of whom brings their most accomplished songs. Hynes uses his Blood Orange identity for 90s R&B slow-jam 'All That', a sultry ballad Jepsen pulls off with gusto. Sia and Samuel Dixon practically plagiarise themselves with 'Making the Most of the Night', recycling the chorus from Sia's 'Clap Your Hands' and past lyrical ideas ("*Here I've come to hijack you*" could easily have come from *1000 Forms of Fear*) to produce pulsating synthpop. But it's 'Run Away With Me' that sees the best match of material and performer, a track expertly marrying Swedish dance-pop, crisp beats and yearning vulnerability into the soaring tribute to young love 'Teenage Dream' could have been. If Robyn did sheer euphoria, this is what it would sound like.

The result is a retro-edged album that is remarkable for both its cohesion and adventurous sonic range. In tapping into a powerful nostalgia and recalling the pop titans of past eras, its best moments achieve a timelessness few records even aspire to.

Tom Freeman



Music Picks of the Week, from Margot Speed

It's amazing what turning on late-night Radio 1 when stuck on gridlocked motorways does for you. One hot night this summer I was aghast and delighted to hear the voices of Pete Doherty and Carl Barat filling the car, introducing their new single 'Gunga Din'. And so I first heard of The Libertines' rebirth, *Anthems for Doomed Youth*.

'Gunga Din' very much sets the tone for the record, which balances reliving the raucous glory of their wonder years with a tone of introspection, along with a healthy dollop of literary allusion to ease the process. The album was recorded in Thailand near the rehab that Pete recently spent time in, and it shows. "*Oh the road is long / and if you stay strong / You're a better man than I*" the refrain goes, and honest discussion of age-old struggles with inner demons continues throughout. The album's sound and the generous helping of stirring riffs are reassuringly Libertine, though overproduction leaves some tracks a tad dull. But the inclusion of older songs helps save it: 'You're My Waterloo' appears injured and emotive, underlined with a simple, newly-written piano line. While there's a lot to love here, I can't help but hope that it is a stepping stone to something even more lyrically beautiful.

The hype that had built around The Libs has also been massing around Scottish synth-pop band CHVRCHES. After the success of their first album, the band have said in interviews that the writing of their latest offering, *Every Open Eye*, happened in a relative flash. They have certainly stuck to their formula of driving pop beats, but the sound is bolder and more mature. The subtly darker lyrical content of tracks such as 'Playing Dead' and 'Empty Threat' keep the work from becoming monotonously pop-happy, as do the dreamy synths of 'Leave a Trace' and 'Afterglow'. In its entirety, the album is a masterpiece, and

proves the talent of this band (as too, incidentally, does their cover of Bieber's 'What Do You Mean?' - an otherwise irredeemable track).

Just as impressive is the debut album from Petite Noir, *La Vie Est Belle / Life is Beautiful*, with which South African Yannick Ilunga has this week crashed onto the global music scene. Ilunga is of Angolan-Congolese heritage and grew up in Cape Town, but it would be patronising to class his sound as 'world' or as having an 'African influence'. In truth, his self-described "noirwave" is bold and original in its fusion of tripping beats, eclectic instrumentation and the singer's own rich baritone, with flashes of Chicago house and layered polyrhythms emerging on tracks such as 'Intro Noirwave' and 'Freedom'. He must surely find success in both underground and mainstream spheres – for the moment he defies classification, but listening to him you can't help but agree that *La Vie* is indeed Belle.

Finishing off the picks are some dance tracks that have been picking up momentum this September (not least on that same late-night Radio 1; thanks again, wholly inadequate motorway system). The first is the latest from Bristol duo Icarus, 'Ride This Train' featuring Aniff Akinola. At points it risks sounding like big club fodder, but it is saved by the deep, unexpected groans of brass supporting an unlikely voice in dance music.

Finally, the latest offering from Lady Leshurr, 'Queen's Speech Ep. 4', or 'Brush Your Teeth' as many are calling it. The artist has been making fresh, competent rap since 2009, but the dark sound of this track and clever, funny lyrics means you should sit up and listen. "*Why you Snapchatting in the club for? / Just dance man*". Sage advice for us all this Freshers' Week.

disorientating at first, culminates in one of the more uncomfortable television scenes of the year.

Meanwhile, the imminent return of *Combo* (Stephen Graham) threatens to derail the domestic bliss that Woody (Joseph Gilgun), Lol (Vicky McClure), and Milky (Andrew Shim) are currently enjoying. Whilst often credited for his dialogue and the performances he can inspire, Meadows is rarely cited for his visuals or for the atmosphere he can create. 'Summer' is a striking demonstration of what a complete and versatile director he is.

The performances have been as good as ever, and undoubtedly each major cast member will be given even more material with which to show their worth over the next two episodes. Particular standouts over the first two episodes have been Chanel Cresswell as Kelly, and Andrew Ellis as Gadget. Whilst the former has been sidelined in the series to date, and the latter has been used principally as comic relief, at the end of 'Summer' both

are given an opportunity to flex their dramatic muscles. It is apparent both will be more significant characters as the series reaches its end, and their work helps strengthen what must be one of the finest ensembles in British drama.

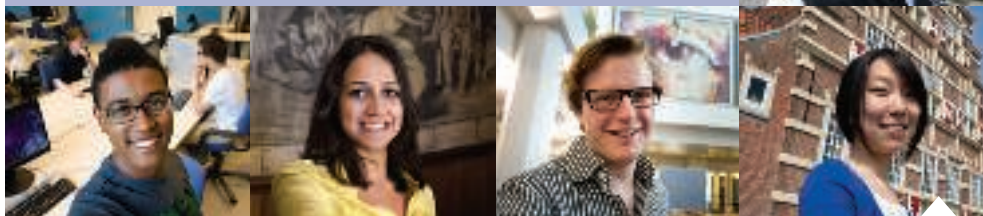
The coming of 'Autumn' and 'Winter' is sure to bring with it much emotion, and it is a testament to the work done by Meadows and his cast that longtime viewers are filled with a genuine sense of dread about what is to come. *This is England '90* is certainly no place to start for the newcomer. An understandable criticism levelled at the first two episodes of *This is England '90* has been its slow pace and self-indulgence. It's all Stone Roses, drugs, and barbecues... where's the drama? What's happening? Whilst very much reliant on your goodwill, the next two episodes are sure to deliver on those more apocalyptic expectations and when they do, we will long for the carefree days of spring and summer.

Michael Dalton

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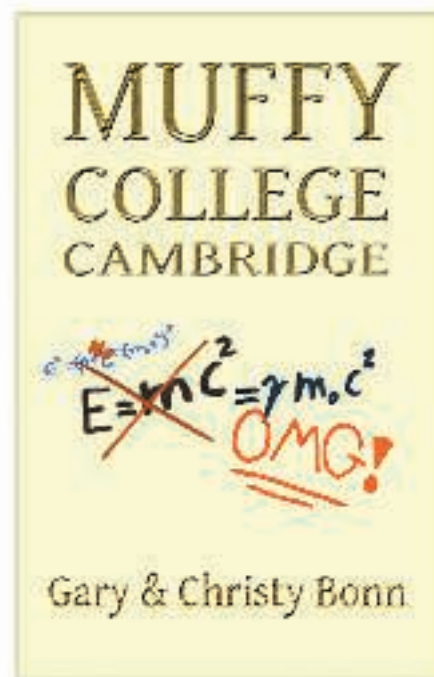
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Fault!

Is there a dark explanation behind Djokovic's crowd troubles? **Angus Satow** investigates.

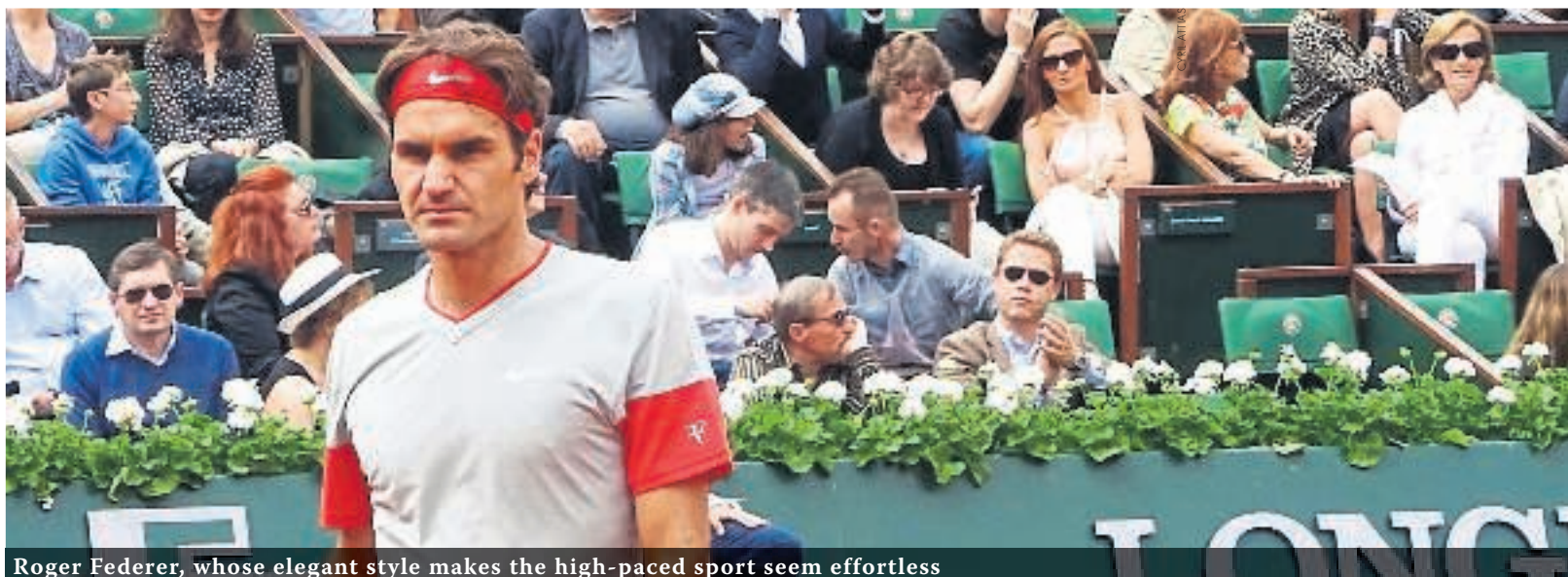
Novak Djokovic is one of the great tennis players of our time. He has won ten majors, became the only man to ever defeated clay king Rafael Nadal in straight sets at Roland Garros, and has been world number one for over a year. He is an unbreakable machine, with the best return in the game, the best defence in the game and a relentless, ruthless accuracy. In the 2011 US Open semi-final, the great Roger Federer had two match points on his own serve, yet he could not put Djokovic away. The Serb held firm and won the match – the man is nigh on impossible to beat.

You might expect, then, for him to be adored as much as Federer and Nadal, the men he supplanted on his rise to the top. If Federer is beatified like a Messi figure, and Rafa's power and fitness praised like Ronaldo, then surely this modest man, who has beaten the other two so many times in recent years, deserves the same treatment? Yet when he defeated Federer at the Swiss's second home – the Arthur Ashe stadium, where tennis's golden boy has won five times – he was greeted not with elation but with disdain. The crowd had made clear their favourite – every Federer winner was greeted as a match winner, while Djokovic faced boos and disruption. They even celebrated a fault in the final game. Rewind a few months to Wimbledon, with Djokovic again facing Federer, and you find the same phenomenon. How can we explain it?

It is not as if Djokovic is dislikeable. After the match he maintained his usual politeness, refusing to blame the crowd and humbling himself by declaring that he would try to “earn their support” – as if his wondrous feats aren't enough. He speaks English as perfectly as Roger, and doesn't take himself too seriously. He's a joker: someone who once took a golf club to his opening match at the snobbish Wimbledon. And he's a nice guy, once handing out free chocolates to journalists at an end-of-season press conference.

No, the answer has deeper, more unsavoury roots. In fact, the answer lies with tennis's class problem. Tennis is not a sport for your average citizen – centre court tickets at Wimbledon regularly exceed £100, and Wimbledon has been described as a “sub-Ascot”. When you think about the strawberries and cream, strict player dress code and almost universally posh voices, it's hard to disagree. The same is true of the Aegon Championships, held at the fancy west London Queen's club in June, where you find yourself surrounded by the monied elite. Investment bankers, lawyers, hedge fund managers, and more. Sure, this is one extreme, but it's indicative of tennis's profile.

The rich have always decided what constitutes art, from Renaissance paintings to modern theatre critics. Roger Federer is nothing if not middle-class sporting art – fans often wax lyrical about how the man “oozes class”. From his elegant backhand to his RF branding, from the cardigans to the coiffed hair, the 17-time Grand Slam champion embodies the middle-classes and their love of the artistry in sport. His seemingly effortless of his strokes chimes with middle-class entitlement. For them, it's almost



Roger Federer, whose elegant style makes the high-paced sport seem effortless



Novak Djokovic: a sign of things to come?

distasteful to watch a player, male or female, stretch themselves, push themselves. The sheer physicality of Nadal, Djokovic and Murray is off-putting, because it shows people struggling for their dues, as they've never had to.

“

ROGER FEDERER IS NOTHING IF NOT MIDDLE-CLASS SPORTING ART

Rugby is brutal. Football is foul-mouthed. Even handball has its physical moments (see p.39). Yet in tennis you can still find the word decorum. You see it, for example, in the pleasure commentators and pundits took in knocking tennis's abrasive bad boy, Nick Kyrgios, down a peg or two. And you most definitely find it in the attitude of the tennis community towards its top players. In the women's game, Serena Williams is denied the adulation that should come with her all-conquering achievements. One explanation might be that deep down, tennis would prefer Maria Sharapova, with her long blonde hair and tall thin body better suited to white Western models of femininity than the muscular American. Williams' style too – flat strokes, loud emotive grunts – has certainly played a part in her never truly being embraced. The same is true of Djokovic, Murray and to a lesser extent Nadal. Both the Serb and the Scot get visibly angry with themselves on court, shouting and screaming.

This isn't acceptable according to the middle-class dogma of the stiff upper lip, the idea that displaying emotions is distasteful; a norm which Federer follows impeccably.

Tennis cannot keep on like this forever. Djokovic is no aberration – rather, he embodies the new trend of scientific sports, using ice baths, following meticulous diets, training relentlessly. As sport continues to become more meticulously professional, science is playing an ever greater role and physicality is becoming more important. You don't see the Paul Gascoignes anymore; rather, supermen like Cristiano Ronaldo. Sport is gravitating towards the Djokovics, not the Federers.

The nature of tennis support is changing, too. Crowds will not stay impeccably silent forever – as the players become branded superhuman sporting machines, their global support will rise, and the urge to cheer them on will become stronger. The old golf-style model of silence followed by polite applause might not cut it anymore. Unless tennis finds a new way, might its decorum be on the way out?

While the sport itself remains safe, the decorous model of its sporting profile is under threat. Its replacement, funnily enough, already exists in the Davis Cup. Tennis's global competition – actually the world's largest annual team tournament – has never garnered as much support as football, rugby or even cricket in the world cup stakes. Its status is less exalted, and because it is so time-consuming it often loses star players – neither Federer nor Wawrinka are playing this year. Yet it provides a new model for tennis. Going to the Great Britain versus



Nadal's rivalry with Federer made for epic Wimbledon finals

France tie, I was reminded more of a football match than the respectful silence of Wimbledon. With an invested, partisan crowd, the atmosphere is electric. Each point is like a penalty shoot-out. The dress sense is eccentric. This is community.

It's also a musical affair. Here the end-of-season ATP World Tour Finals provide a template. Booming music during the breaks and interactive screens: this feels more like a nightclub than Wimbledon. But it represents the future, and one that the Davis Cup has already embraced.

Moreover, the Davis Cup demonstrates the benefits of attracting a less monied audience. It may be a cliché that gentrification leads to the demise of an ‘authentic’ atmosphere (the Cereal Killer Café is the prime example), but it contains more than an element of truth. When Team GB played in Glasgow, the atmosphere was incredible, and spurred them on to victory. By contrast, at the Queen's

Club, an appeal from Team GB was needed for the crowd to get involved, and members were even sent an email after the first day asking them to be a bit more ‘patriotic’ in their support. Even then the massively outnumbered

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SPORT IS GRAVITATING TOWARDS THE DJOKOVICS, NOT THE FEDERERS

French contingent was more than a match for the crowd. Tennis could do with a more diverse following.

The old era of lofty posturing and respect for the artistry of sport is over. Today, players are becoming less like gods, and more like supermen. Tennis needs to change with them.

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Try your hand at the latest sporting craze

Talitha Veith tells us why Cambridge should give up on the dreams of rowing success, and take up the European craze instead

Talitha Veith
Sport Correspondent

“Football, but with the obvious difference.” That’s all I’d heard of handball before I was asked to write an article about it (not this one though!). So before I went to my first training session, I thought it would be wise to look it up: invented in Germany, it is one of the most widely played sports on the continent. Ever since the London Olympics, it’s been a growing phenomenon in the UK as well.

Handball is basically like football but, wait for it, you’re supposed to use your hands, not your feet. There are fewer players, and they run across the smaller court at an amazing speed. The attacking team moves the ball around quickly to try and find a hole in the defence – making the fans feel as though they’re watching a magician doing the cups-and-balls trick. Cracking open a weak spot in the defence, the attacking player jumps through, using the time in the air to bury the ball in the net before crashing to the floor. Trust me, it’s not as painful as it sounds!

Handball is an all-out intense sport. To defend their goals, players frequently jostle, push and shove – sometimes legally under the rules, sometimes incurring fouls. The great thing is that there is a position for every type of physique. A good team needs a strong pivot to split the other team’s defence, fast and technically skilled wing players, tall back players with strong shots, and a creative centre acting as the playmaker. Most

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WHO WANTS TO GET UP EARLY BEFORE LECTURES TO BE SHOUTED AT IN A DAMP AND SWEATY BOAT?

importantly though, a team needs a fearless (read: crazy) goalie.

That brings me to another point. Let’s be honest, handball is not a sport for the faint-hearted. Experience in another team sport is helpful: basketball will give you the edge in handling the ball, volleyball in jumping and rugby in tackling (although wrestling someone to the ground tends to be frowned upon in handball).

That’s not to say it’s not fun. The trainings are mixed gender, even though real games are not, and going to the pub after training is an



The Women's Light Blues at last year's Varsity match

indispensable part of handball. The commitment consists of a two-hour training session per week, three weekends of competition per year for the British University Championship and of course the big Varsity match, plus some occasional friendlies. For people looking for a greater commitment, several university players also play for

the city club, meaning opportunities for glory (and a blue) are in plentiful supply. It may not have the prestige of the more ‘traditional’ Varsity sports like rowing and rugby, but we always lose in those anyway. And who wants to get up early before lectures to be shouted at in a damp and sweaty boat?

Last year, the women's Light Blues finished third at the Plate finals while the men's team steamrolled their way through the UK University Championships to become British champions.

So if you fancy defeating Oxford, forget rowing and join the handball team to bring glory to Cambridge!

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Tennis and class

Is Novak Djokovic a victim of dark forces? See page 37

Sport

Cambridge rears up for Varsity



SAMMY MARTIN

On the home straight? The Light Blues look to do the double and take the title for a second time following victory in last year's inaugural Varsity race

Angus Satow talks to horse race competitor Annabelle Bates ahead of the first Varsity match of the academic year

Angus Satow
Sport Editor

Anni Bates won't make it to Freshers' Cindies. Instead she'll be getting up at 5am and training as she has all summer (while we've been sleeping, travelling, or scrolling Tumblr). All this in preparation for the first Varsity race of the academic year: the horse race.

That race takes place next Saturday, 10th October, at the prestigious Dubai Future Champions Festival. Cambridge hope to win the inaugural race last year, and will take on Oxford at 1.30pm. But that's just the first of eight races, with the prize money for the two-day event coming in at a cool £2 million. As with

all Varsity encounters, however, it's the one against the old rivals that matters the most.

When the second hand strikes 12, 10 riders, five from each university, will hurtle forwards, knowing that the next couple of minutes will set

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NO SUMMER OFF, DAILY 5AM WAKE-UPS AND ALMOST DAILY RIDING

the tone for a year of Varsity matches. There are two simultaneous competitions – an individual race, and the all-important team race. For Bates, this is “the pinnacle of my year”, the climax towards which the whole team has been working towards for nearly seven months.

They've definitely worked for it.

Bates recalls a truly horrific training regime: no summer off, daily 5am wake-ups, five gym sessions a week and almost daily riding. Horse racing may not be the most traditional of Varsity matches, but it's certainly no easy ride. Ironically, Bates – this year's women's captain at the university's athletics club – calls it “a step up” from her previous Varsity experiences in the high jump. When the Cambridge team first got together in March, they were given the stark warning that fitness isn't just necessary for victory, but necessary for survival. With the horses getting up to speeds of 35mph, Bates is modest in describing the sport as “pretty dangerous”.

Clearly there is no room for error – this is high-stakes stuff. The race will be held at the Newmarket Rowley mile, viewed by some as the home of racing; such a famous location will make the pressure overwhelming. The team have already got a sense of the occasion during training. Bates describes how she saw the world-famous champion jockey Frankie Dettori on

the gallops one morning as “a very surreal moment, brushing shoulders with the elite of racing”.

It's been a long journey to get there. Surprisingly, only one of Cambridge's five – their captain James Alexander, part of last year's victorious team – has any previous experience in competitive horse racing. Bates signed up in March “on a whim”, having seen the inaugural race. In fact, she'd never ridden a race horse before she started

more than fifteen seconds: “We all realised how far we had to come.”

For those interested in getting involved in equestrian sports, this is encouraging. “Six months ago I had no idea I'd be doing this”, Bates remarks. But now she stands on the cusp of a second successive Varsity victory, her enhanced powers of endurance about to be put to the greatest test yet. When asked what advice she would give to those dreaming of equine glory, she is unequivocal: “Get down to Newmarket mile, see what it's all about.” At any rate “we need as many people as we can to shout us up the Mile.”

And for those wary of travelling outside the bubble, the message is ‘have no fear’. Not only can you get a £6.50 bus return, but the full day's competitive racing, subsidised food and drink, and grass you can actually walk on will be a welcome break from the intensity of the town. Bates, who as a fourth year lives in a house outside the town, close to Newmarket, is certainly a fan. “It's actually quite nice!” she exclaims. It'll be even nicer if she wins.

“

THERE IS NO ROOM FOR ERROR

training for the Varsity race, and that's a fairly typical profile for members of the Cambridge team. She recalls a humbling moment at the start of their training regime when in a taster session none of the team stayed on for