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STABBED IN THE BACK: KING'S BREAKS RENT PROMISES

Angela Grainger

KING'S COLLEGE is to impose rent rises to the levels recommended in the original University Bursar's Report, students were told last night.

Bursar Roger Salmon and student members of its Access and Costs Committee presented their 'interim' report on future rents policy, containing significant differences of opinion between Junior and Senior Members, to a confused and angry KCSU open meeting.

The Senior Members of the Committee have proposed rises averaging 26 per cent over the next two years, after consulting for four months on comparability, cost and the implication of rent rises on access. Under the rises recommended by the original Bursar's Report, King's students would have absorbed rises of 8 per cent above inflation over four years. Under the new proposals, excluding Kitchen Fixed Charge of £94 per term, the Bursar proposes an average future rental of fifty-seven pounds a week for 2001.

Students were quick to express anger and disillusionment. KCSU External Officer John Gaventa commented "I would say most people that were on rent strike that are here feel betrayed." Nathan Alfred said

the report showed that students had been let down. "The strike was ended because people put their faith in the Access and Costs committee...we hoped that it would allow College time to consider the access issues involved, and trusted it would allow the development of a policy that has the support of the students...it appears to be a misguided faith, a forlorn hope, a misplaced trust."

The anger extended to those in the audience. According to one computer scientist, "The Bursar has shown a blatant disregard for access. I think the statistics in his report are bogus and that he should rewrite it before any further concessions are made by students on the Access and Costs committee."

Others considered the College out of touch: "They talk about communication; you've just got to look at what sort of a lifestyle they are promoting at Cambridge. Banning jobs, residency requirements, travel grants, degree work that take you the summer to complete and then they suggest you can earn the rent for Bodley's in the holidays. The rest of the country already see us as elitist. You can't say they aren't promoting different lifestyles for the rich and poor." said one second year.

The move raises serious questions about the access issue in

Cambridge. King's College students were the first to rent strike last year in response to the University's Bursar's Report, which advised massive rises across the university. CUSU worked out that using the mid range of those proposed, Cambridge University was set to become the university with the highest fixed costs for studying outside London, totalling £70 per week.

The success of the university-wide CUSU campaign, which had 1,500 students marching on the streets of Cambridge against the Bursar's Report, will now come under the spotlight. King's Access and Costs Committee was set up as part of the deal between College and the Access Alliance, which ended its 240 person five month strike last year. It promised to formulate a long term rents policy based on considerations of what rent rises would mean for access and what the college needed to charge to cover costs. But its conclusions have left junior Access and Costs Committee member Omar Iqbal feeling "betrayed and bemused", he said last night, "they have ignored the principles that we agreed". He went on to call the exercise "pseudo-consultation...it's similar to what was proposed beforehand."

The conclusions of the report were split into 'Junior' and 'Senior member's conclusions'. Iqbal, a third year Engineering student on the Access and Costs Committee said the Junior Members had conceded to an 11% rise in rents, "As far as we can go to meet the college without damaging access".

Third year Nathan Alfred, former KCSU chair, said that students were being squeezed so much that "The access issue is now turning into one of affordability." Alongside the rent rises, King's has recently implemented a rise in the price of canteen food and begun to charge for printing for the first time.

Students had argued that all rooms should be within the reach of student's purses but the report suggests a rent that means a student living on the basic student loan in rooms currently let to finalists in Bodley's Court would be left with £2.09 per day to live on, on a 38-week contract, which it was suggested by students would lead to an economic stratification of accommodation. Roger Salmon said this proposal was consistent with the principal of comparability and fairness as the rooms were of 'high quality' and could potentially be let to graduate students or others at higher rates. He suggested "It is

possible to earn money in the vacation and borrow other money" to top up the government provision.

He was also questioned from the floor about why Senior Members had compared the average rents at other universities with only the cheapest rooms at King's. The report was criticised for "skewing the comparison" by taking into account the rents for accommodation in London. Students argued that the extra low-interest government loan for London students invalidated such a comparison but the Bursar considered it "a fair one to make...studying in London is a real alternative for many of our applicants." He added: "Our students are less hard up than those at other universities."

He said the work of the committee had been a "cooperative, constructive process" and thanked students for their work, saying he felt "let down" by the suggestion that the Report betrayed student trust. "We have put a lot of work into win-win ways forward here."

The meeting seemed unable to work out what might happen next. Salmon suggested that as the report was for discussion and not final "I need to talk to fellows, you need to talk to the students".

The future of rent rises across

the University is looking no more certain. The rents issue will soon be up for debate again in Emmanuel and Churchill colleges.

CUSU President Mat Coakley refuted suggestions that the rent issue had been allowed to slide in favour of access officer campaigns. "The discussions have always been college ventures that CUSU supports. The results of last years' strikes are going through the process of discussion."

He went on: "The colleges do have a responsibility to ensure rents don't damage access. High rents have a destructive impact on student communities and create ghettoisation."

Pledging support for the college's students, he said: "The report as I understand it is a work in progress and it is up to the students to judge it. But CUSU will fully support them in whatever action they decide to take. I encourage them to think hard about what the proposals would mean for access."

The report comes at a crucial time for King's College Student Union, who are currently re-electing a Co-ordinator (JCR President) after Access and Costs member Omar Iqbal was elected without any campaigning on his part. He immediately resigned but stays on the Access and Costs Committee.



Reigned all day: Queen in Cambridge to open Divinity faculty. See page 2.

Photo: Tom Catchsides





Photo: George Danezis

GKN pulls out of fair

Andrew Hunt

On Tuesday afternoon, People and Planet staged a protest against arms traders at the Engineering Placements Fair. Around a dozen protesters entered the fair and took part in the peaceful 'sit-down protest' during which they waved placards, distributed leaflets and discussed the issue with engineers.

The action was aimed at companies such as GKN and British Aerospace (BAe). However, GKN pulled out of the fair shortly beforehand, presumably because of the threat of protests.

A spokesman for GKN said, "We have no comment to make on the issue."

The protesters received a mixed

reception but in response to efforts to force them to move, they asserted their rights under the Education Act to remain and to demonstrate peacefully.

P & P felt their actions were successful and well received, especially as the BAe stand was "notably less popular" than the others.

David Babbs of P & P told *Varsity*, "The fact that GKN didn't turn up at all today demonstrates just how effective this kind of protest is – companies with something to hide would rather keep a low profile. GKN have been the focus of our efforts recently because they have bought a professorship, but are not the only ones whose involvement with the University gives cause for concern."

"BAe weapons have been used against the Kurds, West Papuans and

East Timorese and it is important that people contemplating working for these companies realise to what ends the fruits of their labours may be put."

Mr Babbs added, "We will keep campaigning for as long as it takes the University to accept that ethical issues are important...the fact that the University has set up an ethics committee is a sign of progress but we now need to make sure that the committee instigates positive change."

BAe staff, however, dismissed the idea that their company had any responsibility in choosing who it sold arms to, insisting that this is the role of the Government. But they were unable to answer protesters' claims that their company had been pushing for greater deregulation and less red tape in international arms trading.

Catz obeys Lucifer

Pete Houghton

St. Catharine's JCR Committee is up in arms about e-mails sent by the college's Computer Officer, Bruce Beckles. The e-mails were sent in response to criticism of college plans to introduce charges of 6p per page for printing in the college computer rooms, and have been highly critical of the college's JCR committee. One referred to them as "cheap electioneering politicians". Other e-mails claimed that the proposals for printer charging had been arrived at following the advice of his sister's cat "Lucifer", and defined utopia as "the concept of a weekend when you don't come in to work".

The e-mails have been described as "disrespectful" by the JCR President Dan Higgins, who told *Varsity*, "I

will not be satisfied until I receive an apology from Bruce Beckles over e-mails sent to the student body".

Mr Beckles argues that the printing charges are being introduced because the college can no longer bear the cost of printing. He also claims that computer facilities have been misused, and that charging will help to combat unnecessary and wasteful printing.

His e-mails accused the JCR committee, which had objected to the introduction of printer charging, of being "principally concerned with fomenting dissent rather than resolving practical issues". Some objectors within college were described as "nameless malcontents" who "would rather impeach the Computer Officer and incite an armed insurrection than talk to us".

Ethnic minority applications down

Tosin Sulaiman

The number of university applications from black students fell by ten per cent between 1997 and 1999, according to figures recently released by the National Union of Students. Applications from African males dropped by 10.71 per cent during that time, while applications from those of Caribbean origin dropped by 9.17 per cent. The NUS believes that the introduction of tuition fees are to blame. NUS President Owain James said, "Black students and students from low income families are far less likely to enter higher education if they are liable to get into significant debt. Numbers of students from within these groups have fallen as a direct result of the imposition of tuition fees."

Contrary to the NUS survey, however, are figures showing an increase in the

number of black students applying to Cambridge between 1998 and 1999. Last year saw a 24.7 per cent rise in applications from students who classified themselves as black, an increase which the University attributes to the Target Schools and GEEMA campaigns. Figures for this year are not yet available.

Manish Maisuria, the University's new GEEMA Co-ordinator, said, "I don't think studying in Cambridge provides a heavier financial burden than elsewhere, and there are a number of funds that are there to help students facing hardship." He pointed out that there is a booklet on financial issues being produced by the Access/Schools Liaison Officer Rosemary Butcher, which is aimed at prospective undergraduates and will be distributed to schools and colleges. He did, however, acknowledge that tuition fees can "deter people from ethnic minorities from apply-

ing." Studies have shown that 73.3 per cent of full time undergraduates are in debt, and that the average student is about £6,608 in debt. NUS Black Students Officer Dennis Fernando pointed out that the number of graduate applicants has also gone down, and that black people make up a large proportion of mature students. He explained that tuition fees are a "disincentive" for black students to go into higher education because they know they will come out in debt. Poor graduate employment prospects worsen the situation. "Black graduates are three times less likely to be employed, so it takes longer to pay off their debts," he said.

Fernando believes that black students are "at the sharp end of it, as they seem to be the most affected by racism." But, he said, "If you tackle it at its sharpest point, you improve the situation for everyone."

The ten second Varsity

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She's not a pheasant plucker

Lucy Pogson

English weather met the Queen yesterday morning, but crowds still eagerly awaited the arrival of Her Majesty, who was officially opening the new Faculty of Divinity building on the Sidgwick Site.

Although the royal party was not due until 11.30am, people were beginning to gather on the site from as early as 10.30am, and one gentleman waited under his umbrella for over an hour to witness HM the Queen walk the hundred yards from West Road into the new faculty.

The new £7.8 million building was designed by Edward Cullinans Architects, one of the leading names in post-war British architecture, and is distinctive for its glass rotunda and cascade of roof gardens.

Professor David Ford, Regius Professor of Divinity, has described the new £7.8 million faculty as housing "some of the best facilities for our field in Europe". He added that the visit "is an important recognition of everyone's efforts and of the commitment of Cambridge to the flourishing of this field."

As the Queen walked by, the crowd broke into delighted applause, but what astonished Fitzwilliam theologian Chris Stoltz most was the fact that "she carries her own umbrella! Wow!"

Chris Seifferlein, also studying theology, explained how yesterday's events had disrupted lectures for the day for all Cambridge theologians. He said, however, that he was expecting them to be made up sometime next week.

Abigail Lowe, a student at

Homerton, said that she didn't mind missing lectures because she was enjoying the event: "It's special to see the Queen because she's ours – she belongs to us!" Jeanette Haywood, also studying at Homerton, agreed with this, adding "we feel like we know her, she's been around all our lives." The Queen was also described as "a symbol of our country" by Emma Handley, who went on to explain that she had come to see Her Majesty as "a sign of support".

There were, however, sarcastic jeers from some republican historians.

The Queen took a tour of the facilities and officially named the main lecture room the Runcie Room, after the former Archbishop of Canterbury and University High Steward, Lord Runcie. She then stopped to talk to some students over a cup of tea before unveiling a plaque to commemorate her visit.

The royal party also paid a visit to

Trinity Hall, which was celebrating the 650th anniversary of being granted the Royal Licence. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were greeted by members of college, including the newly elected Master, Professor Peter Clarke.

Outside Trinity Hall, a group of students with Union Jack hats posed for photographs, but the general feel of the day was more one of light-hearted patriotism than of royalist fanaticism.



Photo: Tom Catchsides

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News In Brief

Murder

Two men have been charged with the murder of Cambridge resident Ian Belshaw. Robin Betson, of Edward Street, Cambridge and Malcolm Sang, of Ainsdale in Cherry Hinton, were both charged on Wednesday night, exactly a week after Mr Belshaw was found lying in bushes near Campkin Road in King's Hedges.

Police believe passers-by might not have gone to help Mr Belshaw because they wrongly thought him to be drunk.

Sang and Betson were due to appear before city magistrates today after spending the night in police custody, but the police are still appealing for anyone who has more information to contact them.

Blues to row Atlantic

Two Blues boat race champions, Alan Watson, 25, and Miles Barnett, 27, are currently trying to row 3,000 miles across the Atlantic in under 50 days. The expedition will start at Tenerife and go to Barbados. The pair have set a target of raising £100,000 for the Cancer Research Campaign's Cambridge Appeal.

Tony Ogden, manager of the campaign explained "We now urgently need funds to finance the pioneering science at Strangeways Laboratory". The rowers have a chance of beating the world record, which currently stands at 41 days and two hours.

Bag snatching

Welfare representatives were asked to circulate a warning at the beginning of this week, alerting students to two bag snatches that occurred within twenty-four hours. The first involved a female student who was riding a bicycle when attacked, and the second robbery occurred outside a college. CUSU President Mat Coakley stated that "whilst Cambridge is generally safe, we all need to be aware and on the look out".

Penis seen in Cambridge

A flasher was seen around the Madingley Road area last Friday at around 3.30pm. A warning was sent out to female students warning of a "tall white male wearing a blue jacket". One SPS student claimed that "the street lighting around the colleges is inadequate, this puts all female students at risk". A number of colleges are currently carrying out lighting surveys to assess the risk, in the run up to a meeting between CUSU and the City Council. Deborah Moon, Christ's Women's Officer, told undergraduates "we need to know what the problems are before we can do anything about them".

Bad news

A recent NUS report revealed a seven per cent decline in the number of males from skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled backgrounds enrolling in university between 1997-1999.

Up to eight million pounds a year is lost by the larger universities through teaching British and EU students, as foreign students bring in more money.

Winners. Nearly

Varsity Online was recently awarded second place in the Independent Student Media Awards. Visit www.varsity.cam.ac.uk to see how good it is.

Compiled By:

Julian Blake, Oci Stott,
Natalie Ramm, Rasila Patel

Abortion bad. TCS good. Fac-off!

Oci Stott

Student pregnancy and abortion issues once again caused controversy at Wednesday's CUSU Council. An emergency motion seeking to force CUSU to find alternative training for its pregnancy support line volunteers was comfortably defeated.

Rupert Beale (Trinity) proposed that the Family Planning Association (FPA) was not a suitable organisation to train pregnancy support line volunteers and that CUSU funding for this training, set at £500, should therefore be withheld. He argued that the FPA "provided no information at all for those who may have a crisis pregnancy and want to keep their baby", challenging the council to "check their website". He also claimed that the FPA had recently produced a leaflet "advising that a good reason for having an abortion would be that you would be able to go to the pub with your

mates". Sarah Carr (King's) replied that FPA's training for the students was "made to measure". She added that CUSU was liaising with Addenbrooke's, amongst others, to ensure a balanced training programme. There was concern over the wording of the motion, as one clause made reference to the writings of the founder of a related organisation, the International Planned Pregnancy Federation (IPPF), and her eugenic principles, quoting documents over seventy-five years old on the "failure to segregate morons". One delegate spoke out strongly against backing the motion, as CUSU would similarly have to speak out against the current government of Sweden because of the Swedish administration's eugenicist policies in the first half of the century. The issue was secondary to the general argument against the motion, that the training to be provided would be well-balanced, and the motion was defeated.

CUSU Services Officer, Martin Lucas-

Smith, presented CUSU's revised budget at the meeting, which he described as "a budget for the future". He announced that CUSU was "now on a more stable financial footing". One reason given for this was the "financial success" of *The Cambridge Student*. "Let there be no more nonsense about TCS being held by a golden umbilical cord", Mr Lucas-Smith concluded, glowering at a *Varsity* journalist.

The controversy over the new University cards will continue into next term, however, as Lucas-Smith successfully proposed that the motion he himself had co-operated with, and openly supported ('University Cards fiasco', *Varsity* 17 November), be held over until the next meeting of council.

Council also discussed the motions that CUSU will present to the NUS Conference, including an anti-racism initiative, and a motion on working rights for students. The conference will take place at the end of Lent term.

Emma Woolerton

A candidate in the History Faculty Representatives' election has withdrawn in protest at the content of rival manifestos. Adrian Bradley told *Varsity* that he believes one of his rivals has sunk to "a stupid level" by including an anti-Peterhouse slogan on a manifesto, and mimicking his manifesto.

Mr Bradley has lodged complaints with the Faculty's Principal Secretary and Faculty Chairman after the Faculty displayed a manifesto by Nicholas Singer, a student from Downing, which ended on the slogan "Vote for me: I'm not from Peterhouse". Although the remark was later withdrawn, Mr Bradley told *Varsity* that "most of the people at Peterhouse that I've spoken to are very pissed off about it."

Mr Bradley also told us that he believes that Mr Singer altered the style and content of his manifesto to mimic his own. He said that "When I stood, I put up the usual bland manifesto. There was one other up, which was an A4 side of prose." Mr Bradley checked the manifestos the next day, by which time a different set of manifestos had been put on display. "Gone was the prose, replaced by clear bullet points (just like mine) and some new policies (also just like mine)," he said. The new manifesto from Mr Singer ended with the anti-Peterhouse slogan.

Mr Singer told *Varsity* that "The Peterhouse slogan was a big mistake. I put it in as a joke and immediately realised it was extreme folly." He emphasised that his running mate, Yascha Mounk, had not been aware of the slogan. Mr Mounk told *Varsity* that "I didn't think it was very funny, but I didn't think that it would insult someone so badly."

Mr Singer and Mr Mounk also denied any deliberate copying of the manifestos. "The similar points are obvious ideas," Mr Mounk said. Mr Singer has now offered an apology to Mr Bradley, which has been accepted.

However, Mr Bradley expressed concern that the faculty had not monitored the content of the manifestos more carefully. Candidates submit the manifestos to the Faculty's secretaries, who then type them up. Peterhouse External Officer, Tony McConnell, told *Varsity*: "I'm shocked that a History Faculty employee could be so crass as actually to type this up without realising that it might be rather offensive. The idea that 'being from Peterhouse' is a reason not to vote for someone is a ridiculous one."

CUSU Faculty Forum Representative, Joshua Reddaway, said, "We are very concerned about the lack of procedures and guidelines concerning the conduct of candidates and their campaigns, and will be working with the University to ensure this does not happen again." He added that he did not want an isolated incident to overshadow "what I am sure will be very successful elections".

Not everyone can swim, we're told

Jo Collins

12 students from Cambridge and Anglia joined a crowd of 5,000 at The Hague on Saturday, to build a symbolic dyke around the Climate Change talks in an attempt to turn the tide of global warming. The 400 metre-long wall of sandbags completely surrounded the Conference Centre, leaving government delegates no option but to scramble over as they arrived to determine the future of the Kyoto Protocol, a global treaty on greenhouse gas reductions.

Protesters had come from over 40 countries to hold their governments to account for their actions in The Hague. Jack Townsend, People & Planet representative for East Anglia, accused the US of "squirring and cheating their way out of their miniscule targets."

Despite the fears for the future uniting all the protesters the atmosphere of the demonstration was remarkably peaceful. 50,000 sand bags were filled and swung along chains of hands to the dyke, while



Photo: Jo Collins

steel bands and solar sound systems kept the rhythm going.

Roy Ashton from Cambridge said, "The governments' own scientists are telling us plainly that the alternative to action is more and worse natural disasters and global weather disruption -

impacting mainly on the poor".

A section of the dyke has been left standing this week while the governments haggle inside. Hanging from it is a banner which reads: "World Leaders, Don't stick your head in the sand. The tide is coming in."

Jesus "full of harlots"

Thalia Ruimtevuiler

Eight 'shapely' contestants competed on Wednesday night for the much-coveted title of Miss Jesus. The annual (d)RAG event is open only to males who dare to get in touch with their feminine side.

The competitors completed various tasks including downing a Bacardi Breezer, putting a condom on a cucumber and giving a Mars Bar a blowjob. The winner this year was 'Ginger', aka Richard Scott, who admitted spending hours on

his hair and make up. He told *Varsity*, "I was definitely confident beforehand that I had the best legs." He also confessed that it wasn't the first time he had dressed up as a member of the opposite sex. Nick King, who was awarded second place for his efforts as Heidi Bratwurst, the thong-wearing Alpine Milkmaid, said, "I was inspired to wear the thong by the numerous harlots

I've been hanging around with for the last seven weeks - Jesus is full of them." Another contestant, David Tonge, added, "letting people know that you are in touch with your feminine side is not all that bad (as long as men don't get the same message)."

The event has so far raised £350 but the organisers are hoping this figure will double once money from sponsorship has been collected.

More cash for higher education

Sarah Brealey

David Blunkett last week pledged to give an extra £1 billion to universities over the next three years, in the hope of improving the pay of university staff and boosting access measures, intended to increase further the number of students in higher education.

Blunkett claimed that the capital would mean "a real increase in funding per student" and would fully fund the next two years' HE sector expansion "for the first time since the 1980s."

The Government aims to enable half of the population to "have had the opportunity to benefit from higher education" by the age of thirty. Current plans involve

recruitment of an additional 45,000 students next year alone, with further expansion in the following two years.

Sir Brian Fender, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, enthused, "This spending settlement is good news. Our universities and colleges have an excellent record of achievement...but can only play a leading role with the necessary resources, and we are delighted that the Government has recognised the strong case for a substantial extra investment."

He went on to praise the pay rise plans "Universities and colleges must compete internationally to recruit the best staff. This is a major step in helping them do that." Fender described the Government's policies as "a firm commitment to expand

student numbers and increase access... We all recognise how much more there is to do to promote more equal access."

The promise of cash follows the creation of new grants for poorer students, 50 per cent of which - £18 million over two years - will go to 'elite' universities such as Cambridge, with more than a fifth of their intake from private schools. A report written by the HEFCE says these initiatives will be supported by "an increasing element" of universities' own funding.

Most of the cash is being awarded to elite universities, leading to complaints from some former polytechnics. However, there is already a separate £25 million fund for universities which are successful at attracting underprivileged

students using the 'postcode premium' which will be increased by £6 million, while £4 million has been allocated for summer schools.

In spite of the hype, no targets have been set for widened access. Universities are expected to generate their own "individual mission". HEFCE will then monitor the plans' success. HEFCE aims "to raise aspirations of students from under-represented groups to enter higher education and to ensure that students have the best possible chance of succeeding."

Fender spoke of a culture of universal HE availability. "It is a tragic waste of talent that some young people never consider the possibility of attending university or college, even though they have the ability to do so."

Hope for Cambridge Two Paximum impact

Charlotte O'Brien

The campaign to quash the drug-related convictions of Wintercomfort charity workers will come to a head on 1 December, when there will be a further hearing attended by three judges. Jailed last year for allegedly turning a blind eye to drugs supply at a hostel for the homeless, the campaign has continued since. There is a chance of a 'reserve judgment' conclusion, but it is hoped that the decision will be made on the same day. "This is what we've been waiting for since getting out of prison" explains Ruth Wyner who was jailed with John Brock last year. She is keenly anticipating the hearing. "When we got out on 11 July the appeal judges said they hoped for a hearing in weeks – and that just hasn't happened." Wheels of justice eh? "Indeed – its fairly typical".

The case of charity workers being convicted under section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act, which prohibits permitting drug dealing, has unleashed huge controversy.

Wyner admits still to being "puzzled" as to how the apparent contradictions in the law were highlighted by her letter to Jack Straw. She told him she was writing "to make you aware of this supply (of drugs in prisons) as you are of course 'Number One' in regard to prison management" drawing the parallel with her own position as 'Number One' of Wintercomfort where there was a drugs supply "of which I was not specifically aware." Wyner received a reply "from one of his minions. It assured me they were doing all that they could to tackle drugs in prisons and gave me a Crimestoppers number to phone if I wanted to report anything!"

She is scathing about the gesture – "I

was in prison, as if I could phone, on a pay phone, publicly without great risk. I sometimes wonder if the Home Office is at all in touch with what goes on in prisons."

Adjusting to the prison regime was tough, the "infantilising, demeaning nature of it means the hardest thing was to hold onto the person you are" – especially as she was "bedded down for two years at least – that's when parole would have been." Thanks to "three sensible judges" they were released early on bail.

It is hoped that if their appeal is successful, then the law should be clarified to take account of the situation in a homeless hostel. "We feel the law is very unclear, and a petition has been drawn up, with the support of UNISON – but we won't be presenting that until after the appeal has been concluded." The issue has raised support from all quarters. "I'm absolutely astonished at the widespread feeling and the momentum that has been gathered – it has really helped get us through so far." Wyner hopes their fight will reach a result that helps other charities. "What is also brilliant is the way I've received letters from people who tell me that they've written to their MP for the first time, on my behalf, or that the Cambridge Two march was the first march they have been on. Support has come from people who normally would not be involved in such action."

Having been forced to resign her position in Wintercomfort, she sadly states that "I can't turn back now. It's a huge loss, I enjoyed working there tremendously. At least now I get to do some writing." She has had several articles published already and hopes to work on "something longer" over the coming year. "In the thick of homelessness you have no time for that kind of thing,



One of the Cambridge Two: Ruth Wyner

there are always crisis situations."

Wintercomfort suffered due to "extra pressure on staff in an already stressful job. That said they have done a marvellous job at keeping going." Of course, the "other side of the coin" is the increased publicity. "Support has grown, and the struggle to survive as a day centre despite everything has made them stronger." Wyner's hopes for tackling the vagueness of the written law must be bolstered by the fact that even the prison guards and inmates wished Wyner luck with her campaign. "Some did, some didn't. The sensible ones did!" She and Brock are ready, with their league of helpers, to take on the legal system. "When I was inside I had to keep depression at bay, and doing that you have to remember there's a bit of fight in you."

Top comedians Rob Newman and Mark Thomas will be among those appearing at the Hackney Empire in support of the Cambridge Two on Saturday Night. Contact the box-office on (020) 8985 2424 for tickets.

Sanah Faridi
Jennifer Tuckett

Over 600 students turned up to watch Jeremy Paxman debate 'Producing and Presenting the News' with Jon Barton. Paxman declared to the awed assembly that news presenting was "essentially an occupation for trained chimpanzees". He put *Newsnight* on a higher pedestal, however, and the audience, and the rest of the panel in turn put him on an even higher one. The 'debate' itself was something of an excuse for backslapping by everyone concerned.

The highlight of this mutual masturbation session was when a member of the audience railed at the news demi-god for his "merciless" treatment of his interviewees who cannot ask him questions back and criticised the enormous influence he has over people's opinions. Paxman replied, "But I'm not the person making policies, they are". He addressed this issue with *Varsity* after the talk. "Basically it seems to me that the media can only live with one stereotype at a time – you can't be more than one thing and I realised that I had got this image at a point where I couldn't do anything about it...but I wouldn't have said that it's to do with expressing a certain point of view, I would have said that it was with the simple-minded belief that one is difficult more than one is expressing a certain point of view."

In an exclusive interview with *Varsity* after the talk, "Is *Varsity* in terminal decline now, as suggested by someone in *The Cambridge Student*?" asks the Paxman. We felt it would be rude to respond.

Asked his memories of filling the trousers of *Varsity* editor, he responds,



Jeremy Paxman, from Varsity editor to fame.

"It was a very sad period of my life that I've chosen to blot out of my memory." This interview is not going too well? "No, I'm teasing you. I had a great time".

Paxman criticised the journalistic profession – in a highly entertaining fashion – and complained that too many front-pages are made up of press release "babble". "The best definition of news is that it is something, someone, somewhere does not wish you to know, and that anything else is advertising." This attitude, coupled with an excited approach, seemed to confirm the prejudices about what journalists are meant to be like – full of their own opinions and preferring to exert what they think instead of actually listening – was that intentional, or an act? He says anxiously, "Is that the impression I gave you? News is about finding things out, as I hope I said. My personal prejudices are neither here nor there, and a matter of great boredom I would have thought." Actually, they would have been more entertaining.



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Coakhead

Johann Hari CUSUcks up to our Student Union

Those Cambridge students who know what CUSU is (it's our student union, by the way) usually have a pretty poor view of it. Partly this is because of the cynicism that is attached to anything even vaguely 'political'. Partly this is because, in a hyper-competitive environment like ours, anyone who appears to be one notch ahead, to be achieving something outside his or her subject, attracts resentment. And partly it's because CUSU is seen as a bureaucratic, 'meddling' institution that attaches itself to whatever 'politically correct' cause is apparent that particular week.

The best remedy for this pessimism is to go and see what CUSU does. For my first two terms here, I didn't even know what it was. Too many students never even discover the difference between CUSU and the Cambridge Union.

CUSU is elected by and accountable to the student body. You are automatically a member. The Union, in sharp contrast, is an extension of the atmosphere of the all-male public schools that provide so much of Cambridge's intake. It is only open to those who can afford to pay a considerable sum of money each year to be members, and it has no representative role whatsoever.

When I discovered this distinction, I think I shrugged my shoulders. I dare say that unless you are one of the few people involved in either institution, you're doing the same. But watching, probing and discussing what CUSU gets up to, I have become convinced that we have one of the most professional and dedicated University Students' Unions in the country. Students' unions usually attract either

aspirant politicians or well-meaning but dim meddlers. Cambridge's is a beacon. Where else in the country would you get the your union run by the likes of Mat Coakley (who got a first last year and could be earning considerably more than the CUSU Presidency's twelve grand)? As private individuals, we would fork out a fortune for the standard of lobbying that CUSU exerts on the University, local authorities and government on our behalf.

Take the issue of the appalling rent rises proposed by the University last year, led by the naïve and ignorant figure of Professor Charles Larkum, the Chair of the Bursars' Committee. Under the leadership of Tristan Jones, then-President, CUSU launched a carefully planned campaign which com-

bined raising awareness among students and exerting pressure on the University through both private and public channels. They gained an awful lot of attention from both the student body and the national press, and scared many senior figures in the University shitless. Under the pressure, many of the prejudices held by professors were drawn out into the open. A clearly flustered Larkum blurted out in an interview with the *Guardian*, "what good is access if you have to sacrifice quality?" In light of the CUSU campaign, rents will not now rise at the exorbitant rate proposed by Larkum, and he stands exposed as an ugly and reactionary force.

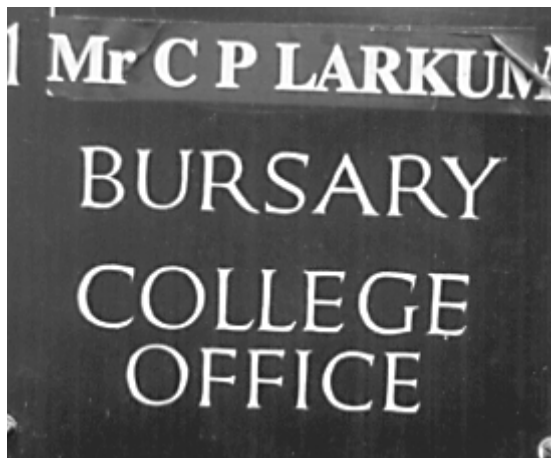
Of course sometimes CUSU's activities descend into nonsense gesture politics. Periodically, CUSU has a burst of illiberal vigour in which they seek to

ban something (Nestlé products, army recruitment or whatever) rather than educate students so they can make their own informed choice. This year's exec have a less puerile and out-of-touch political orientation. This year we will be well served by Mat Coakley and his team.

It's very easy to find out what CUSU's doing. Anyone can go to their open meetings – ask your college rep and he'll show you where they are and explain the (admittedly annoying) procedures. I urge anyone who's got the time to get involved. The elected CUSU officers take a lot of flak for their stressful and low-paid jobs. Just for once, can I take this opportunity to say thank you for all the long meetings, the abuse and the hassle that they endure on our behalf?



CUSU: A beacon of light shining against the dark force of bursarial world domination



Photos: Louisa Thomson (left) and Simon Poliakoff (centre and right)

"If she make me do one more bar graph, she loses a kidney", thought Larry, but his smile never wavered.

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The Sketch

Ten years ago, Margaret Thatcher wept on the steps of Downing Street and declared it was "a funny old world". Presumably she didn't have any idea just how funny the old world would turn out to be. A decade on from Thatcher's red-eyed departure from Number 10, the world is a topsy-turvy place. In America, they are arguing over pregnant ballot papers and hanging chads (apparently the latter is not one of George W Bush's death row policies, nor is the former anything to do with Clinton's Lewinsky escapades). In France they're going (quite literally) mad over the issue of British cows. In Britain Victor Meldrew has died. And as if all this *Alice in Wonderland* surreality weren't enough, this week, Baroness Thatcher is being transformed into the Clare Rayner of politics. Caring, sharing and concerned for our welfare, the Iron Lady has melted. In chocolate terms, she has gone from a hard-nosed almond centre to a fondant caramel.

Any attempt to reform Thatcher's image must surely be a complete waste of time. She has become so ingrained in our national consciousness as the *Spitting Image* puppet who ferociously flayed all those who stood in her path, that a metamorphosis into a compassionate Princess Diana clone simply won't wash. Thatcher could amputate her own leg and auction it off for disabled children and we'd still question her motivation. This is the woman who closed down the mines, introduced the poll tax and encouraged the growth of yuppie-dom. As an exercise in self-promotion, it must rank right up there alongside turning Pol Pot into a nursery school teacher, giving Al Gore a sense of charisma or packaging Satan and the infernal tortures of the Underworld in a people-friendly format (on second thoughts, they've already done that with Steps).

But people are trying nonetheless. Writing in *The Times* this week, Michael Portillo, an undisputed bastion of tender loving care, tried to convince us that Maggie was "not judgemental" (leaving aside her judgements on sacrificial lambs Geoffrey Howe, Norman Lamont and Argentina, naturally). Moreover, she "has many friends among the ethnic groups". Precisely what Portillo means by "the ethnic groups" is unclear. One gets the impression he is trying to keep his distance from those funny little brown people who sell lentils down the road by calling them "ethnic groups", almost like they form some homogenous anthill commune which beatific Tories can look at occasionally to admire their industriousness. Thatcher as a friend of these "ethnic groups" appears somewhat antithetical, as if we're being asked to believe that the Indians got on with Queen Victoria like a house on fire, and the South Africans wanted to have Cecil Rhodes' babies.

An oblivious Portillo wades on deeper into the murky waters of impossibility. Apparently Thatcher is also a nice person because of her economic policies. A tenuous link at the best of times, but Portillo carries on regardless. Thatcher's "dynamic" taxation selflessly gave people "responsibility for their own behaviour". Oooh. Thank you very much. Responsibility for my own behaviour, a specially-packaged present from the Tory Party. And there I was thinking I was in control of myself already, when all along, the Conservatives were looking after my behaviour for me in a Trust Fund until I'm responsible enough. How generous.

Trying to re-package Thatcher in soft-focus is pointless. She was so much more entertaining before. Completely mad, and not afraid to show it. Like Tony Benn, or Ken Livingstone, she at least brought some flamboyance to the corridors of power. Now Tony Blair translucently manages to be all things to all people with empty promises of nothing to no one. It's a funny old world, this rarefied orb of Westminster, but everyone seems to have lost their sense of humour.

Elizabeth Day

Fuelling the debate

Judith Whitely

It's difficult to blame Gordon Brown for his simpering concessions to the fuel lobby last week. Just as Hague and Portillo's magic 3p off fuel duty hardly came as a surprise after the furore of two months ago. They are doing what politicians are supposed to do – giving the people what they want. The fuel protesters would have us believe that high fuel prices affect everyone, or at least, the large driving majority. High fuel prices threaten small haulage firms. High fuel prices exacerbate the misery of Britain's farming community. High fuel prices have a direct affect on everybody's here and now. Can I go out tonight? Can we get that new TV? Where can we go on holiday this year? Can little Johnny go on the school trip?

All important questions. It's about happiness in the western post-modern world. It's about quality of life.

So there was an element of irony last week as Britain disappeared beneath the gush of the Ouse and the Tay and the Cam. We generally don't get to see the results of our high impact modern living. We leave them as a little surprise for posterity. But last week, as Mr and Mrs Jones' chest of drawers floated away down York high street, the message was clear. Why do you always drive Johnny to school? Why do you drive to work alone every day? Why did all that shopping you bought get to the supermarket by road? The world's warming up, and it's because we refuse to leave our cars at home.

This is the problem with the protection of the environment. It's about personal responsibility, and, let's be honest,

personal denial. Our reckless consumption of the world's finite resources can't continue for that much longer. Each and every one of us in the Western world would have to change our lifestyles quite dramatically for the planet to begin to operate on any kind of long-term sustainable level. And we'd be doing it for future generations, not for ourselves, which is why it's such a difficult thing to persuade people to get excited about. The only tangible benefit in our lifetime is the warm inner glow of altruism, and life's too short for such a long term view. Is it really surprising that any kind of government action to try and promote environmental awareness is so unpopular?

Vote-winning health and education legislation is all about opening more doors, providing more services, widening opportunities. Environmental poli-

cy is essentially about more rules and regulation. Policies designed to protect the environment will inevitably encroach on our fiercely guarded personal liberty. Attempts to price drivers off our smog-ridden, gridlocked highways aren't just a financial burden, they are considered an affront to our individual autonomy. They prevent us from doing what we want, when and how we want to do it. So it's unlikely that any political party is going to offer genuinely radical and effective environmental policies in the near future, because we don't want them. At the end of the day, the power to hold back the floodwaters of our increasingly cosy climate lies with individuals, not the government. What's needed is a universal change of attitude. Living for today is all good fun, but it's tomorrow that will have to pick up the pieces.



Photo: Lizzie Pom



Photo: Ben Schott

"The world's warming up...because we refuse to leave our cars at home."

The future of Europe

The Rt Hon Chris Patten, Member of the European Commission, argues that the European future is defined by democratic accountability

So you want me to write about Europe's future? Brave author. What would I have written a century ago?

Would I have predicted in the high days of liberal triumphalism that in the first half of the century to come, we would almost lose freedom entirely in the gulag and in the gas chambers? Would I have predicted that in the second half of the same century we would recover our liberties despite the armed threat of Soviet totalitarianism, behind the shield of NATO and with the animating construction of the European Union. Both those developments betoken a unique pooling of sovereignty by nation states. Predictable. Who's kidding whom? What comes next may be equally surprising.

But there are at least two things about the future that we pretty much know.

First, the "Europe" we've described, debated, derided, seldom praised, is

"Europe...has to confront and overcome the consequences of a paradox that bestrides the world."

the western half of the continent, the union of states, first six, then nine, ten, twelve and fifteen – brought together around the original reconciliation of France and Germany in institutional form. Much of Europe – suffering and just about surviving under Russia's boot – lay beyond our successful economic union. But it was still Europe. Prague is as European as Paris, Warsaw as London.

The next enterprise that challenges

us is to bring virtually the whole of geographical Europe within the bounds of political Europe, the Europe of the Union. That is a historic task of formidable proportions. Its accomplishment will give our political life a new rhythm and purpose; failure would confront us with

"It supposes that sovereignty is like virginity (remember virginity?) – there one moment, gone the next...a largely meaningless concept."

painful questions about our purpose and destiny, questions which would cast doubt on both our generosity and our democratic vision.

Second, Europe – its political and economic Union – has to confront and overcome the consequences of a paradox that bestrides the world.

There are, today, more nation states in Europe than ever before. Nearly all

of them – proud of their language, culture, initiatives and independence – are members of the EU or would like to be. How come? The answer is simple.

While the nation state remains the basic political unit, commanding the primary affections and loyalty of its citizens, they realise that to protect their countries' national interests it is necessary to pool sovereignty. To protect de facto sovereignty, they have to surrender de jure sovereignty in several areas of political policy.

But there's a catch. The institutions

established to implement pooled sovereignty have not yet acquired the legitimacy or loyalty so far as nation state citizens are concerned that they require. That's the message from Seattle and the World Trade Organisation, to Washington and the World Bank, to Prague and the

International Monetary Fund.

It's also the problem for Europe, and the problem for Britain. Brussels is hit by the same credibility problem as other international organisations. But, both in Europe and in Britain, we should be able to address it more successfully. Europe has a rich tradition of democracy – and we should be able to use democratic accountability, on a broader scale, to deepen loyalties and enhance credibility.

Some talk about Europe as though it was a challenge to sovereignty. That's wrong. It supposes that sovereignty is like virginity (remember virginity?) – there one moment, gone the next. That's a largely meaningless concept today. What matters is democracy. And in Europe that can only be enhanced by involving national parliaments far more in the shaping of the European project still in hand.

So what future for "Europe"? Bigger. More democratic. Not a super state, but a unique collection of nation states working together, free and prosperous, for the common good. And if not that, what's the alternative?

Headline Hoggers

Judith Keppel

The woman who killed Victor Meldrew? Not quite. The woman who won a million pounds under the watchful eyes of Chris Tarrant on ITV's *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* thereby killing off Victor Meldrew in the ratings war only.

The woman who's related to royalty? Not quite. She is, however, related to lots of people who have slept with royalty. Alice Keppel, mistress of Edward VII is her great great aunt (by marriage) and Camilla Parker-Bowles, equine companion to Prince Charles, is some sort of cousin somewhere along the line. Kind of.

The woman with awesome general knowledge? Not quite. Questions ranged from "In which sport do two teams pull at the opposite ends of a rope?" to "Complete the title of the James Bond film *The Man With The Golden...*". And these are multiple choice. They did get harder towards the end though, when she answered a question about Henry II (whose mistress she's probably related to).

The woman who really needed the money? Not quite. She lives in a £500,000 house in Fulham, was a debutante in 1959 and the last time she won any money was by riding at a point-to-point when she amassed a healthy "two-and-six". Her daughter's called Sibylla, which is just quite funny.

The woman who launched a thousand pun headlines? Yes. That's the one. The *Mirror* plumped for the obvious "I Don't Bloody Believee It", *The Times* showed its style by asking "Who Wants to be a President?" and printing an inspired cartoon of a fish asking a group of mussels who wanted to be moules marinières. Well I liked it anyway.

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Spanking the Cam

CUSU, where to turn?



THE CHRISTMAS QUIZ

with Piers Trumpington-Smythe

Tom Peck

In response to the huge margin by which Cambridge students voted to create a full-time CUSU Access Officer some weeks ago, last week it was decided that the body should show a strong commitment to the cause, in order to encourage a broad base of candidates for the post. A two-thirds majority using a single transferable vote system, passed a motion to present a motion to suggest that a select bunch of CUSU representatives should take the CUSU minibus on a whistle-stop tour of target schools. Two weeks after they have set off, all is not well.

The minibus, and its passengers, remain approximately five miles from the Madingley road Park and Ride, and in a state of contention. Should they turn left, or right? The first referendum – that of a show of hands, was unsuccessful, three voting left and three right, with one student voting to re-open nominations, still convinced they should have gone straight on at the last roundabout. The two girls in the back corner did not even vote, being too busy trying to carry out an abortion with a travel sewing kit from the first aid box. There was no choice then, but to move to a secret ballot. Emergency hustings were undergone to decide who should make the ballot papers. Using a system of Alternative Vote Plus, as laid out in the Jenkins Report of 1997, it was also decided that each candidate

should submit a handwriting sample, and a three to four majority decided that this sample should be, 'The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dogs.' The first set of referendum results were ignored, on the grounds that the ballot papers were too confusing, with the box "To turn Left" actually being on the right, and the box "To turn Right" appearing on the left. Due to the fear of undermining the democratic process, the driver's motion to check the map was unanimously defeated.

Unable to make progress, the geography faculty had been contacted and consulted. There, all seemed to agree that "right" is the correct way, with the exception of King's College Professors C Guevara and J Swampy. Thus, turmoil persists.

The issue was finally debated last night at the Union Society with guest speakers including the President of the RAC, the Chief Executive of the Highways Commission, and Eamonn Holmes. Some sociology students advocated the possibility of a new Third Way, rumoured to involve a farmer's field and the M6 to Luton. Tarquel Grimlington-Small of Peterhouse was lauded to the skies for his assertion that the entire problem could be blamed on the ridiculously high levels of fuel tax under the current Labour Government.

University Vice-Chancellor Sir Alec Broers, when asked for his opinion on the issue, suggested that next time they should take a third generation WAP

phone, which could automatically check the traffic using satellite technology and select the most appropriate route. A little low, we thought. 'Not as low as our low low prices,' he retorted.

Unsure whether to put the issue to University-wide referendum, the minibus continues to wait. The official word on the issue, from CUSU President Mat Coakley is: "Bugger" followed by "I think we're lost." If you think that you can help, please send your suggestion to cusugimps@lost.outside-cam.ac.vaguely-in-uk.



Photo: George Danezis

Erm, like, where the fuck are we, mate! We're having a few problems with access to certain roads at the moment

Every year, in the circles that I move in, usually when drunk I might add, otherwise I walk in a straight line, it is traditional for me to set my friends and neighbours a small quiz. Nothing too taxing, and I only kill the three lowest scorers. Whilst asleep. I'm not a monster.

Anyway, it has been suggested to me that I open this out to the wider audience that is the *Varsity* readership, so without your permission, which I frankly don't care for, here goes. The prize will be a large quantity of MDMA and a copy of Giles Brandreth's autobiography, the perfect ingredients for that good night in.

The quiz is in two parts, Section A, and Section 13.

A.

1. Who was my first love?
2. Go to the pub.
3. Quote a memorable saying of Mat Coakley.
4. Always use a condom.
5. Draw two pictures that are exactly the same, except for ten small changes. Then find them.

13.

1. Why?
2. Did I go to A Jolly Good Public School?
3. Who's yer Daddy?!
4. Just don't.
5. Try to find a joke in any of Shakespeare's comedies.

Tie breaker: Find a use for a fly swat, silk scarves, and a four poster bed. Marks awarded for originality.

Applications should be made in writing to me, on a dirty postcard. But I won't tell you where I live, after all, you have to show some initiative.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY AMNESIA SOCIETY
 Confused? Forgetful? Don't worry, so are we, I think... Why not meet with like-minded people? Come along to CUAS, and meet NEW PEOPLE EVERY WEEK!
 Meetings: Tuesdays, probably, at least it used to be Tuesdays, didn't it? At that place near that pub with the funny name.

News In Brief

Controversy as CUSU suggests affiliation to RAC

Widespread outrage greeted the CUSU decision last week to forge links with the motoring organisation, whose views may well offend religious groups. The Women's Officer immediately brought out a statement saying that all women had the right to choose whether or not to drive, though map-reading advice will be available. However, a large groundswell movement has grown up behind the "No" campaign, as many people believe that allowing women to driving constitutes murder. "It's basically a matter of conscience", claimed one spokesman. Environmentalists are also against the move, but they're cranks and don't count. Mat Coakley has been quoted as saying something unremarkable.

JD

Horoscopes

Capricorn (22 Dec – 19 Jan)

The voice of your mind will be muffled by the voice of your heart. You will make an appearance in the Buy British Beef marching band.

Aquarius (20 Jan – 18 Feb)

Yo sister, yo gotta tell that sonovabitch he do you wrong one more time, he outta here.

Pisces (19 Feb – 20 March)

This is not a good time to make important decisions. A miscalculation may lead to you being attacked by maddened armadillos.

Aries (21 March – 19 April)

The 3:15 at Newmarket. Put a tenner on "Cobbler's conquest"

Taurus (20 April – 20 May)

A disagreement with an authority figure may lead you to organize a petition against lamp posts.

Gemini (21 May – 21 June)

You must develop a proper sense of priorities in your life. Don't worry about the

tinned tomatoes. Worry about your immortal soul.

Cancer (22 June – 22 July)

Relax, one more little fairy cake won't hurt. You already weigh 435 pounds.

Leo (23 July – 22 Aug)

This a time when your inner core beliefs are both strengthened and tempered by the events of life. The dangers of cheese scones will be brought home to you.

Virgo (23 Aug – 22 Sept)

Be prepared for some disappointment in your personal life. A romantic meal will be interrupted by a walrus.

Libra (23 Sept – 23 Oct)

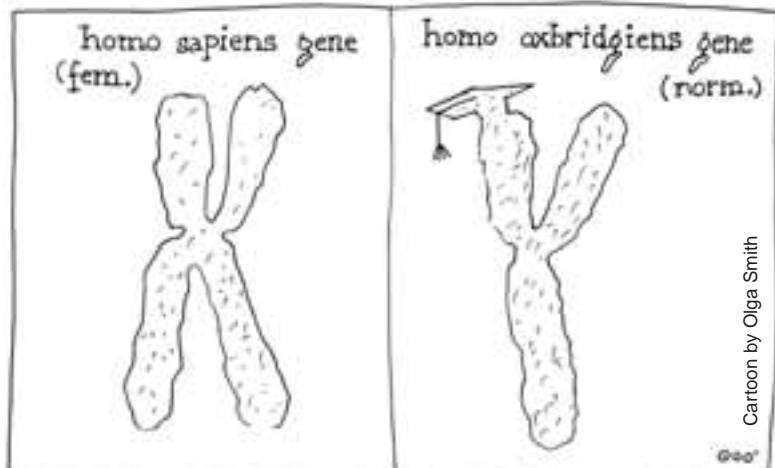
Watch out for your nipples this week. Leave them hanging – they'll get trapped. It hurts.

Scorpio (24 Oct – 21 Nov)

You really don't want to know.

Sagittarius (22 Nov – 21 Dec)

You will begin to see past your own self illusions and rise to a higher level of mental, emotional and spiritual understanding. In the process you may discover a whole new perspective on mayonnaise.



Cartoon by Olga Smith

RIP

Ouch! Spanking in sorrow as Sally is no more



Bungle, said in a statement: "We are all very sad. Please just leave it." When asked about her rumoured £1,000-a-week jelly addiction Bungle was reticent: "It's no secret that Sally had a jelly problem but there's nothing yet to suggest that has anything to do with her untimely demise. Please, leave it."

Friend and *Spanking* colleague, Nadia Fingers, has spoken out, claiming that Sally was the victim of a cruel backlash-attack by gangster cats angry over their sensational exposure by the Undercover team two weeks ago. "The police will have to look at this one very carefully. And even if the reports about her being stuffed to the brim with jelly are true, one has to keep in mind that those cats are clever – the jelly could be a cunning decoy."

Ouch will be remembered by all as a caring and gentle figure, willing to help even the most hopeless of cases in the university. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, Earl of Merioneth and Baron Greenwich, was born Prince of Greece and Denmark in Corfu on 10 June 1921; the only son of Prince Andrew of Greece.

Spanking pays tribute to Sally and sends its deepest sympathies to Mister Bungle and his daughters Fantastic Spasm Leopard Mustard, Shiny Button Melon Teeth, Enormous Magic Fluff Flower, etc.

Spanking the Cam's universally loved university Agony Aunt Sally Ouch has been found dead outside *Varsity* offices.

Police are treating her death as suspicious, although they have not confirmed if signs of violence were evident at the scene. Newspaper reports are speculating that she may have taken an overdose of some sort. Inspector Hound, fresh from the scene, has said that there were prescribed pills, a vodka bottle and jelly found by her bedside.

Sally's former husband and the father of seven of her daughters, Mister Englebert

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Editor: Ed Hall

editor@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Business Manager: Kate Norgrove

business@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Technical Director: Tim Harris

Company Secretary: Diana Tapp

Production Manager: Matt Laycock

production@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Arts Designer: Simon Elliston Ball

artsdesign@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Chief Sub-editors: Glenda Newton • James Turner

subeditors@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Photo Editor: Tom Catchesides

photos@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Online Editor: Ritchie Hughes

webeditor@varsity.cam.ac.uk

News: Sarah Brealey • Tosin Sulaiman

Angela Grainger • Emma Woolerton
news@varsity.cam.ac.uk

News Features: Liz Day

newsfeatures@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Interviews: Tom Royston

interviews@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Science and Technology: Rend S Shakir

science@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Society and Travel: Ed Thaw

society@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Satire: Yuriy Humber

satire@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Sport: Alice Ross • Roy Pang

sport@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Arts Editor: Dan Lambert

arts@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Music: Roman Townsend

music@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Visual Arts: Elizabeth McGrath

visualarts@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Film: Chris Turtle • Sanah Faridi

film@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Theatre: Gordon Richardson

theatre@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Literature: Nick Poyntz

literature@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Classical Music: Benedict Taylor

classicalmusic@varsity.cam.ac.uk

Page Designers and Sub-editors: Ian, James, Flora, Kirsten, Angela, Ian, Davinia, Jeremy – just too damn many to fit in surnames

Second Floor, 11-12, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1QA.

Editorial: 01223 337575 Adverts: 01223 353422 Fax: 01223 352913

Email: letters@varsity.cam.ac.uk

http://www.varsity.cam.ac.uk

A right royal rumble

Gor' bless you ma'am. The Queen came to town yesterday and can I just say, she looked lovely. Resplendent in her hat of many feathers. Just think about the poor pheasant who had to die in order to make that hat. The Queen's act of wearing that hat, both to church on Saturday and to open the Divinity faculty today represents a beautiful two fat finger salute to the press and animal rights protesters who complained about the photograph of her wringing a poor pheasant's neck, whilst hunting with Philip last week. It's just a pity she didn't go to visit the Huntingdon life labs after opening the Divinity faculty.

Where would we be without the Royal family? People complain that they cost us. I'm willing to pay my four pounds a year royal tax just to see Fergie's toe-sucking, Prince Philip's faux pas and not forgetting Di's funeral entourage. With cable TV costing more each year, the Royals – entertainment wise – are becoming even better value for money. Did anyone take the pheasant episode seriously? How could the incident have possibly done damage to the anti-blood sports campaign? Surely their argument that blood sports are only enjoyed by ignorant, thoughtless, upper-class gits, hasn't been affected.

It seems natural to me that the royals do exist, that they should continue to exist, and that they should generally be objects of derision. (If we lost them, we'd have to replace them with

as many mindless overpaid celebrities – Posh and Becks x10 – and who do you think pays for them?) What I find confusing is the amount of people who spent hours outside in the rain, at the Sidgwick Site, hoping to get a glimpse of Her Majesty. Do they not understand? Do they not realise that her like exist so that we can laugh at them in the *Mirror*? It isn't worth getting wet over them. A friend of mine had a much better idea. He was boasting earlier that while in the Divinity faculty he'd nabbed the Queen's coffee cup, complete with lipstick marks. He saw his chance and went for it. His reward? A lifetime supply of dinner party anecdotes. And people want

to get rid of them?

Apparently some people don't even want Prince Philip to be University Chancellor. Do they not realise what the role of Chancellor is? He isn't someone we're supposed to look up to. The role isn't supposed to be a figurehead for the University. It's a figure of fun and ridicule; Aberdeen has Clarissa Dickson-Wright, Dundee has Tony Slattery. We top them all. In terms of mock-ability, Prince Philip is the perfect University Chancellor. Whether he makes an equally good President of the World Wildlife Fund I'm not sure. At least they have a sense of irony.

Ed Hall

Weekly Cartoon by Edam



ABCDEFGHIJKlettersMN

Johann talks shit?

Johann Hari is as ignorant as he is prejudiced.

He informs us that Zionist is racism, and compares Israel with Nazi Germany. Israel is the only democracy in the middle east, the only country in which all have religious freedom, the only country in which people of all faiths and races can enjoy citizenship. Those simple facts make Hari's statements nothing less than contemptible.

The saddest aspect of Hari's column is his displays of ignorance. He asserts that only Jews can be Israeli citizens, which is untrue, he tells us that the ultra-orthodox have a slogan, 'Israel for Jews alone.' A slogan neither I, anyone else has ever heard before. I suggest that Hari simply made it up.

He cannot even manage consistency. He writes 'both sides have shown an unwillingness to move' and then

describes how Barak offered Arafat partial sovereignty of the Temple Mount, only for his offer to be refused. It sounds as though there has indeed been movement on one side, and it has been rebuffed. In fact Hari makes it clear that he believes that Israel should not exist, and so for him no Israeli prime minister could ever move far enough, except to dissolve his state.

Finally Hari points towards Ireland as an example of the peace and harmony that can flourish given the chance. No one can possibly believe that the English handling of Ireland years can teach anyone anything, especially while the kneecappings and punishment beatings continue.

Hari should stick to writing stupid articles about stupid issues, and leave serious matters to those better informed and more balanced.

Ben Elton
Queens'

A big thank you to Gabrielle Bradfield, Emily Lipman, Michael Korn, Hannah Neidle, Natasha Grayson, Leonie Sloman, Daniel Abramson, Alon Zieve, Caroline Stone, Danny Burkeman, Uri Golomb and Simon Lightfoot for all sending letters on the same subject. Extra special thanks go to Toby Greene for sending two.

Speak English!

Desidero rispondere all' articolo di Maggie Evans ("Car copulation capers" Varsity 17 November). Devo dire che non mi è piaciuto affatto. Lo trovo pieno di sarcasmo, ironia e derisione nei confronti della legge italiana e degli italiani in generale. 1) Forse che in Inghilterra non succede che giovani coppie sfoghino i loro desideri amorosi in automobile? 2) Cosa significa "...such a truly bizarre ruling could only really come from a country blessed with



The Varsity crossword is sponsored by Joti and Debbie, graduate advisors at Natwest, who hope you've had a good term so far, and wish you all the best for the rest of it. To win a £10 music/book voucher return either completed puzzle with your details to the Varsity offices by 12 noon Thursday. Last week's winner: Stephanie Clarke. Please go to Natwest (Benet's St) to collect your prize.

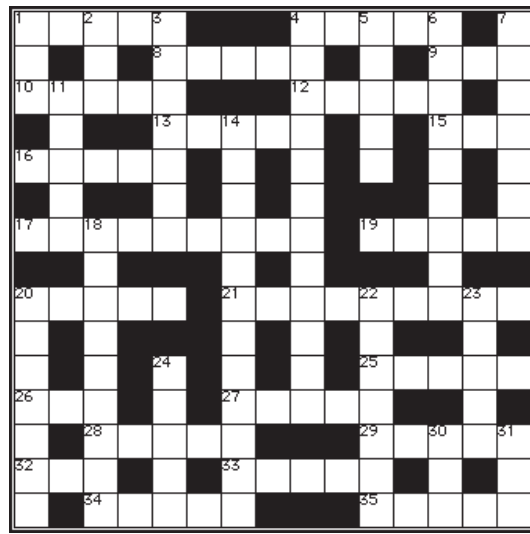
Across

1. We read that you can look back in here (5)
4. Is a shepherdess, without urine returning, make music(5)
9. Aaaaagh! Mouse is heard (3)
8. Gold girl at ancient city has foresight (5)
10. Dirt is caught, carried and run away (5)
12. This is lost in France? (5)
13. Reason things are stopped? In some places (5)
15. Vehicle silent after losing man (3)
16. Lyrically only a day away (5)
17. Shown red, like lesbian, and taken here. (5,4)
19. Blackman? Quite the opposite. (5)
20. Drive in this to 22, to get to a show. (5)
21. First people with last ball, falls. (9)
25. Choccy maker swaps girl for 1000 pounds, for eg (5)
26. Take back gift (3)
27. Swirly-swirly brave (5)
28. Tasty girl (5)
29. To miss none before I think (5)
32. Classy water, starting exactly as you heard (3)
33. He is understood (5)
34. Returned guitar and has sweets (5)

35. Black monarch before he gets dirty (5)

Down

1. A vessel is a fool
2. Slime game? Partly OK (3)
3. Vermin sacks? Damn (7)
4. Position of little girl? You'll only get this if you're good (7,5)
5. Elegant item goes both ways with James the first at place of work. (5)
6. Money with 16 (dropping first step) shows arrogance (9)
7. Insect smells, returning with alien (7)
11. Get caught in a sulk, please (5)
14. Okra stays holding a dainty young strange fellow, initially (5,7)
18. Act childishly and spread smell (4,5)
20. No smoke without fire? There is with these (7)
22. Apparently, was aware of N city in the East (3,4)
23. Curry usually found before guy (5)
24. Company and TV programme are less talkative (5)
30. Compiler is about being positive, maybe (3)
31. This place is like a fish we here (3)



Cryptic by Jove

Concise by Caligula

Across

1. Big smoke (5)
4. Indian cry (5)
8. Pazzazz (5)
9. Choose (3)
10. Faulty firework (5)
12. Waste (5)
13. Grouch (5)
15. Recede (3)
16. Take again (5)
17. Peak (9)
19. Sharp (5)
20. Tough (5)
21. Gbs (9)
25. Oxidised (5)
26. Bog (3)
27. Hoarse (5)
28. Indian yoghurt (5)
29. Confuse (5)
32. Indian city (3)
33. Communist (5)
34. Tennis player (5)

35. Romantic music (5)

Down

1. d/dt(sin) (3)
2. Antlered beast(3)
3. Mechanised (7)
4. Harlots' clients (12)
5. Charity (5)
6. Athletic sport (4,5)
7. Stalky remnants (7)
11. Oscar Wilde (5)
14. US concert venue (12)
18. Votes for president (9)
20. See 18 (7)
22. Rice included (7)
23. Glorify (5)
24. Veg. of tears (5)
30. Ironic (3)
31. Slippery fish (3)

RU sitting comfortably? Dear dominatrix

Archie Young



"Farmers do it, teachers do it, even educated truckers do it. Let's do it, let's go on strike." So sang the angry members of the England rugby union team this week as they demanded a fairer share of the RFU's turnover.

Having brought the country to its feet last Saturday with their 'heroic' last gasp victory against Australia (albeit thanks to a dodgy video referee call in the eighth minute of injury time, with the opposition reduced to thirteen men), the England team then brought the RFU to their knees by threatening not to play against Argentina tomorrow if they didn't increase their wages. Their timing could not have been better in forcing the RFU to agree to their requests: on the back of a great win and with the next match so soon. Equally, however, for many supporters their timing could not have been worse, souring the win that had been the source of such joy just a few days before.

At first it seemed like a joke, particularly to Scots like myself; Matt Dawson with his top of the range Mercedes claiming that he just wanted to be able to pay his mortgage. Soon it became clear, however, that it was not a joke,

nor simply the cries of a greedy few - English rugby stood on the brink of collapse. Clive Woodward was not a happy man. Feeling betrayed by his players, he laid down an ultimatum of forget the dispute or forget your England career. The effect was unbelievable. 'Heroes' turned their back on their country for the sake of their wallets, even Jason Leonard, who has laid his body on the line for his country for a decade, was willing to turn down the chance to become the most capped England player of all time to support his fellow players.

Finally on Wednesday morning both sides emerged from the talks smiling; a deal had finally been struck. Both sides claimed victory, the RFU suggested that the players had accepted the deal they offered them before and the players claimed that they were "happy with the new deal". As Woodward said it had all been a waste of time.

The England team seem to have done a 'trucker', riding a wave of public opinion they tried to go a board's length too far only to find that crest turn into froth beneath them. Far from heroes they are seen as money-grabbing opportunists willing to use the honour of playing for their country as a bargaining tool.

Despite the valiant efforts of the truckers and many others recently, it seems as though the English still haven't quite got the hang of this striking lark - perhaps they should have paid more attention during school French lessons.

James Morris



Our Parliament couldn't stop talking about Margaret Thatcher yesterday. Ten years after she resigned, William Hague was so keen to sing her praises that he even found parliamentary time for a brief commentary on the wonder of her name. He is not a fool, he did it because Thatcher is to died-in-the-wool Tories what the Pope is to nuns; if Catholics can gain benefit from relics, so can politicians. The cult of the individual is not an activity particular to Tories, people indulge in it all over the world as part of a general will to be told what to do.

It starts young with children covering their walls with Robbie Williams pictures and continues to adulthood as middle-aged women cover their fridges with Robbie Williams pictures. Mao Tse-tung may have killed more people than Hitler but his picture is on the walls of radical students everywhere. A few people know about Che Guevara's life, a lot of people think he has a wicked beard and have him on their T-shirt. People are loath to take a detached view of exciting people's strengths and weaknesses, the more we admire someone the more we excuse their lapses and errors. Conversely, the more we detest someone

the less we are prepared to accept their good suggestions.

This seems like a platitude but in its irrationality it is startling. The situation becomes weirder when we notice how much our feelings towards people stem from foolish considerations anyway. We often (dis)trust people's claims based not on their content but on their manner of presentation; we are all primary school teachers who mark work down for being messy.

The press is a key area where manner of presentation has a massive effect on how important people assess things to be. Put your view on politics in the *Sun* and you can swing an election, mention it in the pub and everyone will tell you to shut up and talk about something else. Dislike a fantastic play and people think you're a tasteless moron, change your name to Sheridan Morley and suddenly you can bankrupt a theatre company and drive people to suicide. The problem is the jumble in people's minds, the inappropriate connections between distinct areas of thought. You might well dislike my dinner party manner, but that is no reason not to make me president of the USA. I can be madly in love with someone but still not agree with each word they utter. As people interlink more and more logically separate fields, prejudices become more entrenched and society becomes increasingly volatile, subject to the charismatic ravings of loons from Savonorola to Bush. A little thought will keep the crazy from power. It's probably worth it.

Do-me a favour

Alex Hawkes



The Great Exhibition of 1851, the first of its kind, displayed gadgets and innovations that stretched the ideas of contemporaries; plenty were ridiculous, but plenty weren't, and those that had no useful function were at least interesting. The 1951 Exhibition, held in its memory, introduced a post-war generation to new building techniques and gadgetry for what they anticipated was a better world. At the 1937 World Expo, the Spanish pavilion contained Picasso's famous painting, *Guernica*. But at the 2000 Millennium Dome exhibition, the gadgets are boring versions of video games, the art is hardly noticeable, and the building threatens to sink into a pit of arsenic-laced Greenwich dirt.

The Millennium Dome is a farce; let there be no confusion. The building itself is monumental, impressive and a genuine landmark; at £80 million, the only bargain in the whole deal. It's let down by what's inside. The Transport Zone, which starts with flashing light style gadgets, descends into parroting Labour policy on Transport, deprecating the motorcar but not offering real alternatives. The Faith Zone is frankly an insult. I don't consider myself religious, but I recognise that a force in our lives like Christianity, or Islam for that matter, might deserve more considered treatment than recorded babies' voices and a poor attempt at formulating a deistic multi-culturalism. The Body Zone teaches you GCSE science, and the *Blackadder* show, though the undoubted highlight, is less funny than the originals, and has borrowed its plot from *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*.

Let there be no confusion either as to who is to blame. The architectural concept and initial plans were drawn up by the Conservatives, and they were unduly optimistic. These plans were then ratified by New Labour, but the real damage was done in deciding the contents. What appears from most accounts is that the poverty of really interesting artwork and free thought was the doing of Mandelson and those he appointed - certainly such is the opinion of Stephen Bayley. Originally contracted to work on ideas for the project, he resigned when its sheer mundanity became clear to him. That such a project, with its five-year old target audience and patronising attitude towards Britons' history and culture, should have drained so many millions from the public purse is a national disgrace. I don't argue necessarily that this money should have been spent on entirely different project, as I think that a genuinely fruitful national community could be created and encouraged by the judicious spending of public money on the arts. What is so galling is that the opportunity of the Millennium celebrations has been wasted in the most needless manner. The sadly banal contents of the Dome are the direct result of the refusal to allow recognised cultural institutions, with proven track records as regards large-scale presentation of the arts, to become involved. "One Amazing Day Out"? That we could have spent so much money on such a meaningless folly should be a matter of public dismay.

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

the heady mix of Catholicism and sensuality that Itaians have"? Lei crede davvero che, come italiano, io debba essere un cattolico? Per meglio dire, lei pensa davvero che OGNI italiano sia un "misto di cattolicesimo e sensualità", tanto da non poter agire se non in conformità col volere della Chiesa, o seguendo sempre le sue più basse pulsioni da "latin lover" mediterraneo? Dunque, ne deduco che per lei l'Italia non è un paese laico, ma un fondamentalismo cattolico abitato da un popolo la cui prima (ed unica?) attività è il sesso. 3) La 'Cinquecento', in Italia, è solo un dinosauro del passato. 4) "...This legal move speaks volumes about what the Italian mentality is like: rules are not supposed to be watertight. If you're cunning and determined enough, there's always a way around everything". QUESTO E' UN INSULTO!

Ricordandole la massima evangelica per cui "chi è senza peccato scagli la prima pietra", e che voi inglesi certo non fareste male a guardare a casa vostra, qualche volta, invece di dare sempre giudizi su cose che non capite e che magari non vi riguardano.

Con scarsa cordialità

Denni Fornaciari
Italy

Who says no one ever reads online? In the same week we are awarded runner up student website award, this mad Italian reads VarsityOnline somewhere in Italy.

Letter of the Week

I read Peter McArthur's letter (Letter of the Week, 17th Nov) with interest. I thought I should just clear things up, as the quote he gave from LesBiGay was taken completely out of context. He had not asked us, as he claimed in his letter to Varsity, to forward an email to our mailing list (which, by the

way, we would be happy to do) but to allow him to share our stall at the Societies Fair. We refused, because we felt that the alternative sexualities his group addressed (he mentioned foot fetishism and sadomasochism amongst other things) had no more to do with lesbian students than any other students. We were also aware that many of the freshers signing up with us at Societies fair would be nervous, and for most it would be their first encounter with LesBiGay in Cambridge. We therefore thought it inappropriate to confuse the issue by implying that being lesbian necessarily entailed being a foot fetishist, sadomasochist etc; in any case, we wanted to devote the space allotted to us at freshers' fair to our own publicity, directed at our membership.

I would suggest that next year, Mr McArthur contact the Services Officer at CUSU to arrange for a stall of his own at Freshers' Fair (there is no need to be authorised by the Societies Syndicate to do this). In the meantime, if he would like to send an advertisement for his newly founded group to lesbigay@cusu.cam.ac.uk, I'll gladly put it out on our weekly listings.

Helen Evans
LesBiGay Co-Chair

Can I make a personal plea? When writing letters to Varsity can you ask yourself. Am I making this up? Did it really happen? Thank you Ms Evans for exposing this latest mendacity. Your prize: two cinema tickets.



A pair of tickets to see the film of your choice will be sent to the writer of the letter of the week.

Fakes hype and charity

Jonti Small



Spend only the shortest time in Cambridge and you find that your capacity to be shocked by folly and fuckwittery becomes deadened. But the unexpected pleasure in losing the ability to be outraged is the greater potential for bewilderment. Why, for example, in a world that is so clearly full of well meaning people, is it that the 'best intentions' seem to be the most risible - especially when presented like this.

In my pigeonhole appeared a jaunty flyer with 3 beguiling questions. The first was both sober and frothy: "Have you ever wondered what life in the less privileged parts of Britain's big cities is like?" The second, both soothing and accusatory: "Do you feel in need of a 'reality check' after another term in Cambridge?" And finally a vague suggestion that was also suggestively vague: "Do you just feel like doing something completely different after the end of term?". Say 'no' and you obviously wish that term would go on perpetually. As Sisyphus has never really been one of my idols, I had no choice but to conclude, that yes I, would quite like, in the words of Monty Python, to do "something completely different".

An affirmative response meant that I should attend 'December Week' organised by 'Trinity in Camberwell', a charitable trust that operates in South East London. I have no reason to doubt that the community centre established by Trinity is a good thing. What's more, the idea that Trinity students should be exposed to 'many sides of life', and the tacit admission

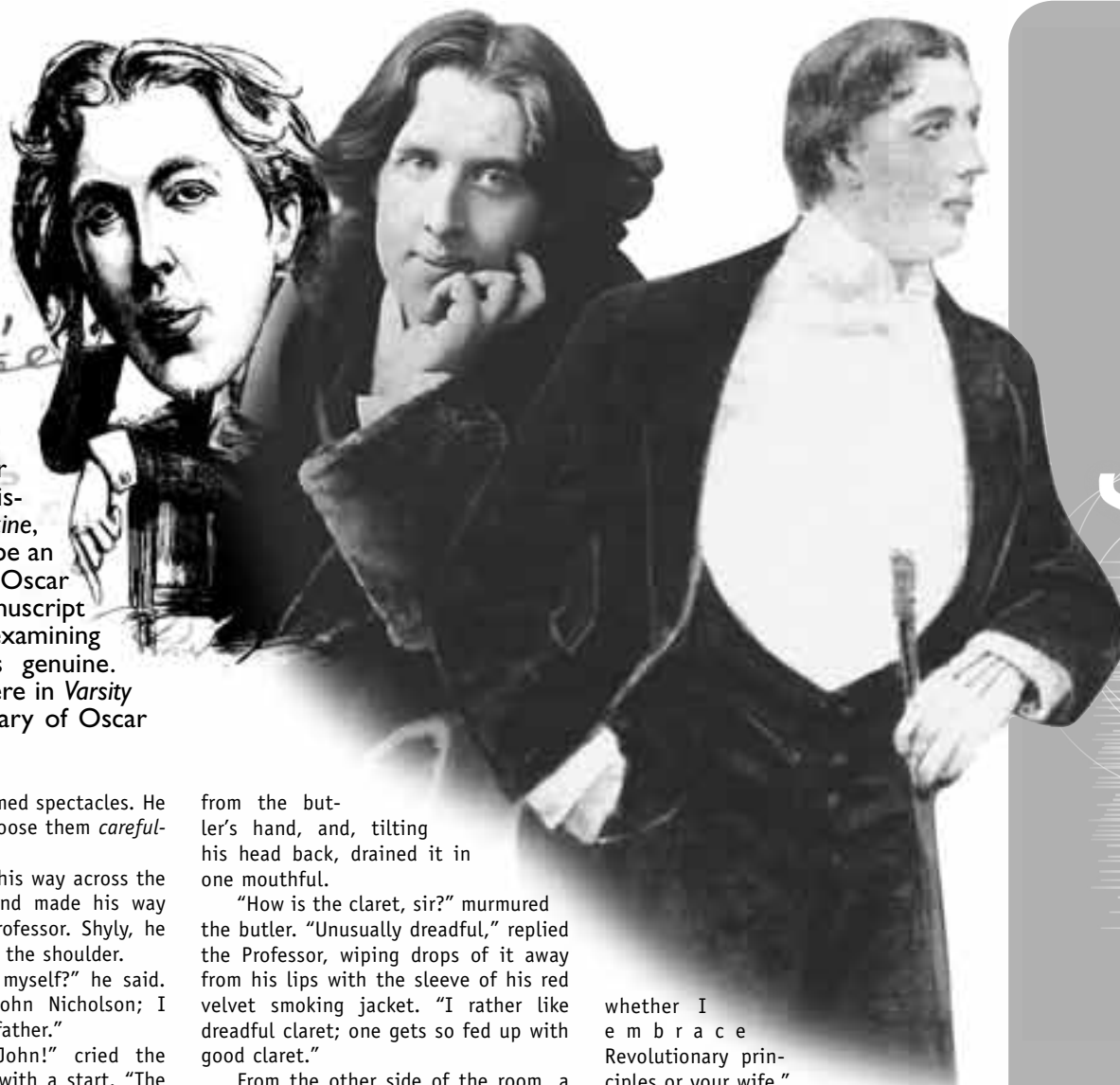
that Cambridge provides a sheltered existence is to be welcomed. But the promotion of these good intentions seems to backfire badly.

December Week is promoted with the promise of the chance to "spend some time in South East London, meet and enjoy the hospitality of local people, and relax and have a good time". At best it sounds like a glossy travel brochure for southern Spain. At worst it seems to have the unfortunate echo of early buccaneering anthropologists spending time with and learning about the primitives. Come to Camberwell, the three questions implied, if you have ever "wondered" about how the poor people live, or if, bless, you need a "reality check" after a tough Cambridge term, or if you just fancy a change of scene from Val D'Iserre. I don't doubt that there are laudable motives for December Week, it's just that these certainly aren't them.

Camberwell, the flyer implies, is that 'less privileged' part of one of Britain's big cities that you always wondered about. What on earth does 'less privileged' mean? Hampstead, after all, is a 'less privileged' part of a big city if you come from Belgravia. The concept of 'less privileged' only makes sense if you assume that everyone is privileged, and that difference is a question of degrees of privilege. This way the poor presumably become the 'least privileged'. Thus the fuzzy euphemistic speak permits the denial that poor people actually exist. They are just less privileged. This clearly does Trinity in Camberwell no favours.

In publicising December Week, and in trying to break down stereotypes about inner cities, another stereotype, that of rich kids who think that poor is cool, is however unthinkingly perpetuated. But there is one easy remedy to all this: one listen to *Common People* by Pulp should do the trick.

Wilde Regained



Varsityarts

At the beginning of November, the Literature Editor was carrying out research in the UL for his Part II dissertation. Leafing through copies of *Blackwood's Magazine*, he came across papers tucked inside that purport to be an unfinished draft of a previously unknown story by Oscar Wilde. Hand-written on Victorian foolscap, the manuscript appears to be contemporary; experts are currently examining its content in order to ascertain whether it is genuine. Meanwhile, the fragment is exclusively reproduced here in *Varsity* to coincide with the commemoration of the centenary of Oscar Wilde's death on 30 November.

It was the night of the Commemoration of Benefactors, and the Combination Room at St Peter's College was unusually full. It was December; long icicles like crystal daggers hung from the rooftops, and the chill snow lay glistening outside on the lawn of New Court. Inside, the oak-panelled room was stifling with heat and conversation. Two Members of Parliament, fervent Tories and both St Peter's men, had come on from the Reform debate in the Commons, and now stood, red faced and resplendent with gowns and collar studs, by the fiercely burning log fire. By the door sat Crown Prince Otto of Karlsruhe, positively weighed down by his jewels and his moustache. He, too, had been a member of St Peter's until forced to leave and take up his throne in his tiny kingdom thirty-seven miles south of Bavaria. Beneath the stained glass of the north window a solemn Benthamite was explaining the logical impossibility of the Resurrection to an outraged and indignant high churchman. Next to him was a brace of Fellows of the Royal Society, and indeed it must be said that the room was absolutely packed with geniuses.

In a corner of the Combination Room stood Lord John Nicholson, eighteen years old and only just come into his title. His father, a cantankerous Methodist who had fought at the Battle of Balaclava, had died of typhoid that summer after an extended stay in Manchester; from him his son had inherited all thirty-six volumes of Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution*, and a nervous disposition. Lord John looked down at his boots, only recently purchased from Lobb's of Jermyn Street but already giving way to the ravages of the Cambridge winter, and grimaced as the Master began another story of his time in India. Glancing across the room, he spied through the gloom Professor Merton, Senior Fellow of the college and Regius Professor of Divinity, sitting in a high-backed mahogany chair with his eyes shut. Here lay a path of escape: Merton had taught his father in his undergraduate days.

"Master, I must, I beg pardon, take my leave," stammered Lord John. "Professor Merton was a friend of my late father; I should really say a few words to him."

The Master looked up from his story of Governor Ellis and the elephant, and

adjusted his gold-rimmed spectacles. He paused, and said, "Choose them *carefully*."

Lord John picked his way across the oak-panelled room, and made his way over to the dozing Professor. Shyly, he tapped the sleeper on the shoulder.

"May I introduce myself?" he said. "My name is Lord John Nicholson; I believe you knew my father."

"My dear Lord John!" cried the Professor, awakening with a start. "The pleasure is entirely mine. Such a shame about your father; it seems only a short while since I was forced to discipline him for that unfortunate incident with the kitchen maid... but that, I fear, is another story." He stood up, took out a silver-framed monocle from his top pocket, and scrutinised the young peer carefully. Satisfied, he sat back down and said, "So, Lord John, what have you done in your first term at St Peter's?"

"Well," replied Lord John eagerly, "I have been reading the first volume of Ranke's treatise on..."

The Professor coughed violently, and exclaimed, "No, no, foolish boy, I mean what have you *done*?"

Lord John took a step back, looking at the Professor in confusion. "Well, Professor," he faltered, "I row. That is to say, I am a member of the college Eight. As a matter of fact we..."

"Rowing!" cried the Professor. "Ineffable twaddle! Why, I am sure the Greeks never did so at Salamis."

"My knowledge of Herodotus is slight, Professor," rejoined Lord John, "but surely his account of..."

Polishing his monocle on the cuff of his shirt, the Professor again cut him short. "Do be quiet, Lord John, arguing is so very disagreeable. My idea of an agreeable person is someone who agrees with me." Looking around the room, he shook his head. "I am so very disappointed with the modern undergraduate!" he murmured, more to himself than to Lord John in particular. "All that the University is these days is a collection of books."

A butler, clad in stiffly starched shirt and coat-tails, sidled up to the pair, brandishing an intricately engraved silver tray full of glasses; it had been bequeathed to the college in 1638 by Sir Horace Smythe, the only St Peter's man ever to be wrongly executed for treason. Professor Merton seized one of the finely cut crystal goblets

from the butler's hand, and, tilting his head back, drained it in one mouthful.

"How is the claret, sir?" murmured the butler. "Unusually dreadful," replied the Professor, wiping drops of it away from his lips with the sleeve of his red velvet smoking jacket. "I rather like dreadful claret; one gets so fed up with good claret."

From the other side of the room, a tall, broad-shouldered bewhiskered man strode towards them. Ranks of medals glistened on his chest; it was Major Dulrymple, hero of the Umbutu Mutiny, and St Peter's most celebrated son. Only the week before, no less a periodical than the *Gentleman's Magazine* had called him one of the finest examples of English manhood.

"Ah, Professor Merton!" he cried. "How d'you do? We were just discussing Mr Gladstone's latest proposals for Parliamentary Reform. A frightfully democratic prospect, which I must confess I find appalling." He paused momentarily, inebriated by his own eloquence, and continued, "Great Britain at the present moment occupies a position of grandeur unparalleled in history. We have already seen our irritable neighbour France fall victim to the foul spectre of Revolution; must the Empire go the same way?"

"You do not believe, then," asked Lord John, "that Her Majesty's Government is a good one?"

The Major shook his head. "Good government," he barked, "went out, like all good things, with the Stuarts."

"It is a shame, perhaps," observed the Professor, "that your family did not go with them."

Lord John looked on, horrified, as the Major drew himself up to his full height, the polished silver buttons on his red uniform straining under the pressure. "Infernal Radical!" he exclaimed. "You will die, sir, either of the gallows or of the pox."

The Professor took out his monocle, polished it vigorously, and fixed the irate Major with a steely gaze.

"That depends," he rejoined, "very much upon

whether I embrace Revolutionary principles or your wife."

At this point the manuscript comes to an abrupt end; it is not yet known whether any other fragments survive...



10

classical | Endellion

13

music | Judge Jules

16

film | Chopper

also re I
Remember
for yourself
past. 16 people tel
and the

Perhaps I am chosen to teach
young B. Snow, and its bea
abstracts friend
Oscar Wilde



Captain Caveman

Gordon Richardson has a man to man with Mark Little



Photo: Paul Ryder

Mark Little's coming to town next week in Rob Becker's one-man play, *Defending the Caveman*. I'd already booked my tickets, but I still wasn't sure what to expect. So I gave him a call...

"Sure, it's got a bit of a naff title, but *Caveman* is basically this comic thesis about men and women. Anyone who's seen me do comedy will know my unique energetic, on-the-edge style, but here it's within this more mature and wise play that suggests how modern man is possibly similar to prehistoric man. And it's also bloody funny." Well that's cleared that one up, but why did they pick a sophisticated guy like Mark Little to defend the caveman? I ask if he's very hairy.

"I'm not a champion of anyone. This show isn't saying men should have the right to be arseholes. Today we're told that all men are arseholes, and that's the pre-text which this play starts to question. Of course, there are arseholes out there, and they shouldn't get away with it. But in fact prehistoric man worshipped women – he didn't just club them on the head and drag them back to the cave, he valued women deeply."

All this anthropology is surprisingly heavy, coming from the jocular Aussie we're used to seeing fronting *The Big Breakfast*, or playing Joe Mangel in *Neighbours*. But though he takes it seriously, he's vehement that the show doesn't offer us any particular message about men and women, least of all his own.

"It's not even about message. There's been so much message in the last few decades, with all these books and so on, but this show cuts through all the message and just shows what really happens in the house in a really funny way". Nonetheless, Mark agrees that his own life experiences are what attracted him to the part and informed his approach to it. So what is it about him that most gets on his wife's nerves?

"Oh, man – it's all those trivial little things, you know. Like why should a man have to turn down the car radio because he's lost? And nowadays we don't have spears, we have the remote control. So women get annoyed because men like to surf through the channels whereas they take time to look at what's on each one." Remote control etiquette aside, what does he think is the key to a successful relationship? "Having a laugh, definitely", he responds without hesitation. "And good sex, mate", he adds as an afterthought. And does he think men get bad press generally these days, or is it just cavemen?

"I think men are maybe a bit confused about where they stand. There's also a bit of man-shame, cos men are made to feel ashamed about being themselves. But *Caveman* is about the instincts of both men and women – it's a great one to bring your mate to", by which I think he means 'your sheila'. So what does he think about *Varsity* giving away three pairs of tickets to the first night?

"Good on ya."

theatre bonza giveaway

To be in with a chance of winning one of three pairs of tickets to see *Defending the Caveman* at the Corn Exchange on Monday 27 November at 8.30pm, AND a copy of John Gray's book *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*, just complete the following sentence in 20 words or less:

Strewh, mate, I could do with some help with relationships because...
Email your entry to theatre@varsity.cam.ac.uk by midday Sunday.

Competition

theatre previews

Defending the Caveman | Corn Exchange | Mon 27 – Tue 28 | 8.30pm
Win tickets to see Mark Little in this one-man play about men and women.

A Servant to Two Masters | Arts Theatre | Mon 27 – Sat 2 | 7.45pm (Thu & Sat, 2.30pm)
The RSC comes to town with a new adaptation of Carlo Goldoni's popular comedy of disguise, deception, love and longing, in which a cheeky Italian servant tries to do two jobs at once.

Fascinating Rhythm: A Gershwin Review | ADC | Wed 29 – Sat 2 | 11pm
A fast-paced medley of Gershwin tunes set in a New York jazz club.

Footlights Smoker | ADC | Tue 28 | 11pm
The Eagles did it. Motorhead did it. Even Blur did it. Now Footlights give you their very own Best Of, featuring this term's least bad stand-up acts.

House of Flies | Playroom | Tue 28 – Sat 2 | 8pm
Magic realism merges with black comedy in this piece of new writing depicting the destructive circle of friendship in a failing London pub.

Bouncers | Playroom | Tue 28 – Sat 2 | 11pm
John Godber's comedy featuring four bouncers who portray a variety of characters, from giggly girls to football hooligans.

GR

Just like the old days

Old Times | Playroom | Tue 21 – Sat 25 | 8pm

The power of understatement

A husband and wife, nearing the reflective age, prepare to receive an old friend last seen 20 years ago – the only long term friend of the disquietingly silent Kate (Lydia Fox). She arrives, triggering an intriguing reconstruction of their unlikely but connected past; and of course, it's Pinter – so let the mind games begin!

This is a good production of a good play, though it did lack certain charismatic touches, like the emphatically Pinteresque dynamics of acute understatement and cruel deliberacy that might have been brought out more fully. In this play, each unspoken move is important, each word scrutinised for oddity of nuance – "Lest", says Deeley, "you don't hear that very often" – each participant is soundly

aware of the unspoken conflict of the interaction.

The understanding and the right intent are certainly there – the excess on-stage movement of which a lesser production might have been guilty, was for the most part, well trimmed. The set is appealingly sparse, and consequently such moments of silent, visual significance as the heavy stride across the room for a cigarette, and the regular clink of brandy being poured are impressively magnified.

There was, however, a slight looseness, a sense that the noose could have been pulled a little tighter for maximum effect. The characters, though well played, are perhaps too broadly conceived for the purposes of the play. Anna (Aisling O'Neill) is fluent and convincing, if a little wistful; Deeley (Adam Seddon) has a strong comic sense and delivery, but his soft comic

edges made it difficult to reconcile this element with his underlying nastiness. Lydia Fox's Kate is sleepily sinister, saying little, but somehow dominating the stage, hedging her words until her final psychological victory. This will always be a play worth seeing, both for its edgy banter and its darkly comic moments, and this production certainly does it justice.

Ben Musgrave



Big screen Brecht

The Threepenny Opera | Robinson | Tue 21 – Sat 25 | 7.30pm

It's metadrama, darling

When Brecht's *Threepenny Opera* was first performed to the bourgeois circles of Berlin in 1928, its gleefully self-satirising musical format must have spoken uncomfortably to an audience thoroughly accustomed to shows of what Nietzsche had pompously termed 50 years earlier, the music of the elite 'German spirit'. Adam Barnard's new production maintains Brecht's sharp, mildly accusatory metatheatricality, adding to it a brave new dialogue with the audience thanks to the incorporation of elements of cinema.

Clapperboards, a 'silent movie' screen introducing each scene, and even the audacious (but ultimately justified) addition of a Chaplin-esque Brecht character to provide prologue, all complement the cinematically styled acting and staging of the play. If Barnard's intention is to satirise warmly our own comfortable nostalgia for movie culture, his project is a success: Polly (Susanne Sheehy) reminds us of a self-conscious Judy Garland, and

Macheath (Ben Lumsden) of a smug, roguish Errol Flynn.

This was an immensely entertaining collective performance. Comic timing was often brilliant amongst the gang of outlaws, whilst the cosily domestic group of prostitutes provided a reckless show of female rivalry. Brecht's famous 'alienation' effect was carried off with an air of gimmicky frivolity, often taking the audience by surprise. Particularly effective were the scenes in which Lucy ran manically through the audience, and when she and Polly held up signs during an argument ("I don't like her / we're going to sing about it").

The musical performances from many of the leads were, however, rather disappointing – even if the choreography was always brilliantly exaggerated. The best rendition by far came from Rebecca Mills in her only solo as Lucy – notable not only for her powerful voice, but also her suitably deranged comic delivery. Ben Lumsden, and Stacey Blades as Mrs Peachum, were also convincing. On a technical note, the orchestra was occa-

sionally too loud for the audience to hear the voices – a problem which ought to be overcome after the first night. It could be said, though, that the singing wasn't really what we were there for, as the cast provided us with an energetic evening of satire, song and sex.

Ruth Pannell



Angry young men

The Birthday Party | Queens' | Tue 21 – Sat 25 | 11pm

Pinter's confusing party

As the song goes, "it's my party and I'll cry if I want to." This just about sums up Pinter's birthday party from hell, where the only requirement for the guest list is a tendency towards fits of threatening and inexplicable behaviour.

A group of people whom you would do your utmost to avoid are assembled in a room. The birthday party in question is intended for Stanley, the central character of the play – only it's not his birthday, and besides, he comes across as so irritating that you can't imagine why anyone would want to throw a party for him if it were.

The Birthday Party was initially somewhat difficult to follow, as we were taken from 'irrational fit of anger by Stanley' to

'irrational fit of anger by McCann' to 'irrational fit of anger by Goldberg' and back again. At one point, the actors actually switched off the lights on stage; you can't help feeling that this isn't really necessary. After all, the audience were pretty much in the dark all along.

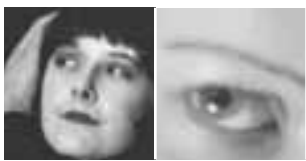
Saying that, the actors tried hard to make the best of the burden Pinter had bestowed on them. Katharine James carried the show with her humorous and touching portrayal of Meg, in which she managed to create a real sense of a character. The scenes between Adam Cohen (Goldberg) and Scott Morrison (McCann) also worked well, as the two actors bounced their lines off each other to create a pace and sense of interaction lacking elsewhere in the production.

Despite these achievements, it seems

that Pinter's script ultimately proved too much for this production. The beginning of the play, for instance, lacked pace and interaction. By the concluding scenes, director Kate McNaughton seemed to have succeeded in remedying this problem – only for the play to plunge into a state of incoherence and confusion.

Pinter's plays are never easy to perform, and it's a shame that a clearly able cast and director were handicapped by a difficult and incoherent script. At one point in the play, a character declares, "I've seen everything that's happened. I know what's going on. I've got a pretty shrewd idea." The problem with this production lies in the fact that the audience left the theatre unable to share these sentiments.

Jennifer Tuckett



Not too jolly, Roger

Treasure Island | ADC | Tue 21 – Sat 2 | 7.45pm

Better than scurvy

“The house was crowded with a large and enthusiastic audience, who testified their enjoyment by no stinted applause.” Thus commented the Cambridge Review of the first Footlights show, *Bombastes Furioso*, back in 1883. Sadly the same can't be said of *Treasure Island*, the Footlights pantomime of 2000. And this is not merely because the ADC's auditorium contained anything but a large audience. If the theatre had been filled with large enthusiastic people the show would undoubtedly have been better received, but even then it wouldn't have been the best thing Footlights have done in a long time.

Don't get me wrong. *Treasure Island* is an entertaining show, with several outstanding performers and an excellent set. Alex Horne's script contains plenty of amusing throwaway jokes (as well as lots of incredibly crass ones by which pantomimes are traditionally blighted), and throws up a number of great set pieces, such as Long John Silver's pastiches of Eminem. Yet despite all this, the show lacks the momentum and quality of execution to bring about unstinting mirth and applause. Some scenes were so obscure that they served the ends of neither plot nor comedy – for instance the random shouting of football chants at the end of one song, and the point-

less pissing about of John Silver's pirates before they stole the map from young Jim.

Nonetheless the script should have been good enough to make the end product better than it was. Too often there were promising ideas that failed to live up to their potential. John Silver's rap songs were a prime example of this, as the musical direction and choreography were at times shoddily loose. The naughtiness inherent in pantomime may excuse much, but there was still no disguising under-rehearsed, awkward performances.

Consequently, the show was carried to a large extent by its best performers, most notably the hilarious Tim Key as Billy Bones and Philip Stott as John Silver. Stott cultivated a fruitful on-stage partnership with a stuffed parrot, putting on a bad ventriloquist act. Day Macaskill (Dr Livesey) enjoyed a similarly successful relationship with a techie.

By the time you read this, many of the problems will have been ironed out: less words

will be drowned out during songs, and hopefully the lack of slickness and pace will have been addressed. Although it's shortcomings make it difficult to recommend unequivocally – and bearing in mind that it is also aimed at children – *Treasure Island* will be enjoyed by many as a welcome dose of lighthearted fun at the end of another draining term.

Gordon Richardson



Jim Hawkins (Rachel Reid)

Horse play

Equus | Queens' | Tue 21 – Sat 25 | 8pm

A winner by a length

As ever, the root of the problem lies with the ancient Greeks. It was their mythology that first expressed – through Dionysus and Apollo – the terrible, unbridgeable divide between reason and passion. Peter Shaffer's *Equus* explores this dichotomy and the inadequate responses to it, that constitute the history and tragedy of modern society.

We follow child psychiatrist Martin Dysart – played faultlessly throughout by Khalid Abdalla – as he probes the dark corners of a patient's soul. Dysart, a man with an ironic fascination with the 'primitivism' of the ancient world, is asked to treat Alan Strang, a teenager with a history of mutilating horses. James Gilberthorpe as Alan fails to impress early on, as his portrayal of a troubled teenager rarely gets beyond a simplistic, prissy bolshiness. This soon ceases to matter, however, as we see a far more interesting side to Alan – his disturbingly intense fascination with horses, or rather the mystical spirit he sees within them, which he names 'Equus'.

Gilberthorpe shines in these scenes, where he delivers the powerful lines with a real feeling for the terror and majesty of religious ecstasy.

The rest of the acting is unfortunately something of a let down. Alys Cummings is playful and assured as Hesther, the magistrate who introduces Alan to Dysart, although she takes a little while to settle into the part. Sam Baldock and Felicity Poulter however, never really create a convincing sense of the dynamic within Alan's family. There doesn't seem to have been any clear idea at work of how these characters should engage with the rest of the play, which might explain the actors' lack of insight into the roles. Luckily, these are only the supporting characters, and the two leads are strong enough to carry the play on their own.

The actors are more than complemented by the staging. The fairly minimal set allows the action to shift between a number of distinct areas. As Dysart carries out his therapy, our attention is guided by subtle changes in the lighting when Dysart contrasts the reality of the boy in front of him with the imagined horror of his crime. The dancers who represent the

horses are also worthy of praise. Their Gothic costumes, all straps and sculpted metal, along with their slow, elegant movements, convey a marvelously beautiful and sinister impression. This is especially clear when Alan describes the religious-cum-erotic pleasure he feels when he rides in secret, which could easily come across as farcical and ludicrous.

It is impressive that James Gilberthorpe's acting and Anna Morrissey's choreography manage to capture the strange power of this scene.

Equus is certainly a remarkable play. From Dysart's quietly disconcerting opening monologue to the terrifying climax of the final scene, we are presented with an eloquent and vital clash of ideas: normality versus individuality, antiquity versus modernity, rationality versus passion. Throughout this, we never lose sight of the essential humanity of the characters, and the ideas never overpower the drama. The quality of the script, the intelligent staging and the highly talented leads mean that, despite occasional weak acting and directorial missteps, this production is well worth seeing.

Tim Fiskien

theatre in brief

Hong Kong Story | ADC | Wed 22–Sat 25 | 11pm

Half an hour's worth of entertainment successfully emerges from this interesting, though at times disjointed, concoction of dance, music and slide projections.

The basic love-story provides a structure upon which various facets of Hong Kong life can be explored through dance. A fast pace adds a dynamic nature to the contrasts between hectic city scenes and the feelings of loneliness and isolation conveyed by the mourning of a love-struck girl. Excellent choreography and rhythmic in-your-face tunes yield memorable results in the large-group scenes.

There was, however, much variety in the quality of performances of individual cast members. Many demanded constant

audience attention through their ability to encapsulate the ethos of the play into their actions. Sadly, a few seemed to overestimate the potential of wearing 'very Hong Kong' pyjamas as a means of amplifying their performance. The use of slides was a good idea but unfortunately much of their potential was never realised, as they tended to detract from, rather than enhance the stories being told. The use of mobile phones as props was highly effective, adding a new comic dimension to the piece. As several audience members received calls from their friends in the cast, the general hubbub of confusion turned into one of hilarity.

The final verdict? Short but sweet: a thoroughly enjoyable – if undemanding – half hour.

Lucy Hassall

Transplant | Playroom | Tue 21 – Sat 25 | 11pm

This is a very funny show. The Playroom was full to the brim with a positively ebullient atmosphere arising from the enjoyable madness of a nasty surgeon, various caricatured evil persons, a veritable hero in the form of a delusional private detective (the wonderfully James Lewis), and a band called Fluffy Dice.

This was made all the better for it being the panto season, when everyone likes it if people fall over a lot and do really terrible fight scenes in urinals. Admittedly quite a lot more could have been made of Adam Tuck's clever script;

some of the acting was either too cheesy or – at the other end of the scale – a bit self-conscious for this kind of comedy. Some of the scenes were not as smooth as they could have been, either. *Transplant* is also a little long, as it has, if not exactly an intricate plot, certainly a winding one that involves all the characters revealing their true selves at least three times.

But this kind of criticism seems beside the point. It's the end of term, this is a fun show that is, at times, very good. If you want to laugh, laugh you will.

Skye Wheeler

Atlantica | Christ's | Tue 21–Sat 25 | 9pm

To go into details would be laughable but *Atlantica* is about whales with a dash of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* mixed in. Seemingly against the odds, this production is really rather good.

Writer and director Jack Martelli has managed to triumph over a preposterous plot, rickety set and obscure venue and has created an intriguing and, at times, genuinely chilling piece of drama. The cast were universally excellent, with Alastair Boag and Kian O'Grady particularly impressive, and the direction made great use of the occasionally alarming set, its creaks and groans adding to the nautical feel. Martelli's roots in film are

brought to mind by minor touches, such as the use of background music at moments of tension, and the atmosphere he creates is more of a big budget thriller filmed on the high seas than a student play in Christ's awful Typewriter.

Maybe the sparse audience enhanced the sense of isolation but I think I actually felt the hairs on the back of my neck creep as the actors' screams intermingled with the whalesong (don't ask, I told you the plot was silly – so was *Jaws*). Admittedly, it doesn't take much to scare a theatre critic, but try it on a first date all the same. If you take some popcorn with you it'll be just like the movies.

James Dormer

Lovers | Christ's | Tue 21–Sat 25 | 7.15pm

The lovers of Brian Friel's one-act play are Maggie and Joe, a young couple close to marriage and O-levels: the action concentrates on their attempts to fit themselves into the world around them and on their excitement and apprehension for the future. Will their love triumph over their Irish convent-school circumstances, or will they be suffocated by an unfeeling society?

Sixties kitchen-sink dramas of this type place great pressure on the actors to create believable characters, having little more than the bare words of Friel's text to work with. Here the minimalist set increases this pressure in an attempt to focus our attention on the characters.

Fortunately the two leads, played by Del Jones and Jon Reynolds, are able to cope with this responsibility for the

whole of the performance.

Jones manages to combine convincing naivete with an engaging vivacity, alternately hopeful and fearful of the future. Meanwhile Reynolds maintains an air of anguished bewilderment, occasionally breaking out of his reserved character to show some of the same depth of feeling. Overall, however, the tone of the play is very even – indeed almost flat at times – the clinical delivery of the narrator-figures who break up the scenes between Mag and Joe not always being relieved by the emotions on stage.

That said, this is a confident and professional show happily lacking in serious flaws. It is a competent reading of Friel's play, which quietly addresses his issues in an austere way: making the effort to provoke your own thoughts rewarded.

Will Carr

Minds. Wide Open.
www.gs.com/recruiting





Deposition of the month

The Deposition of Father McGreevy | Brian O'Doherty | Arcadia | £11.99

Bless me, Father

On first impression there's something decidedly reassuring about *The Deposition of Father McGreevy*. Populated as it is with all the stock characters one expects from Irish literature of this kind, we may feel certain that O'Doherty is about to give us the 'auld Irish' sentimentality. The title character, Father McGreevy, is a solicitous Catholic priest who finds himself administering to a small congregation of Gaelic speakers in a village in Kerry. When all the female inhabitants of the village die – following an unexpectedly harsh winter – it is left to McGreevy to keep the isolated community together. From this premise O'Doherty weaves his tale, and it is one far darker than we may have initially expected.

As the novel progresses the tragedy of the community is made apparent, though not completely clarified. O'Doherty attempts to grapple with the darker side of this supposedly idyllic rural life, far away from the sham of Guinness-drinking and folk songs with which the Irish tourist board sells the country. It is a knowing swipe at the pastoral Ireland of De Valera. Father McGreevy speaks to us as a broken man; a priest who has found his world-view drastically altered by events way beyond his control. As a result, he can eventually only take solace in the Eucharist. As the story progresses, he singularly fails to keep his world together and never fully comprehends what occurs around him.

McGreevy's narrative is perhaps overtly clerical and pious at points, and this would detract somewhat from

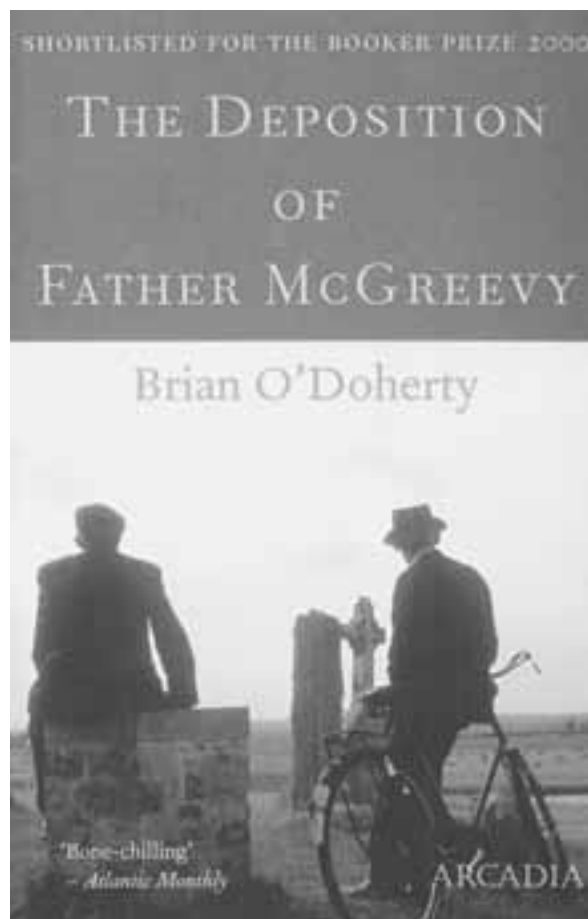
the impact if it weren't written in such a farcical manner. As it is, though, this tone helps convince us of the piety of McGreevy's worries and anger. That the actual deposition is placed within a larger matrix centring on the journalistic investigations of William Maginn is, however, unnecessary and serves merely to anaesthetise the emotion of McGreevy's narrative.

Before being nominated for this year's Booker Prize, *The Deposition of Father McGreevy* had sold, literally, only a dozen or so copies. Published by one of the smaller publishing houses in the country – Arcadia – its recent success is deserved, as are the financial awards that come with such a nomination. While this is not a book that will appeal to everyone's tastes, and some readers may be shocked by certain contents, it is not written for simple shock value. O'Doherty deals with his topics with an intelligence and sensitivity that is laudable. Most impressive of all is the way in which O'Doherty conveys to his readers the

thudding sense of a small community's enforced isolation. A flawed book, yes, but one that is still well worth investing reading time in, now that term is drawing to a close and all of us have more free time.

Anthony Windram

The Deposition of Father McGreevy was nominated for this year's Booker Prize.



A life manifesto

Karl Marx: A Life | Francis Wheen | Fourth Estate | £8.99

Full Marx

From the outset, Francis Wheen's objective in this, the most recent biography of Karl Marx, is clear: to extricate Marx from the phenomenon of Marxism, and to rediscover the real man behind the 'ism' which has so steadfastly attached itself to one of the most famous names of modern history. In bringing the man to life he undoubtedly succeeds: no brooding over the image of Marx in solitary confinement in the British Library reading room here. Instead, we are presented with a picture of Marx as a drunken reprobate, whose youthful and not so youthful love of debauchery and altercation would guarantee any companion a good night out on the town.

Although humorous, Wheen's intimate, man-down-the-pub style does break down at times; quirky phrases such as "crack-pot" and "skint" invade the narrative incessantly. Marx's hairiness, too, seems to be an important personal characteristic, and takes on a heightened relevance in this biography.

Wheen devotes just the right amount of space to consideration of Marx's theories, and successfully places the revolutionary's political involve-

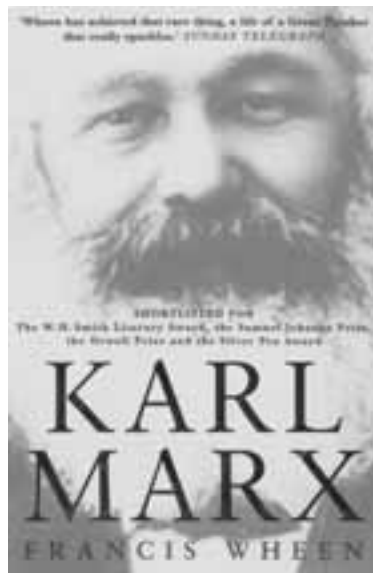
ment, and writing of his major works (most notably the long compositional process of *Capital*), in the context of his personal life. The author does not shy away from the Marx whose arrogance and revengeful bitterness towards intellectual opponents earned him such a negative reputation among his contemporaries. Nor does he fail to expose Marx's pretensions to bourgeois life when, in reality, he spent most of his life in debt while his family hovered near destitution. What's more, he succeeds in opening up Marx's familial life, which – although burdened with premature death, poverty and controversy concerning Marx's illegitimate son – is painted (for the most part) as a picture of love and friendship.

Tracing the great man's life from the arrogance of his youth, to his role as a feared political revolutionary, Wheen ends with a portrait of a mellowed old grandfather, to whom politics and philosophy had become empty shadows when compared to the personal tragedy that characterised his final years.

Hegel's role as guardian angel to this genius, supporting him financially as well as intellectually throughout his life, is duly recognised in this book. The incongruence between the dour reck-

lessness of Marx the revolutionary, and his devotion to his family and his life-long friend Hegel, is what ultimately emerges from this book. Perhaps, however, this simply bears testimony to a man whose life, according to his biographer, was characterised by the "paradox, irony and contradiction" that shaped his writings.

Suzanne Lynch



Cantab

Gabriel Glickman scrutinises Roger Scruton



All philosophers relish controversy, and the more daring create it, as much through their personalities as their work. Roger Scruton excels in this capacity. "I was from the earliest age an intellectual and a trouble-maker", he reminisces, and the equation of these two identities has been the pivot of much of his writing.

It does not take more than a brief acquaintance with his works to discover his target: it is orthodoxy that he seeks to subvert. Scruton has fashioned himself as the high priest of conservative traditionalism, delighting in the unmodish nature of his sentiments. Referred to by his enemies on the Left as the "unthinking man's thinking man" he has assailed the icons of popular culture in Blairite Britain with an impish panache. The Pet Shop Boys took legal action when he questioned the originality of electronic sound in *The Aesthetics of Music*, and there were calls for the NSPCC to intervene when he announced his intention to raise his four-year-old son on a diet of the classics – to awaken noble character in favour of infantile enjoyment.

In the tradition of Tory satirists from Swift and Pope, Scruton thrives on a sense of the absurd; and this certainly provides a bizarre reflection on an age when pop stars take philosophers to the courts. Beneath the histrionics, however, this is an author with a serious, even passionate, edge. In the last years of the Czech Communist regime, he entered the country to disseminate papers and address secret meetings, preaching the virtues of freedom and human dignity. In a sanitised, spin-doctored arena of contemporary politics, this is a man whose integrity cannot be held in doubt.

Scruton's reflections on his undergraduate years at Jesus College in the late 1960s feature in his recent book, *England: An Elegy*. While repelled by the left wing spirit of the era – in particular the teachings of Raymond Williams at the English faculty – he took away a powerful regard for the loyalties engendered by the collegiate system, and the intellectual freedom on offer to an arts student. *Elegy* is a poignant and intensely personal statement of beliefs, a journey through Scruton's romantic mindset, as he searches for the soul of Englishness – in religion, law and the arts. For Scruton, English patriotism is distinguished from the nationalism of the Far Right, in that its root lies not in race, but in the land – the "scept'r'd isle" itself. This mystical fascination is the kernel of the book, redolent of Blake's *Jerusalem* and the Arthurian legends. He sees the greatest exponents of national culture as those who can re-enchant the landscape, from Shakespeare to the Gothic Revivalists to Vaughan-Williams.

Scruton's writings look nostalgically to a place that may never have really existed. But in the voyeuristic and shallow world we face today – the England of anti-paedophile mob riots and the Millennium Dome – his lament for a lost beauty should not go unheard. As he puts it: "when people discard, ignore or mock the ideals which formed their national character, they cease to exist as a people...What the English have since become is, to my mind, the proof that ideals are important."

Rebel, patriot and idealist, Roger Scruton's provocative powers are seldom matched. His place in the pantheon of Cambridge philosophers is beyond contention.

Sea swell

The Voyages of Alfred Wallace | Peter Everett | Vintage | £6.99

Ocean liner

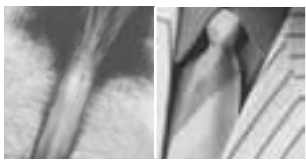
The life story of Alfred Wallace, a poorly educated Cornish fisherman blessed with an innate talent for painting, is initially reminiscent of William Blake. Like Blake, he was a marginal figure powerfully inspired by a deeply personal vision. Like Blake, his subject matter was his passion and he saw his art as almost organic to his being; an expression of his life at sea. Like Blake, he was considered a madman. It is also a curious coincidence that a novel about his life should be published at a time when Blake's own art and writing is enjoying a revival.

Born in 1855, much of Wallace's life was spent at sea until his death in a workhouse in 1945 – his existence spanned an incredible breadth of history and change. Everett hasn't set himself an easy task in this novel, which seeks to illuminate to the reader the mind of an idiosyncratic, troubled and brilliant man. The text takes the form of a stream of consciousness – unpunctuated by date or chapter divisions – in which the story is composed of a flossam of fragments of memory and glimpses of experience shored up against the barely perceptible tide of time.

After an unconvincing start, the novel gradually builds up a rhythm which becomes increasingly confident and lyrical – especially towards the end when the speaker finds a compelling voice. Fluent tone is like a tide in the narrative, flowing strongly when discussion is based around Wallace's love of painting or his feeling for the sea, and ebbing away when other elements dominate – like the section concerning the death of Reuben. But the lyrical element is not realised fully until the last few pages – in the image of a mind lost in madness, coexistent with a vivid, kaleidoscopic sensitivity.

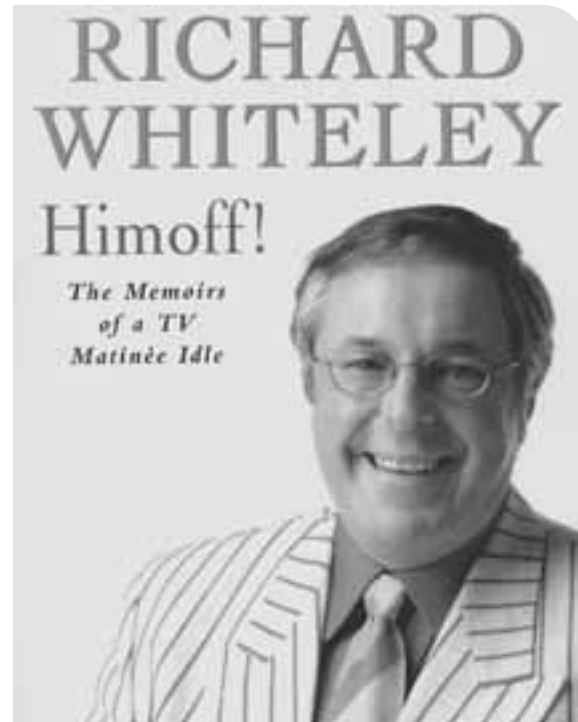
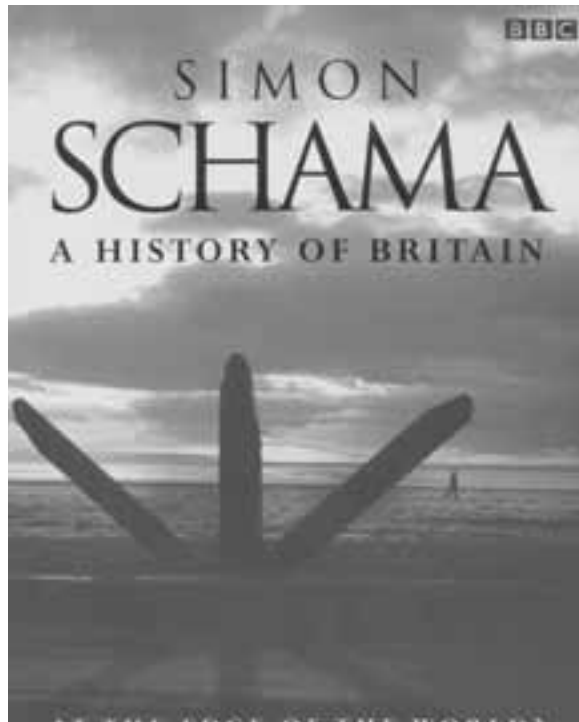
Ultimately, this is a novel best read to admire the structure of the narrative; the cumulative effect of the various ideas and recollections it preserves for the reader are more communicative than the often confused movement of the plotline. Nonetheless, in the later passages there is indeed the feeling that the author has finally gained access to the mind of the artist: his touch becomes surer and the narrative itself more powerfully elegaic. Peter Everett's book is a sensitive, poignant delineation which, when it succeeds, paints a highly sophisticated portrait of this haunted, "naive" genius.

Kate Alpass



Christ's pieces

Ed Hall referees a title-fight between Richard Whiteley and Simon Schama



literature and finally...

TCS brought us the joys of the *FHM Real Sex Book*, now *VarsityArts* goes one better with *Puppetry of the Penis: the Ancient Australian Art of Genital Origami*.



In 1965, two keen students graduated from Christ's. Both rose quickly to the top of their respective careers, where they have remained unchampioned bastions of their chosen professions. Now at last they come face to face again as they battle each other to become top of the Christmas books best-seller lists. Both books detail the history of great institutions. Who will win? Simon Schama narrating 4,600 years of British history, or Richard Whiteley narrating 56 years of himself?

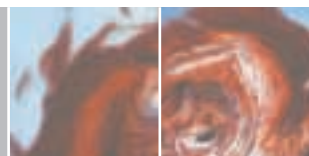
Whiteley may not have picked the loftiest of topics, but his memoirs (entitled *Himoff!*, describing the way minor celebrities like himself are recognised in the streets - "look it's him off the telly") are an entertaining account of a relatively interesting life. There can be no accusations of ghost-writing here, Whiteley's inimitable style is recognisable from the outset: "I was introduced to daily journalism at the age of seven and a half...I was a paper boy". A healthy amount of space is given to his times at Cambridge, his work on *Varsity*, and the future successes of his *Varsity* work-mates, columnists, photographers and critics a-plenty. But beware, this book is for hardened Whiteley afficianados only. Of course, if you're the sort who is sickened by "Twice Nightly"'s awful puns and friendly, tea-

time manner you'll quickly tire of his memoirs - but your Gran will probably love it. And it may not even be obvious Schama has picked the weightier topic. But based on his ever popular TV series, the book has been accused by some, not least the academics he left behind in Cambridge, of being simplified and overtly narrative. In trying to make his book accessible to all, they argue, he has succeeded in making it interesting to none. This is a little unfair. It may offer nothing new to Cambridge's Emeritus professors, but its selling figures to the *hoi polloi* speak for themselves - 24,700 copies sold at the latest count. It isn't the

first time Schama has raised the hackles of the intelligentsia; in 1992 he released *Dead Certainties (Unwarranted Speculations)* - a classic of postmodernism, in which he used fictitious characters and narratives to provide a portrait of life during the time of General Wolfe. It became a crime against history, for which the ivory-towered profs have never forgiven him. The stage has been set, will your family be opening simple Simon, or witty Whiteley on Christmas morn? My money's on the tea-time Titan. But of course, if you don't fancy either, yet still want a Christ's piece for a yuletide gift, I hear Darwin's *The Origin of Species* is still selling well.

You saw the play at the Edinburgh Fringe, now marvel at the book, a tribute to the more flexible members of our Antipodean friends, and their so-called dick tricks. Complete with line drawings and black and white photographs, Simon Morley and David Friend show readers exactly how to manipulate their genitalia into any shape they desire. Wonder at the Loch Ness Monster! Grimace at the Skateboard! Choke on the Hamburger! The perfect stocking filler this Christmas. Fed up with charades? Simply treat your family to an impromptu puppet show!

Dirk Diggler



The paint debate

Is painting still an acceptable form for art?

Painting is arguably the most obvious form of art, being a pure notation of what is actually visible. Thus, opinions about art over the last half-century have tended to pivot on notions of whether it should represent what is implicit and observable or show us what we have never seen or thought before. The latter increasingly became the dominant opinion from the '60s onwards, as kitsch, irony and art statements challenged us with post-modernism and painting was put to one side.

As Marcel Duchamp said of his work, the artist should turn what is obvious back upon itself until it becomes something so different that it can be no longer recognised as the work of the specific artist or society that spawned it. However, as this

year's Turner Prize has shown, artists are returning to painting, demonstrated in the articulate works of Glenn Brown and Michael Raedecker. Is modern art losing its nerve for innovation, and hence matching the general cultural trend for retro styling?

Postmodernism is a tricky concept to define and is often misused. Social theorist Nicholas Garnham described it as an aesthetic phenomenon, whispering to us that true beauty can only be channelled through multiple meanings, where we never feel we can grasp it. Jeff Koons, an artist who has made a career out of an unusual use of brash bright objects and neon lights, has explicitly claimed that his project is to show how complex a work of art must be to reflect modern societies which often have beauty hidden deep under the surface. For the viewer, this involves a lot of effort and interpretation, a long way from the days of Van Gogh's sunflower paintings, or Monet's impressionistic depictions of some water lilies, which arguably seek to depict innocently what is beautiful to the naked eye.

Can art really seek to re-enact this original state of innocence or is society itself too fragmented and dissolute? Chris Cunningham, who recently displayed a horrific and powerful video in the Royal Academy's *Apocalypse* exhibition, has commented that the modern media and technology available to the artist render one-dimensional methods like painting almost completely redundant. A fair point, perhaps. *The Sunday Times* art critic Waldemar Januscawik once asked of Tracey Emin what can this woman actually

do? What skills does she possess? But this critique basically came down to his chagrin at the fact that she was proud of the fact that she couldn't paint. Postmodernism, then, seeks to move so far from society's basic conception of its arts, that art as such is no longer recognisable, in the way traditionalists perceive of it.

However, let us not deride the revolutionary social and artistic potential of painting. The Turner Prize, recognised for its seemingly limitless potential for controversy, would not nominate painters lightly. Raedecker in particular is highly explorative and looking further back.

Bridget Riley utilised painting in the form of swirling abstractions to create complex optical illusions.

However, as Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate museums, recently stated, art should be transgressive. Life is not all sweet. It is questionable whether painting can

ever achieve this as successfully as other methods – but what is sweetest about this is that it is an argument that will rage forever.

Charlie Phillips



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Friday | 24.11.00

Film

- **CAIUS FILMS:** SANJURO - Kurosawa writes/directs samurai tale. *Caius, Bateman Auditorium*. 8:30pm. £2.
- **CU Televisual Entertainment:** Watch or join in our live TV show - this week featuring mud wrestling! *CC's Cafe, Sturton Street, www.fmdlive.co.uk*. 6:30pm.
- **Kettle's Yard:** Marion Kalmus: Restoration Drama, An installation. *The Festival Theatre*. 11am.
- **Misc**
- **CU Tai Chi Chuan:** Chi Kung classes. *Robinson College, Games Room*. 4pm.
- **SALSA DANCE CLASSES WITH NELSON BATISTA:** Absolute beg/improvers: 6-7.30pm All levels: 7.30-9.00pm. *St. Columbas Hall, 4 Downing Place (opp. Crowne Plaza)*. 6pm. £5/£4 per class.
- **Shakespeare Reading Group:** One play per week. Characters from hat. *Emma, Camden House Drawing Room*. 5:15pm.
- **Anglia Music Department:** Free, open to public: New Music Players: Schoenberg, Dudley Hughes. *Mumford Theatre, Anglia*. 1pm.
- **Bach at Night VIII:** Members of Gonville and Caius Choir sing Buxtehude and Bach. *Caius College, Chapel*. 10pm. £4/£2.
- **BachPlus VII:** Preludes and Fugues by Bach, Mendelssohn, Shostakovich and more. *Fitzwilliam Museum*. 1:10pm. FREE.
- **Cafe Studio:** Simeon Wood performs "The Traveller" on flutes, celtic whistles, panpipes. *Emmanuel United Reformed Church*. 7:30pm. £5/£3.
- **Clare ents:** Garage & House night taking over the cellars. *Clare*. 9pm. £3/4.
- **Evolution:** Vibe FM's Krazy Kev, select-ed drinks from £1.50. *Toxic 8 Nightclub, Next to Lion Yard Car Park*. 5pm. £4 b4 10.30, £5 b4 11pm, £6 after 11.
- **Fitz Music Society:** Corelli Christmas Concerto, Beethoven 3rd Piano Concerto soloist John Bradbury, Mendelssohn 4th Symphony (Italian). *Fitzwilliam College, Main Hall*. 8pm.
- **Jazz at John's:** PATRICIAN JAZZ QUARTET works by Coltrane, Parker, Tristano, Clifford Brown, plus their own. *John's College, Fisher Building*. 9pm. £4.
- **Kettle's Yard:** Student Lunchtime Concert: Patricia McGill, cello. *Kettle's Yard, Castle Street*. 1:10pm.
- **Momentum:** another night of Drum and Bass until midnight. Cheap entry. *Selwyn Diamond*. 9pm.
- **The Lindsay Quartet:** Haydn, Schubert and Shostakovich. *The Guildhall*. 8pm. £15/£13/£10/£8. Student Standby £3.
- **The Trinity Singers:** Rutter Requiem and Highlights from Handel's Messiah,

with orchestra. *Trinity College Chapel*. 8pm. £5, £3 Students, £1 Members.

- **TRINITY ENTS:** INDIE-Live Band. 70p Pints before 10. *Trinity College, WPR*. 9pm. £3.
- **Talk**
- **Cambridge Buddhist Society:** Dr Tenzin Namdul talks on 'Tibetan Medicine - Past and Future'. *Friends Meeting House, Jesus Lane*. 7:30pm.
- **C.U. Railway Club:** "The legendary 4498", Alan Jackson, "Sir Nigel Gresley" Locomotive Trust. *Emmanuel College, Camden House*. 8:30pm.
- **MMP:** Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? Prime mysteries revealed. *CMS, Clarkson Road, Tickets email d.stretch@damtp.cam.ac.uk*. 5pm.
- **Theatre**
- **BATS and Clare Actors:** "The Birthday Party" by Harold Pinter - Bookings from Arts Theatre, 503333. *Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall*. 11pm. £4/£3.
- **BATS present: EQUUS -:** a boy's obsession with horses inspires an acute analysis of the decay of modern society. *Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall*. 8pm. £4 / £5.
- **CADS:** Atlantica - Exciting new writing by Jack Martelli. *Christs College, New Court Theatre*. 9pm. £5/£4.
- **CADS:** Lovers by Brian Friel. *Christs College, New Court Theatre*. 7:15pm. £5/£4.
- **Fletcher Players:** 'Old Times' by Harold Pinter. *Playroom*. 8pm. £3.50/£4.50.
- **Gilbert & Sullivan Society:** The Pirates of Penzance - skulduggery and patter in Cornwall. *Peterhouse*. 8pm. £3/£3.50.
- **Narcotic Productions and Fletcher Players bring you:** TRANSPLANT! an Epic Tale of FEAR! REVENGE! CORRUPTION! and... STUFF! *The Playroom*, 11pm. £3.
- **OFF THE TOP OF OUR HEADS:** The acclaimed Edinburgh Fringe sell-out comedy play comes to Cambridge. *Trinity Hall, Lecture Theatre*. 8pm. £3/£4.

Saturday | 25.11.00

Film

- **Kettle's Yard:** Marion Kalmus: Restoration Drama, An installation. *Festival Theatre, Newmarket Road*. 00am.
- **Misc**
- **CONTEMPORARY DANCE AUDITIONS:** Dancers wanted for explosive and innovative dance show Lent 2001. *Pembroke College, New Cellars*. 3pm.
- **Hughes Hall:** International BeerFest. Enjoy international beers at 50p/bottle! *Hughes Hall, Bar*. 9pm. £1/£2.
- **Music**
- **Bach at Night IX:** The Dome Consort play orchestral music by Bach and

more others. *New Hall, The Dome*. 9:30pm. FREE.

- **BachPlus VIII:** The series continues with a selection of Bach and Stravinsky. *Fitzwilliam Museum*. 2:30pm. FREE.
- **Caius' Ents:** Back to School Bop - Cheesy tunes. *Harvey Court, West Rd, Dress: School Uniform*. 9pm. £4.
- **Celebration 125:** Last Night of the Proms programme celebrating 125 years of.. *The Corn Exchange*. 7:30pm.
- **Christ's College Music Society:** Lunchtime Recital - Music for French Horn & Piano. *Christs, Chapel*. 1:15pm.
- **Micallef-Inanga Piano Duo:** Robin Holloway's Gilded Goldbergs - freely recomposed for two pianos after J.S. Bach. *West Road Concert Hall*. 8pm. £8/£6/£4. Student Standby £3.
- **St John's Ents:** FONDUE - A night of hot cheese! Dress - Christmas! *St. John's College, Fisher Building*. 9pm.
- **X-Cite!:** The massive DJ Fluff with the latest dance anthems! *Toxic 8 Nightclub*. 9pm. £5 b4 10pm, £7 b4 11pm, £8 after 11.
- **Talk**
- **Kettle's Yard:** Perfidy: Surviving Modernism, conference. The artists explore links between this new show and modernism. *Kettle's Yard*. 11:30am.
- **Theatre**
- **BATS and Clare Actors:** "The Birthday Party" by Harold Pinter. *Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall*. 11pm. £4/£3.
- **BATS present: EQUUS:** a boy's obsession with horses inspires an acute analysis of the decay of modern society. *Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall*. 8pm. £4/£5.
- **Brickhouse Theatre:** presents 'The Threepenny Opera' by Bertolt Brecht. *Robinson College, Auditorium*. 2:30pm. £4.50 students, or £5.50.
- **CADS:** Atlantica - Exciting new writing by Jack Martelli. *Christs College, New Court Theatre*. 9pm. £5/£4.
- **Cads:** Brian Friel's "Lovers". *Christs College, New Court Theatre*. 7:15pm. £4.
- **Fletcher Players:** 'Old Times' by Harold Pinter. *Playroom*. 8pm. £3.50/£4.50.
- **Gilbert & Sullivan Society:** The Pirates of Penzance - skulduggery in Cornwall.

THE HOUSE OF FLIES

by Robbie Stewart

Magical realism merges with black comedy in new writing focussed upon the destructive circle of friendship in a failing London pub
The Playroom, St Edwards Passage off Kings Parade
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the threepenny Opera

by Bertolt Brecht

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 matinee: Saturday 25th at 2:30 pm
 Robinson College Auditorium
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Peterhouse, 8pm. £3/£3.50.

- **Narcotic Productions and Fletcher Players bring you:** TRANSPLANT! an Epic Tale of FEAR! REVENGE! CORRUPTION! and... STUFF! *The Playroom*. 11pm. £3.

Sunday | 26.11.00

Film

- **Christ's Films:** Rules Of Engagement. *Christs College, New Court Theatre*. 8pm & 10:30pm. £2.
- **Queens' Films:** Fight Club. *Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall*. 10:30pm.
- **Queens' Films:** Raging Bull. *Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall*. 8pm.
- **St John's Films:** X-Men. *St. John's College, Fisher Building*. 7:30pm & 10pm. £1.80.
- **Misc**
- **Cambridge Steiner School:** Advent Fair with traditional crafts, puppet shows & organic cafe. *Coleridge Community College, Radegund Road*. 11am. £1 Adults, Kids Free.
- **Cambridge Ultimate Frisbee:** Fun, friendly, and fast paced mixed team sport. *Jesus Green*. 11:30am.
- **CU Rambling Club:** 11-mile walk from Cambridge to Shepreth, meet Senate House. 11:30am.
- **CU Tai Chi Chuan Society:** Wudang style Tai Chi Chuan training session. *Fitzwilliam, Reddaway Rm*. 2pm. £2/£3.
- **CU Yoga Society:** Beat stress the fun Yoga way! *New Hall, Vivian Stewart Room*. 5:30pm. £3/5 per class.
- **CU Yoga Society:** Beat stress the fun Yoga way!. *New Hall, Vivian Stewart Room*. 7:15pm. £24 per term.
- **C.U Raja Yoga Society:** Learn to meditate and beat stress. All welcome. *Inner Space, 6, King's Parade*. 6pm.
- **SALSA NIGHT WITH NELSON BATISTA:**

absolute beg/imp: 7.00-7.45pm. *Sophbeck Club, 14 Tredgold Lane*. 7pm. £3/£4.

- **Samatha Association for Buddhist Meditation:** Introductory course in traditional Thai meditation. Free. All welcome. *Darwin, Old Library*. 8pm.
- **ScienceWorld Radio Show 107.9FM:** Is brain repair really possible? Find out on ScienceWorld THIS week. *Live only on The Eagle 107.9FM*. 6pm.
- **Music**
- **Bach and Shostakovich:** Movements from Bach's Partitas and a Shostakovich piano trio. *New Hall, Fellows' Drawing Room*. 7:30pm. FREE.
- **Bach at Night X:** Cantatas and Concertos. *Robinson College, Chapel*. 10pm. £4/£2.
- **Churchill Music Society:** Jazz in the bar. Quintessence. *Churchill*. 9pm.
- **Clare Cellars:** Hip-hop set from MARK RAE: Def Fly & Real. *Clare*. 9pm. £4.
- **Coffee Concert:** Coffee and a croissant followed by an hour-long piano recital. *Cambridge Pianoforte Centre, King's Hedges Road*. 10:30am. £6.
- **Fitzwilliam String Quartet:** Purcell and Shostakovich. *Fitzwilliam College, Chapel*. 8pm. £6, £3, £1.
- **Talk**
- **Methodist Society - WORSHIP:** discussion/activity on the use of music in worship. *Wesley Methodist Church*. 12am.

Monday | 27.11.00

Film

- **CU Televisual Entertainment:** Get involved with live TV! Just turn up - www.fmdlive.co.uk for venue. *Trinity, room TBA*. 7pm.
- **Misc**
- **Cambridge International Club:** Learn

28th Nov -2nd Dec 8pm
House of Flies
 Robbie Stewart

28th Nov -2nd Dec 11pm
Bouncers
 John Godber

The Playroom
 St. Edward's Passage, King's Parade, Cambridge

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traditional dances from around world. No partners needed. *Gibson Hall, St. Columba Church, Downing Place.* 8:30pm. £1:50 (conc £1:00).

- **CU Taekwondo:** Beginners 6.30-8pm Seniors 8-10pm. *Fitzwilliam College, Reddaway room.* 6:30pm. £2.50.
- **CU Yoga Society:** Yoga: Relaxation, meditation, exercise. *St. Catharine's College, Ramsden Room.* 5:45pm. £3.50.
- **CUTAZZ:** Advanced Tap Class. *Queens' College, Bowett Room.* 7pm. £2.
- **CUTAZZ:** Inter Tap Class. *Queens' College, Bowett Room.* 6pm. £2.
- **Eating Disorders Support:** Worried about eating disorders? Phonenumber 8-10pm, (7)40555. 8pm.
- **INDIAN DANCE CLASSES:** Classical Indian dance for beginners. *Pembroke College, New Cellars.* 5pm. £3/£5.
- **Yoga with Barbara Harding:** *St Marks Community Centre, Barton Road.* 8pm. £3/5 per class.

- Music**
- **Award Holders Concert:** Shostakovich, W.F. Bach, Ravel and Sarasate. *Robinson College, Chapel.* 8pm. £8/£5/£4. Student Standby £3.
 - **Churchill and New Hall Music Societies:** Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf, Mozart's Vespers, and original composition by Louis Johnson. *Churchill, Main Hall.* 8pm. £5/£3.
 - **Clare College Music Society:** Louise Kateck (soprano), Eliot Alderman (tenor) sing Mozart operatic duets. *Clare College, Chapel.* 1:15pm.
 - **CLARE ENTS:** CONTENTION: the quest for Cambridge's best student band. See www.clare-ents.com. *Clare Cellars.*

- **Magic Monday:** Groovy student night playing Funk, HipHop, Jazz, and Indie. *The Fez Club, Market Passage.* See www.magicmonday.co.uk. 1pm.
- **RAG & CU A Cappella Society:** Cabaret au Caramel - cocktails, confectionary and Close Harmony. *Queens.* 7pm. £3.
- **Revelation Rock-Gospel Choir:** Weekly rehearsal - come and sing! *Peterhouse, Music Room.* 7:30pm.
- **TCMS Late night recitals:** Candlelit performance of Carissimi's oratorio Jephte. *Trinity, Chapel.* 10:15pm.
- **Toxic 8 nightclub:** "Adelante", students night, entry from £1.4 floors of music. *promotional drinks £1, 8pm-2am.* 8pm.
- **University of Cambridge Concert Band:** Michaelmas 2000 Charity Concert in aid of WinterComfort. *Wesley Church, King Street.* 7pm. £3.50/3.00.

Tuesday | 28.11.00

- Film**
- **Corpus Christi College Pictures:** DIAL M FOR MURDER. *McCrum Theatre, Benet Street.* 8pm. £2.
- Misc**
- **caiusRAG presentz Miss Caius 2000:** Beauty pageant with noticeable difference. *Harvey Court.* 8pm. £2.50.
 - **CU Meditation and Buddhism Soc.:** Learn to Meditate. *Christ's College, Z Basement.* 7:15pm.
 - **CU Poker Society:** CU Poker Tournament. Email cupoker@hotmail.com for details. *Tit Hall, Bar.* 6:45pm.
 - **CU Yoga Society:** Iyengar Yoga for all - beginners always welcome. *Caius College, Harvey Court Breakfast room.*

- 6pm. £3.50/cheaper with a termpass.
- **CU Yoga Society:** Work out and relax with Yoga. *Caius College, Harvey Court Breakfast room.* 8pm. £3.50 per class.
- **C.U. Ninjutsu Club:** Beginners classes in Ninjutsu. *Small Gym at Fenners.* 8pm. £3.00.
- **C.U.Hispanic Society:** CHRISTMAS/END OF TERM FORMAL HALL! Wine provided by the Society. Email hft20 for tickets. *Jesus College.* 7pm. £4 mems, £6 non.
- **Jewish Society:** "Study with a Buddy", intro. Hebrew, Talmud, Mysticism, etc. *Jewish Student Centre, 3, Thompson's Lane.* 7:30pm.
- **Jewish society:** "Study with a Buddy". Beginners Hebrew, talmud, etc. *3, Thompson's Lane.* 11pm.
- **Samatha Meditation:** Free classes in traditional Buddhist meditation. *Darwin College.* 8pm.
- **Tango Argentino at the Tango Bar:** "Milonga", £2, *St. Paul's, Corner Hills Rd./St. Paul's Rd.* 9pm.
- **Tango Bar:** Dance Tango Argentino. Basic technique class. *Centre at St.*

- Paul's.* 7pm. £4 (£3).
- Music**
- **Bach at Night XI:** Newnham Sinfonia and College Choir bring this series to a close. *Newnham College, Clough Hall.* 10pm. £4/£1.50.
 - **BachPlus IX:** Featuring works for flute and piano. *Fitzwilliam Museum.* 1:10pm. FREE.
 - **Cambridge Africa Society:** Cool music

- dance from around the continent. *Devonshire Arms, Devonshire Rd (off Mill Rd).* 9am. £2/£1.
- **CLARE ENTS:** CONTENTION: the quest for Cambridge's best student band.
- **CUMS 1:** Performance of film scores. *West Rd Concert Hall.* 9:15pm. £2.
- **Love Shack:** Glen White lays down hits from the 70's and 80's. *Toxic 8 Nightclub,* 9pm. Free entry b4 11 if

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Peter (prw24) or Donna (dmm32)

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Thurs 30 November
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Ramsden Room, Catz

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Contact Philippa (pjl27) for details

Auditions for **ALCESTIS**
by Euripides

The Director of this Caius Freshers production is looking for potential **Actors and Actresses** both undergraduate and postgraduate

Saturday 25th 12-4pm and Sunday 26th 12-5pm
Green Room, Gonville & Caius College Trinity Street, CB2 1TA

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Amateur Dramatic Club

The Amateur Dramatic Club announces
AUDITIONS
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Les Liaisons Dangereuses
5th Week ADC MainShow
A play about sex, seduction, manipulation and getting away with it.
Sat 25 Nov: 12-6pm
ADC Theatre Dressing Room 1
Sun 26 Nov: 12-6pm
ADC Theatre Bar
Contact: James Tilston, jat37

Othello
6th Week ADC MainShow
Sat 25 Nov: 12-5pm,
New Court Theatre, Christ's
Sun 26 Nov: 10am-2pm
Lloyd Room, Christ's
Contact: Alex Winckler, adew2

The 2001 Lent Musical
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Weeks 8 & 9 ADC MainShow
Actors, Singers and Dancers all welcome
Please bring something to sing
Fri 24 Nov: 2-5pm
Sat 25 Nov: 11am-5pm
Sun 26 Nov: 2-5pm
all on ADC Theatre Stage
Contact: Jon Croker, jmic2

Christ's Films

Sunday 26th November
8pm & 10.30pm
RULES OF ENGAGEMENT
Thursday 30th November
10pm
WITHNAIL AND I
Christ's New Court Theatre
£2
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Ian McKellen
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- **Newnham Raleigh Music Society:** Bach and Britten - A Ceremony of Carols. *Newnham, Clough Hall*. 10pm. £4/ £1.50.
- **The Sound of Bells:** Includes John Tavener's Last Sleep of the Virgin for quartet and handbells. *Great St Mary's*. 8pm. £9/£7/£6/£5/£3.

Theatre

- **Fletcher Players and Voulez Vous Productions:** "Bouncers", John Godber's award-winning comedy. *The Playroom*. 11pm. £3.50/£4.00.
- **Footlights Smoker:** hilarious late night comedy. *ADC Theatre*. 11pm. £3.

C-company announces auditions for David Edgar's

Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde

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Contact: nph23/07811-724817



Ex Productions Announce
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Sat 25th & Sun 26th Nov
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ADC Dressing Rooms

Contact: vlc 21

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Contact Priya, pds30

Shadwell Dramatic Society

Invites applications to

DIRECT

Contact Jack Harding
@ Caius (jjh31)

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Interviews to be held on Tues 28th Nov

The Marlowe Society Announces

The Marlowe AUDITIONS *The Marlowe*

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Ramsden Room, St Catharine's

Contact: Catharine, cal36

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Film

- **Churchill College MCR Film Society:** Black Cat, White Cat. *Churchill, Wolfson Hall*. 8pm & 11pm. £1.80.

Misc

- **CU Tiddlywinks Club:** Yet another exciting meeting. Visitors welcome. *Queens', The Erasmus Room*. 7:30pm.
- **CU Taekwondo:** Beginners 6.30-8pm Seniors 8-10pm. *Fitzwilliam College, Reddaway room*. £2.50.
- **CUTAZZ:** Beginners' Tap Class. *Queens' College, Fitzpatrick Hall*. 6:30pm. £1.50.
- **Eating Disorders Support:** Worried about Eating disorders? Phonenumber 8-

10pm (7)40555. 8pm.

- **Go Society:** meeting. *King's College, Chetwynd Room*. 7:30pm.
- **Raja Yoga Society:** Positive thinking and meditation. All welcome. *Inner Space, 6, King's Parade*. 7:30pm.

Music

- **Bach's Mass in B Minor:** featuring CU Chamber Choir. *King's, Chapel*. 8pm. £25/£20/£14/£5/Student Standby £3.
- **CLARE ENTS: CONTENTION:** the quest for Cambridge's best student band. See www.clare-ents.com. *Clare Cellars*.
- **Cool Tempo:** mix of funk, dancefloor jazz, latin and futuresounds. *Sophbeck Sessions, Napier St*. 7:30pm. £3/£1.
- **Live Wire:** Student Night with DJ Ric Groves, Selected Drinks £1 b411. *Toxic 8 Nightclub, Next to lion yard car park*.

9pm. £2 b4 10.

- **Max K on Cambridge University Radio:** Top quality music plus exclusive Hefner and Lo-Fidelity Allstars interviews. <http://www.cur.co.uk>. 4pm.

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Due to a shortage of space this week, Varsity was unable to print the listings of Thursday 30.11.00 and Friday 1.12.00. As always, full listings are available now and throughout the holidays at: www.varsity.cam.ac.uk



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Drum and middle-class

Wildchild | Clare Cellars | Fri 17 Nov

A night out with Clare

Clare Cellars is arguably Cambridge's best student venue. It is arguably Cambridge's best venue, full stop. It certainly whoops the high-street sleaze. The fact that Clare Cellars is in a cellar (hence the name) gives it a literally underground feel. It has a comfy chill-out room, with a free coat-check – a clubland rarity. It boasts a sociable bar, with no loud music – another clubland rarity. It even sports a classy dance area, broken-up by pillars, hemmed in by a low ceiling and boosted by a proper sound system – a real clubland rarity, as student venues go. Is it any wonder Clare Cellars is the name permanently on students' lips?

With this in mind, I sauntered on down to Clare last Friday for one of their renowned drum 'n' bass nights – wearing trainers. Take note: you wear trainers for shockin' to drum 'n' bass, you wear shoes for dancing to house. Don't ask why. Rules is rules.

Cambridge's glitteratti are under a permanent three-line-whip to attend drum 'n' bass at Clare – and all the attractive people you see swanning around Cambridge were gracing the Cellars with their presence last Friday. The fashion statements were varied; headgear ranged from granny rain-protector *Pigeon Street* sheikh for the ladies – milliners take note, there's a gap in the market – to skateboarder beanie classics for the boys.

There were people in baggy trousers and people in straights; there were people in Teflon shirts, rubber shirts, and for the truly adventurous, cotton shirts. There was even one bloke wearing a long-sleeved pink t-shirt, but we're all open-minded now, aren't we? Well, thankfully the crowd were, as I was that bloke. Such a farrago of clothing could only be produced by students – but such a fashion melting pot is a welcome change from the formal hall look. The only drinking society here

were the water bottle massive and nobody looked bored enough to play "I have never"; there were more important things to do – like check their hair, swap baking tips, and, er, dance.

Tonight features an all-female DJ line-up. It makes a definite change from the testos-



terone charged atmosphere of look-at-me male DJs, with jockey-sluts queuing up to perform fellatio on them – do men become DJs for any other reason? My favourite moment of the

evening came when the DJ slipped in an old-skool jungle tune; the fierce ragga lyrics injected a firing atmosphere into the crowd and the dark breaks ensured we rocked and shocked in a dance hall stylee. For a moment we could have been in

Streatham, and watchwords like "bushwacker" and "bloodclot" emerged from the speakers. In fact, a few characters were present who could have come from Streatham: it appears the local estate boys have obviously clocked onto the appeal of Clare Cellars too. Bit presumptuous, I hear you say? How did I know they weren't students? Isn't *urban chic*, as they say, *a la mode*? Well, these street urchins bore the subtle hall marks of non-students. They wore worn-out Reebok Classics and Ben Sherman shirts. They had hackneyed faces. They even wore, and this one's vying for next year's look, Raalf Larenn

(sic) roll neck sweaters with, wait for it, gold chains (H-Samuel, of course) worn on the outside of the sweater – just wait till Posh 'n' Becks cotton on. But the promoter (tireless dynamo Andy Clapperton) assured me they were an oversight, and the bar staff refused to serve them – bravo! In fairness, they were a far cry from Cindy's weekend clientele, and the only crimes I saw them commit were fashion ones. In fact, given their chance, I'm sure they would have stirred the crowd up with their MCing skills; "yo, Cambridge, denounce your roots, throw away your suits, sack your valet, sell your chalet, drum and middle-class can kiss my ass." We can only wonder.

Next time you're going out, ditch the dinner suit, don some fly-garms, and haul your butt down to Clare Cellars. But remember, arrive early. Nine o'clock early – after all, this is Cambridge! Go on. Boycott Cindy's. Isn't it about time you gave your valet a night off?

Roman Townsend



music singles

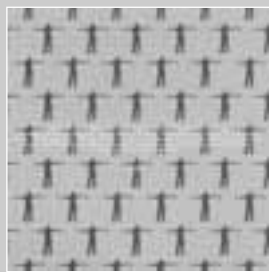


Lo-Fidelity Allstars | Ghostmutt EP | Skint Records | Released 27 November

It seems that if you were once on the floor at the Boutique, you now have two options. You can either move on, like the Chemicals and Jon Carter, foregoing the massive basslines for a harder, housier sound. Or you can be like Fatboy Slim and Bentley Rhythm Ace, and carry on making records with comedy foghorn sounds.

The Lo-fis can't decide which camp to join. It's impossible to deny that *Ghostmutt* is almost a carbon copy of everything they've ever put on wax. Present and correct are the thumping bass, Hammond organ loops, and, 'The Wrecked Train', a vocalist who proves that it's not just Daft Punk who are a dab hand with a vocoder. It's nothing new then. But the Lo-Fis always stood out from the Skint crowd; their shunning of the handbag norm wasn't soaked in irony, but steeped in the tradition of acid house and hip-hop.

MP



Melanie C | If that were me | Virgin | Released 27 November

Melanie C's releases from her debut solo album *Northern Star* are proving to be highly contrasting. Quite unlike any of her last releases, *If That Were Me* steps away from the grunge element of *Going Down* and refreshingly contains no r'n'b influences, as featured heavily in *Never Be The Same Again*. Instead, this single has a sweet melody that is surprisingly flattering to Mel C's

unique, if not somewhat strident, vocals. Perhaps the greatest departure from any of her past solo releases lies with the lyrical content of this single. Containing lines such as: "I couldn't live without my phone, but you don't even have a home", you could be forgiven in mistaking the single for a winter fundraising effort. Cheesy or just plain caring, Mel C is certainly proving to be vocally versatile; but if that were me, you'd be damned sure that I would have found another lyricist by now to complement this fantastic tune.

NC

Michael Phillips,
Naomi Coates

One too many?

The Beatles | 1 | Parlophone | On current release

Torturous Christmas tripe posing as a viable release

It seems impossible to move these days without some by-product of Beatlemania fall-out crashing down on our heads. This week, ladies and gentlemen (cue fanfare): all the Beatles' number one hits on an album. No, not all their best songs. No, not performances by acclaimed artists reinterpreting the wonderful music of the artists formerly known as the Beatles (now, 'the Moneygrabbers'). Just 27 singles on one CD – a kind of grotesque roll-call of all the songs which the Beatles released at the right time in either Britain or the

US. Yes, every one of these tracks is a modern classic. It's mainly popular songs like *Love Me Do*, *Eight Days A Week*, *Yellow Submarine*, *Penny Lane*...the list is long and distinguished. But what makes this album a distinguished replacement to the *Blue Album*, the *Red Album*, or any other variations on a theme of 'Beatles' Greatest Hits'? What, indeed, makes it an album at all? John, Paul, George and Ringo's fame may well have been built on singles, but their most famous singles are all easily located on truly great albums. The single *Eleanor Rigby* is part of the ground-breaking *Revolver* album, *All You Need is Love* can be found on the psychedelic *Magical Mystery Tour*, and *A Hard Day's Night* can be found on the album by

the same name. Indeed, listening to the albums as a whole is much more pleasurable. Even if the Beatles are running a little short on cash, and see a quick opportunity to capitalise on the recent release of their 'autobiography', there is no reason why we should fund them. Perhaps if the surviving ex-members of the band retired from the ceaseless regime of self-publicity they have developed for themselves, they could earn sufficient money to keep the fridge full through government pension schemes. But in the meantime, the music and recordings have not changed one smidgen. It's time to say, "Hello? Goodbye".

Adam Cohen





You be the Judge...

Are there any drawbacks to having such high status in the music industry?

Everyone has an opinion, either positive or negative.

Are you to female clubbers what David Beckham is to Essex girls?

No idea.

Which artists have had the greatest influence upon you?

James Brown, Jay Pierre, Hardfloor lots of small labels.

What single and what album could you not live without?

Album: Grace Jones, *The Greatest Hits*; Single: The Clash, *Magnificent 7*.

If you could have been present at any rock and roll moment which would it have been?

Woodstock.

During the mid '70s were you into disco or Meatloaf?

Disco.

People believed that tape-to-tape recording at home would be the end of the music industry and it wasn't. Will the Internet be?

It is difficult to say; on the one hand it offers an exciting means of music distribution but on the other hand, laws need to be made to protect the rights of the artist. But it is sure that the Internet is the future.

What do you think about broadcasting club nights over the net?

I am currently sitting on the fence with that one. But is it definitely the future.

What do you think about two-step garage? Is it part of a dance music revolution?

More music that I listen to, than

dance to, but when songs are good it works really well.

What are your views on the legalisation of cannabis?

I believe that cannabis is effectively legal already or certainly decriminalised. Public opinion is in favour of legalisation of cannabis and it seems stupid to criminalise people who in no other way would fall into the bracket of criminality. A line has to be drawn in hard drugs.

How would you advise aspiring DJs to get into the music industry?

Make a lot of records is the best bet.

How do you fit everything in?

I sleep in the car and on planes in between gigs.

Judge Jules mixes the Ministry's The Annual, on current release



Roman Townsend

Unexpected pleasures

Andy Votel – *Styles of the Unexpected* | Twisted Nerve XL | Released 20 Nov

Eclectic Electronic Abstraction

It's 3.40am and you are the last surviving male at a Newnham College floor party. Slumped in various beds, chairs and corners, people stare vacantly into the middle distance – all conversation having long since ceased. In a few minutes, someone will rouse themselves to suggest – with renewed enthusiasm – the prospect of another joint. A suitable and far more enlightening alternative to the consumption of soft drugs would be *Styles Of The Unexpected* – the mesmerizing new mini-album from Andy Votel.

While the name may not immediately set the proverbial bells ringing, Votel has

been stamping his highly individual style over an impressive back catalogue of remixes, projects and solo ventures during the past few years. He runs his own label, Twisted Nerve, which embraces numerous acts including the Mercury Music Prize Award-winning Badly Drawn Boy.

This particular record is a trippy, understated foray into abstract electronica, fused with original lyrical ideas, jazzy sampling and trip-hop beats. The opener, *Urbanite Rocks*, sets the tone for the album – chilly, sparse but funky. Like most of the tracks, it unfolds slowly and hypnotically, changing only subtly. At points, some of the tracks might even tempt the less self-conscious of us onto a dance floor – providing it was suitably smoke-

filled and dimly lit. Jane Weaver and Lee Gorton contribute vocals to *Girl On A Go Ped* and *RiderBrow* respectively. *Pickpocket* is the album's highpoint – up tempo, jazzy and original.

Benjamin Ward



National pride

Gatecrasher | *National Anthems* | Released 27 Nov

Captures essence of the club

Credit where it's due. Over the past six years, Gatecrasher has managed to drastically alter Joe average's attitude towards hard house and trance, dressing him in florescent rubber and making him miraculously lose a few stone along the way. But to justify the release of a sixth double album, it's really got to be about more than finding "that tune, you know, man, when we were on top of the podium with that girl from Swansea, and the lights were going crazy, and suddenly, I dunno, it just all went mad".

The first track, Thrillseekers' *Synthetasia*, lays the atmospheric foundations with a gorgeous space electro ballet, so that you can almost bear Planet Perfecto's *Bullet In The Gun* when it rears its ugly head. The pace is slow, and a little jolty, due to the inclusion of so many relics from the Radio One play-list. But when Bob Sinclair's *I Feel For You* cuts Groovejet in half, the vibe suddenly

becomes a blur of Balearic beats. By track nine, Sader Kleinenberg's *My Lexicon*, the trance is taking no prisoners. Special mention goes to the old skool synthesiser attack in Agnelli & Nelson's *Hudson St* – unbelievable. The mix ends on a beautiful vocal tip, with a triplet of fragile female frottage (Marc Et Claude, Angelic, Fragma) to bring you back to reality.

The second CD is a clearer representation of a night well spent in Sheffield. The growing trend of 'seriously' hard house makes no gestures towards chartability, mixing old and new tracks to create an assault of adrenaline-fueled highs, lows, and more highs. Timo Maas's *Ubik* is fantastic – gradual chromatic synths taking you further than even you thought you could go. They even wheel on Westbam as the last track, creating that authentic I-never-knew-I-liked-German-techno feeling, which anyone who's danced 'til 6am can testify for.

Just don't listen to it after Gatecrasher, or you might have a coronary.

Becky Hogge

Sound of the suburbs

The Ministry of Sound | UK Garage | Ministry of Sound | Released early Dec

This album enlightens the ignorant

Not so long ago, the garage scene was viewed with tangible derision. It was no more than a Kappa wearing, Reebok kicking youth that partook in a subordinate genre, whilst their peers, the hard house luvvies, looked on disparagingly, glowsticks in hand.

In what has been the most impetuous revolution of the year, garage has radically reformed its once uncouth image to emerge in 2000 as a more melodious, yet still precocious sound – capturing the mass market without impinging on sacred house territory.

As a markedly more urban sound, UK garage was reappraised and found to be a prodigious commodity: the two-step revolution achieved equality with its popular

counterparts. Chart hits from the likes of Sweet Female Attitude and Lonyo proved that this new found egalitarian sentiment was based on legitimate mass appeal. As for fraternity, collaborations produced an abundance of sleek and elegant flavours; the Artful Dodger allied with the expert vocals of Craig David being the most prosperous proponents of such a co-operation.

Suddenly, it appeared that the ecstasy generation had found a friendly rival in the fluent vocals and industrial beats of this new sound, which also found its new home in the unassuming fishing village of Ayia Napa. Here the Gucci loafers massif mixed up the beats; the Dream Team et al sipped Moet with the Napa Slappers. Such a hedonistic concoction is the essence of this album.

The two-step sound, which can often seem perpetual to the point of monotony,

is captured here in its element in a compilation of the years most melodic efforts. The ministry employ the finest Craig David vocals in *7 Days* and *Woman Trouble*. R'n'b adaptations of Squisso's ignominious *Thong Song*, and *Imagine* by Shola Ama, are strong tracks, as is the Baby-D dance-classic *Let Me Be Your Fantasy*. Darker garage is not neglected, either – D.J.Zinc and Oxide both have tracks on offer. Richie Dan's omnipresent *Call It Fate* also finds its niche in this all-encompassing collection.

As a succinct and authentic showcase of this year's garage revolution, this album will enlighten the ignorant to the ways of two-step. Such a compilation would also make the perfect christmas gift for aspiring Casanovas, if the lyrics of *7 Days* are anything to go by!

Aisling O'Neill





Fun and games

Chuck and Buck | Warner Village | Daily

...doesn't suck

Allow me to describe my favourite Far Side cartoon, entitled 'Animal Nerds'. Three wolves are stalking a deer only to be disturbed by a fellow lupine who eagerly shouts "Hey! Hi you guys! What's going on?" Said deer looks up to see its pursuers, evidently having heard something. Now, exchange the deer for a pretty wife, big house and successful career, the wolves for an up-and-coming record producer, and switch the 'nerd' for his goggled-eyed, lollypop sucking childhood friend who just won't leave him alone, and you have *Chuck and Buck* in a nutshell.

Chuck and Buck, you see, were very close as children and, as the film progresses, it becomes clear that they were more than just friends. Buck (Mike White,

who also scripted) still dreams about the idyllic days before his companion moved away and, despite his 29 years, still acts like he isn't a day over 11. When his mother dies, he decides to look Chuck up, with the hope of continuing where they left off. However, Chuck (Chris Weitz) – or 'Charlie' as he now prefers to be known – has buried the past, moved to Los Angeles, and now enjoys a rich, yuppie lifestyle with his pretty fiancée. Inevitably, friction occurs, especially when the gloriously naïve Buck starts turning up to trendy parties and hassling Charlie with incessant telephone calls.

This scenario often makes for pretty cringe-making viewing, probably because each of us can in some way identify with Charlie – the man who thought he'd left a part of his life behind for good. However, it isn't tears all the way: White's character,

pathetic though he is, will have the audience smirking a few times. There's also the inspired casting of Weitz' brother, Paul, as the hilariously inept actor whom Buck casts in the role of 'Hank' in his semi-autobiographical play, *Hank and Frank*.

Also commendable is the film's avoidance of clichés, especially where Chuck is concerned. Rather than presenting him as a

mindless yuppie, White has injected the character with some genuine pathos which ensures that we sympathise with both leads. *Chuck and Buck* took this year's Sundance Film Festival by storm and deservedly so.

Chris Turtle

www.chucknbuck.com is also highly recommended...



What the hell?

Little Nicky | Warner Village | Daily

Big disappointment

FPleased to meet you, hope you guess my name/ But what's puzzlin' you is the nature of my game". Thus spake Lucifer back in the days when his gospel was preached by The Rolling Stones. According to *Little Nicky*, the Prince of Darkness' game is giving pineapple-shaped suppositories to Adolf Hitler – spiky-side first. This charming prospect is visualised for us in the film's opening minutes as we get to see the Führer, replete with French maid's outfit. From this abysmal opening, the whole thing spirals further downward.

There is a plot of sorts. Pondering retirement, Satan (Harvey Keitel) summons his kids to appoint his replacement but decides, Lear-like, to keep the crown. Eager to succeed Dad as chief pineapple-pusher, two of his spawn flee to New York to recruit souls for a *coup d'état*. Once there, they possess the mayor, spread the twin plagues of alcohol and prostitution, and change the city's slogan "I Love New York" to "I Love Hookers" (a prophetic vision of the regime under Senator Hillary, perhaps?). Cue Satan's other son, Nicky (Adam Sandler, giving a weak impersonation of his trademark 'gimp with a speech impediment'), who must go to Earth and retrieve his siblings by making them drink out of some kind of silver hip-flask.

Little Nicky traffics in the kind of cute theological parody that was clichéd when the Bible was still in production: its angels are sorority girls, imported from *Clueless*, who drop lines like, "Isn't God smart? I mean, like Jeopardy-smart"; Sandler's alibi for the people of Earth is that he's from "the Deep South"; and it's even revealed that Satanic verses aren't encoded in heavy-metal tracks, but numbers from *Chicago*. There are enough showbiz cameos to fill Senator McCarthy's blacklists (Quentin Tarantino as a blind priest, Henry Winkler as himself) but even those are shit.

Abandon hope all ye who enter here.

Grant Smith

100% bitches

Charlie's Angels | Warner Village | Daily

100% rubbish

Drew is at Riquette International, an exclusive Beverly Hills beauty salon, chatting to bleach-blonde Barbara – her long-time male friend and excruciatingly expensive personal stylist. The latter sports a skinny-fit T-shirt with "100% Bitch" emblazoned across it in gold glitter. As he finishes her manicure he is forced to embark on a ten-minute arm-waving episode.

"Do I mean nothing to you, honey? I work my fingers to the bone and you don't tell me, ME, about your new film! Bitch!". A group of tanned assistants arranging copies of *Vanity Fair* in the background notice the fracas and start sniggering. Barbara throws them a censorious glare and they get back to work.

Drew sighs deeply and blows him a kiss in the mirror. "I'm sorry baby. It won't take long. I just decided, you know, since I have this great successful production company that I'd cast myself in this remake: remember that TV show *Charlie's Angels*? Well take that, and two of my

good-looking friends and we'll clean up at the box office!"

Barbara lashes out with one arm at a passing trainee who starts fanning him furiously with a brochure. "But surely there's more to it than that, mm-mm?" Cue sliding head movements.

"Sweetie! No! I just said 'Get me Cameron Diaz' and some other good-looking chick, and give me identical fight scenes to *The Matrix*, accompanied by The Prodigy. I also told them to save time by taking all the filler scenes from other action movies like *Mission: Impossible*, *Die Hard* and the Bond movies. The public are bound to want to part with their hard-earned cash!"

"Those assholes!" The pair erupt in fits of laughter. The fanning assistant joins in and Barbara stops abruptly, snatches the brochure and beats him away with it. He sparks up a Marlboro red, closes his eyes and inhales deeply. "So where's the talent?"

"Well we got the guy who does those kra-zee Gap ads. I mean, he's got no previous directorial experience but who needs

that? Oh, and there's a scene where Cameron shakes her ass a lot we told the press it would be liberating for women. Bill Murray is quite talented but we didn't give him a very big part, as I thought it would detract from the costume changes and subtle plagiarism."

"Drew – you demon! How do you do it?", "Well mainly with a \$92 million budg-

et and powerful friends who exploit adolescents...and why haven't you finished yet?"

"I'm doing it as fast as I can... Antonio – bring the diva an iced tea – I'm burning up!"

He starts massaging fake tan into Drew's legs. Scene fades to black.

Rob Sharp



Charlie's Angels! The Musical

film competition

First prize in last week's caption competition goes to Peter Ford, for his blunt, offensive entry. Second prize for their more lame attempts go to Jamie Douglass and John McKay.



Winning entry:
"Some Jehovah's witnesses just won't take no for an answer"

Results

Shooting stars

The Way of the Gun | Warner Village | Daily

Fun with guns

Those of you who enjoyed 1995's surprise hit *The Usual Suspects*, will be glad to hear that some of the crew have reunited to make this fresh, offbeat action comedy. This time around Christopher McQuarrie (who won an Oscar for his *Usual Suspects* script) tries his hand at directing while Benicio Del Toro is magnificent as Ryan Phillippe's not-so-usual partner in crime.

Parker (Phillippe) and Longbaugh (Del Toro), part-time petty criminals and full-time losers, decide to try and strike it big – by kidnapping a surro-

gate mother for a wealthy, child-less couple. Things look rosy until they realise the unborn child belongs to none other than Hale Chiddick, big-shot crime boss of *Godfather* proportions. As the pair make their getaway to Mexico, Chiddick sends his two bungling bodyguards in pursuit, leading to a hilarious car chase that can only be described as something out of *The Flintstones*. Not content to sit idly by, Chiddick's trusty 'bag man' Joe Sarno (a wrinkly James Caan) joins the fray. Much bloody carnage ensues as all involved parties try to screw each other over, culminating in a Wild West shootout in a Mexican brothel.

Del Toro, sporting a complexion as

healthy-looking as the cigarette smoke perpetually wafting from his mouth, is perfect as the jaded criminal on a mission. Unfortunately the same can't be said for Phillippe who, despite a generous sprinkling of facial hair, fails to shed his pretty-boy image. The real scene-stealer, though, is James Caan, as the self-proclaimed master "in the art of adjudication". You won't find a tougher, more grizzled sexagenarian this side of Clint Eastwood. Also of note is Juliette Lewis as the surrogate mother, expertly reprising her by now well-practiced role of vulnerable über-bitch.

The first three-quarters of the film are expertly paced, with McQuarrie utilising the story-telling talents he put on

display so effectively in *The Usual Suspects*. The story has several threads with almost every character ending up as more than they seem. However, McQuarrie falters as he tries to tie all the loose ends together in the final quarter, while leaving some intriguing opportunities unexplored. Luckily, this doesn't stop *The Way of the Gun* from being a highly entertaining breath of fresh air in this age of the formulaic blockbuster. A final note: *The Way of the Gun* is not for the squeamish, featuring plenty of blood, a variation on the medieval rack, and what must surely be one of the most painful onscreen deliveries ever.

Ian Fong

Mad about the boys

The Wonder Boys | Warner Village | Daily

Wunderbar

From Fellini's *8½* to *Shakespeare in Love*, creative block has been an ironically fertile subject for filmmakers. In Curtis (*LA Confidential*) Hanson's latest, the blocked creator is washed-up academic, Grady Tripp (Michael Douglas). Pottering around in a soiled dressing gown and a cloud of marijuana-smoke, Tripp is the walking debris of a life that, like his planned opus, has failed to get anywhere.

The Wonder Boys kicks-off like *American Beauty* on campus: Tripp is the mid-life loser in need of redemption, and his students; Hannah (Katie Holmes) and James (Tobey Maguire) fill the posts of nymphette and morbid visionary. But it develops into something more pensive, with the unconventional reality of everyday a given fact rather than a revelation. The film

becomes a road movie that ditches the open highway for a series of car rides that are brief and local, but which are nonetheless explorations of the characters' inner lives. They begin when Tripp and James are thrown together when they have to dispose of a dog's bullet-riddled carcass (there just isn't enough space here to warrant an explanation). While Tripp agonizes over the pregnancy of his married girlfriend, he admits James into his Bohemian world and a string of offbeat episodes follow which give the student an education in life as well as literature. Thankfully no diplomas are awarded by the *Dead Poets' Society*: whenever the brink of sentimentality is teetered upon, *The Wonder Boys* spins in the opposite direction, reflecting upon but rejecting the spiritual offices which America has foisted upon its writer-caste.

Grady Tripp belongs to the growing breed of anti-heroes patented by Bill

Murray in *Rushmore* and, of course, Spacey in *American Beauty*. Although the real Douglas checked-in for jowl-suction before his wedding snaps, screen-Douglas seems to be tackling the ageing process by speeding it up –

the hair is grey and lank, the specs vintage NHS. But even if playing the loser is just *de rigueur* posturing, there's a depth and vulnerability to Douglas' character that harmonises nicely with the other understated performances – which include Frances McDormand and a sorely underused Rip Torn. Tripp's own fear of becoming a wonder boy – a talent

that dries up after its first hit – is also one that may well have crossed the mind of director Curtis Hanson; if so, it is a fear that this elegiac comedy should put to rest.

Grant Smith



"Live long and prosper"

film trailers

Fight Club

Queens' | Sun | 10.30pm
Brad Pitt and Edward Norton set up a club for testosterone Generation X-men to rediscover the caveman within by punching each other's lights out. A visceral satire on male identity in the consumer world, it begins with brutal realism before taking off into urban fantasy.

GS

X-Men

John's | Sun | 3pm, 7.30pm, 10pm

Your favourite group of super-mutants named after a letter of the alphabet have leapt out of the comic book – and onto the silver screen. Professor Xavier and his X-Men butt heads with Magneto and crew in their quest to make peace between mutants and humans. Explosive action sequences, a star-studded cast and a naked blue woman. What more could you want from a film?

IF

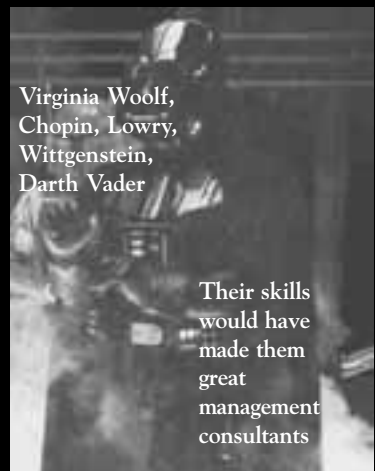
Grant Smith, Ian Fong

Philosophers on film

Despite George Lucas' best efforts to distract us with big explosions and irritating sidekicks, it doesn't take a genius to figure out that *Star Wars* and its sequels are really a metaphor for the plight of the Cambridge Arts student – and philosophers in particular. The good Jedi – Yoda, Obi-wan Kenobi... – clearly represent the ivory tower of academia, modelling their teaching methods on the example of Socrates and his adherents.

The Dark Side, principally Senator (and later Emperor) Palpatine, represent the evil forces of big business and management consultancy. Young Anakin is initially taken under the wing of the good teachers, who educate him in the ways of sitting about doing nothing in particular, except for a bit of meditation and some recreational martial arts. However, as Kenobi's grip on him weakens, Anakin is slowly drawn to the Dark Side by hollow promises of easy power and wealth. He is encouraged by Palpatine's underhand tactics (like clandestinely employing Darth Maul to scare the shit out of everyone), reminiscent of the utter dishonesty of all graduate employers.

Having won Anakin over, Palpatine proceeds to manipulate him in an attempt to recruit the next generation, in the form of Luke. Anakin has become Vader: the sinister graduate of three years ago, who returns to his alma mater to tell all the latest students how wonderful his new career is, and to trick them into following him to the nice big office block (represented by the Death Star). This time, things do not run so smoothly. Luke has fallen in with Han Solo and the Rebel Alliance – the dropouts and wasters of that galaxy far, far, away. He has



Virginia Woolf, Chopin, Lowry, Wittgenstein, Darth Vader

Their skills would have made them great management consultants

learned to truly appreciate the lifestyle offered to him by his Jedi teachers, much more than could ever be the case had he listened to nobody but the crusty old dons (symbolised by Yoda). Even more significantly, he has made the acquaintance of R2-D2 and C-3PO, former friends of his father's. They tell him exactly how much of a tosser Anakin has become since getting his big, important job. Of course, gimpy C-3PO's extreme campiness ensures he would never fit in with the Dark Side crowd for long – much to his frustration – which explains his persistent bitchiness. R2-D2 clearly couldn't give a toss about anything, and tells everyone exactly what he thinks of them (why else do you think the editors insisted on bleeping out everything he says?) which is why he'd never cut it in the real world; but that's obviously fine by him.

Luke himself is an individual, and would rather die than be assimilated into the faceless Empire with their ranks of identical Stormtroopers. Eventually, though, the anarchists win the day. Despite being all but crushed, they manage to exploit the Empire corporation's vastness (and bureaucratic lack of attention to detail – 'Look, let's leave a hole in our main fortress just big enough to fly a huge bomb all the way down to the main generators...') and succeed by going right for the jugular.

The message is clear: we must seize arms and kill Bill Gates.

J R Searle



Mark Hamill: Even Yoda couldn't prevent his career from sinking

Strangers on a train

Into the Arms of Strangers | Arts Picturehouse | Daily

Don't be a stranger to this

For nine months prior to the second World War – in a great act of mercy – Britain opened its doors to 10,000 children from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia seeking refuge from the growing hostility of the Third Reich. Thinking it to be a temporary measure against immediate danger in the wake of the terrifying *Kristallnacht*, parents packed their children off to safety. The majority of them never saw their families again. Mark Jonathan Harris, writer and director of the Academy Award-winning film *The Long Way Home*, and producer Deborah Oppenheimer, have produced this heartbreaking but inspiring account of this journey, quite literally, into the arms of strangers.

What we are presented with is an incredibly moving and well-balanced documentary that lasts for just under

two hours, but honestly seems much shorter. Incredibly (for recent US films covering the period), Britain is portrayed in a magnificent light – but not excessively so. Events like the narrow escape of the deportation vessel the HMT Dunera are featured (when the Government deported thousands of alien nationals to Australia in a cramped ship that nearly got sunk by a German torpedo), and not all accounts of British life are savoury.

The experiences of the *Kinder* are nowhere near as horrendous as those of the people who were taken to concentration camps and, in some ways, they are much more familiar to us all. As extreme as their experiences were, their feelings of loss and loneliness are something we can all comprehend and though over half a century has passed, the memories of the film's subjects seem to be as fresh as if they had just happened. Some moments come close to over-sen-

timentality, thanks to some over-zealous musical post-production, but overall this is well balanced with brilliant accounts of the protagonists. Overall, this is a highly moving portrait of an episode in history that is too often overlooked.

Rob Sharp



Wank karaoke

Duets | Warner Village | Daily

The power of Paltrow

Sequins never fail to please. Nor does a pink Cadillac. Throw in a velvety rendition of *Try a Little Tenderness*, and some *Bette Davis Eyes* and you'd think you were on to a winner. But, enjoyable as this is, some characterisation wouldn't have gone amiss.

Three 'duets' are interwoven with each other. First up: a salesman sickened by middle-class suburbia and consumerist values takes a karaoke pill, starts wearing an earring, and is magically saved from his own oblivion, thanks to a black ex-con hitchhiker with perfect pitch and a big heart.

Next, a bland underachiever with a

chiselled smile rescues a musically talented slut from herself, before falling head over his unconvincing heels in love with Gwyneth Paltrow, to the strains of *Strangers in the Night*. Finally, the thespianly challenged Gwyneth's problems with her errant father are solved on stage when they discover that they both know the words to the same karaoke number. Sob! The director's characters seem to have fallen off the back of a lorry for realistic character types, leaving behind any motives that might have padded out the story.

Maybe karaoke can replace religion, family and personality. But if we don't care if these stereotypes find themselves in their performance or not, we have no

incentive to suspend disbelief during the perfectly orchestrated silver-screen karaoke moments. The fat rendition of *Copacabana*, can count as the high point of an unexceptional film. Overall, it might be karaoke, but it's got no soul.

Sarah Peter and Madeline Earp



"Relax Gwyneth: it's hip to be square"



Chopper Read between the lines

Chris Turtle is sliced and diced by *Chopper* director, Andrew Dominik



Chopper Read is a highly controversial figure in Australia. His books have become massively popular and, most recently, he raised his profile by appearing on a well-known talk show in a drunken stupor. So what drew director Andrew Dominik to the books of Chopper Read? "I'm interested in any kind of abnormal behaviour, so I tend to read a lot of true crime." And what appealed to him about Chopper? "The contradictions that were in the source material between the 'unrepentant and proud' stance and the fact that, a page or two later, he's having bad dreams about the things he's done."

Comedian Eric Bana was cast, rather unexpectedly in the title role. He first came to Dominik's attention at the suggestion of Chopper himself though the director's initial reaction was not enthusiastic: "Chopper did suggest him and it seemed like a nit-wit idea at the time". However, according to Dominik, the reason for casting him is simple: "I came upon him through the audition process, we tested him and he was the best. Chopper obviously knows what he's talking about."

The film opens with Chopper in prison, omitting his early exploits. Why was this the case? "He's had a very unpleasant upbringing but that's not something I was interested in showing. He is an adult, he feels bad about what he's done and trapped by it and how does

that feel? Anyway, you can see Chopper's childhood in his behaviour throughout the film, in his relation to authority figures. His repetitive patterns of behaviour give a pretty good idea about what's happened to him."

Although the film is inspired by Chopper's life as described in his books, it certainly does not glorify either the man or his deeds. As Dominik puts it, "I don't think anyone's going to walk out of the movie and think 'that's the life for me'". I ask him how Chopper himself reacted to the film: "Pretty well, considering. The film is very different to how he's portrayed himself in his books. The movie portrays him as a very insecure person. We were always very worried about how he was going to react. When he saw it, he said it was not the film he was expecting but that he couldn't imagine that we could have done anything else. He looked at his behaviour in the film and said that, when he was inside himself, all that stuff seemed kind of normal but, watching it from the outside, he must have been insane."

Violence aside, *Chopper* is a very funny film and Dominik thinks that much of that humour stems from Chopper himself: "It's very much a Chopper sense of humour, which is typically Australian. Chopper is a really funny guy, hysterically funny. That's the reason why he's captured so much media attention in Australia because he's just really good for

a laugh. Whenever a crime figure gets killed in Australia, they always ring up Chopper for a quote and he always says something really funny. And I actually think that's the reason why he's become such a well-known media figure - it's not to do with the crimes he's committed."

Given the number of books Chopper has written about himself, you'd think there was scope for more films about his life and deeds but Dominik disagrees: "I don't think so. You wouldn't want to reach the end of the process and feel that there was anything more to say."

From what the director says, there certainly isn't much scope for a movie about Chopper's life at present: "He lives on a very isolated farm in Tasmania. He's married, he's got a little kid. I'm not sure what he does with himself: household chores and a bit of writing probably? He's doing pretty well - he hasn't shot anyone." So, he's controlling his violent tendencies? "Yeah, I think those guys sort of run out of steam. It's not so much that they redeem themselves or recognise the error of their ways. I don't think many people change significantly over the course of their lives." And, presumably, he's lost contact with the other characters in the film? "Well most of them are dead. They're in the criminal world - life expectancy is not good."

For Andrew Dominik's sake, let's hope life expectancy in the film industry is considerably better.

Top of the chops

Chopper | Arts Picturehouse | Daily

Brutal but brilliant

To the vast majority of the British public, the name Mark Brandon 'Chopper' Read means very little. In Australia, however, he is something of a celebrity. His string of best sellers detailing his life in the criminal underworld have a massive following (despite the fact that, as he gleefully puts it, he "can't bloody spell") so it was only a matter of time before someone saw the potential for a film. However, director Andrew Dominik has eschewed Read's self-glorifying style in favour of a production that provides a fascinating insight into the mind of a deeply twisted, yet curiously affable man. That isn't to say that *Chopper* plays down the violence of Read's life - in fact, it's easily the most brutal film I have ever seen and came close to being censored. Thankfully, after months of debate, the BBFC have seen sense. *Chopper* is here...

After a brief introduction, we join Read in prison in the 1970s where he remains for the first half of the film. The most striking thing about the prison scenes is the colour: shooting in a washed-out pale blue, Dominik creates a cold, stark prison atmosphere like nothing you've ever seen. These opening scenes are awash with blood (which, given the colour-scheme, looks an unsavoury dark brown) but violence is never glorified and never portrayed as anything other than what it is - painful and unpleasant. The tattoo-coated Chopper himself, played by Eric Bana, makes for a brutal, brooding, yet strangely humorous anti-hero: the viewer doesn't know whether to laugh or cry when he tentatively offers a cigarette to a man he has just stabbed in the face.

The second half of the film, focusing on Read's years on the street in the '80s, is equally gripping, despite lacking some of the intensity of the opening. Fatter, earless (don't ask) and even crazier than before, he drifts the streets of an anonymous town seeking - and finding - trou-

ble, wherever he goes.

Plot aside, it is Eric Bana as the half-crazed Chopper himself who dominates. Casting him was something of a risk (originally prompted by Read himself, curiously) given that he is far better known as a comedian, but it is difficult to imagine anyone else in the title role. The supporting cast too, are uniformly excellent. Most amusing of all is the way in which each reacts to Read. He regularly terrifies his girlfriend, friends and enemies and yet as soon as the guns are put away he's back to his jovial self. Everyone acts like nothing has happened - presumably from fear of setting him off again.

Chopper is at times a difficult film to watch and a few confusing and abrupt scene changes mean that the film loses focus towards the end. However its well-rounded and fascinating central character gives it some kind of heart, and Dominik's stylish, innovative directing ensures there's never a dull moment. For anyone remotely into cinema, this is essential viewing. People who don't like violence should see it anyway and simply avert their eyes when Read's dark side kicks in.

Chris Turtle



Bollywood nights

Sanah Faridi takes one smaall aubergine...

Kiss my chuddies, innit! It's the Asian Film season at the Arts Picture House; your chance to sample some of the best showtunes and worst hairpieces in Bollywood. This is not, however, just another faddish revival for the likes of Angelina Jolie (as she did in the London festival) to drool over foreign films and be, like, reaaaally cool. Kulwant Ajmal - the programmer of the season - wants to emphasise "a different focus of work, that is, this is an exploration of British Asian values as well, with films such as *East is East* showing". But it's not all issues, with films such as *Kutch Kutch Hota Hai* (*Something Happens*) promising to be the typical all singing, all dancing Bollywood flick. It's a film, as Ajmal puts it, that "transcends language".

Headlining the season is the Cambridge premiere of the historical English language biopic, *Jinnah*. In case the only thing you remember about Indian history is a blacked up Ben Kingsley in the Richard Attenborough film, *Ghandi*, Jinnah was the first leader of Pakistan, and has often wrongly been blamed for the deaths of millions, which occurred when India was divided and Pakistan was formed in 1947. He was similarly caricatured as the arrogant, monocle-wearing adversary in *Ghandi*, in which he was depicted, in the words of Jamil Dehlavi (director of *Jinnah*), as "a

cardboard character, the villain of the piece...not explored in any depth."

The making of the \$3.5 million movie was the brainchild of Dr Akbar Ahmed, who thought up the idea when he was made an honoray fellow of Selwyn. That was ten years ago. It encountered numerous setbacks because of massive controversy on the Asian subcontinent, where Jinnah is either hugely revered or hugely loathed, depending on which country you're in. Pakistan caused the biggest problems. As Dehlavi, put it, "they wanted us to depict a superman...the film was condemned before we even began shooting". "We had a lot of problems", says Dr Ahmed: "A lot of people made me promises which were that; just promises. While the politicians of Pakistan talked about Jinnah, they did not follow his ideals. We were portraying a Jinnah of integrity, tolerance, and they were worried it would expose them." Eventually, it was only through the

tenacity of the then Pakistani PM's Additional Secretary, Azmat Hassan, that the project was eventually approved.

The film provoked numerous outcries, including a protest at the vast numbers of English actors starring in it - including James Fox, who reprises his pukka colonial role. Christopher Lee was attacked - perhaps due to confusion caused by his famous screen persona, Dracula. As Ahmed explains: "They said he was a horror actor. The press created controversy where none existed. They also said that Shashi Kapoor (famous Bollywood star), because he was a Hindu, should not have acted in the film." There were attacks on Ahmed, as well, which became serious: "They said, 'For us he's got no daughter, and no wife because she is not a Muslim'".

Jinnah is an honest and spellbinding account of the 1947 partition of India when, as India threw off the shackles of the British Empire, different ethnic groups broke down



into civil war. With no guarantees from either side that the interests of their supporters would be protected, the eventual, and bloody solution, became partition. This feeling of enmity has lasted over 50 years, and Pakistan has as many problems today as it ever did. From the viewpoint of an academic, and as a former Pakistani ambassador to Britain, Dr Ahmed sees, "a problem with law and order, a tension between ethnic groups and political groups".

The film makers set themselves a very ambitious task: "I am rectifying history", says Dr Ahmed. But in the end it's up to the audience to decide. Go just to find out who "the greatest statesman of this century" (Dehlavi) really was.

Must sign off, now, butch, but, listen, yhar, if you don't fancy a history lesson, then go along for a cinematic experience that will blow you away instead, like *The Terrorist* - known as the most beautiful Indian film ever made. Atchah?





Photo: Chris Heath

Not just a spectator

Boris Johnson didn't give Tom Royston the blues

“I’m going to BE there [thump], BE their MP. I’m going to LISTEN to their problems, TRY [thump] to understand them, that sort of thing, do the best I can to understand their concerns, local level, Westminster, intervene, as my predecessor said, before lunch [thump], before tea, before breakfast, whatever it was, I’ll be there. Point One: I’ll be there. Point Two: I have an unparalleled knowledge of Some Subjects.”

Spectator editor Boris Johnson, in case you didn't know, is the Conservative Party's candidate for the safe Tory seat of

Henley on Thames, which Michael Heseltine will be vacating at the next election. He keeps shouting random words and hitting the desk. “I don't know whether I'll be any good,” he confides, “I think it's quite likely I won't be. My basic plan is to try to survive, understand what's going on. My problem will be I will make gaffes, people will try to trip me up and I will always fall into it.”

“The truth is, we all have flashes of inspiration, and long passages of, umm, torpor.”

And considering that, he's not been doing too badly for himself. School Captain at Eton, Union President at Oxford, Boris was writing leaders for the *Daily Telegraph* by the time he was 23. At the age of 36 he's still their star political columnist, and the editor's chair at the *Spectator* (which his ample behind has occupied for the last year) had, until the bother of becoming an MP got in the way, seemed a stepping stone to even greater media things. Actually, I don't quite see why he wants to chuck all that in for back-bench obscurity. Wouldn't he have more fun, and more influence, staying put? “People keep saying this to me, but in the end you either believe in the democratic system, or that power should be concentrated in the hands of a bunch of dissolute, ignorant, indolent journalists. I've got to do it.”

I gingerly suggest that although he seems to have a genuine commitment to working in Parliament, Boris could be said to lack the common touch needed for deal-

ing with his humdrum and anonymous constituents. “I do come across as a frightful apparition from the world of the *Telegraph* and the *Spectator*, and public school and all that – I think public school gives kids an appalling confidence. It has an up side and a down side, as anyone who comes across Tony Blair and me knows – my appeal to the masses may be very limited. I don't know what to say to you. But I've got to do it. I think everybody should have a go. I think YOU should have a go.” The man himself always has a go. Amidst the media interest which surrounded his adoption as Henley's Tory candidate

(apparently he was picked from the short-list after performing the best in a *Have I Got News For You* style quiz test), it was generally forgotten that he's tried it all before. Boris spent the dark Tory days of 1997 contesting an unwinnable Welsh seat: “I did fight Clwyd South, but Clwyd South fought back.” And he'd even gone to the trouble of learning Welsh. “I can sing bits of the national anthem. Some other bits are easy: like taxi is not taxi, but t-a-c-s-i. Toilet is, I think, uh...” One of the good things about journalism is, of course, the freedom to say what you think; a freedom denied to the average morsel of lobby fodder. The prospect of this eager, fizzing young cannon appearing on the green leather benches of the Commons, full of ideas trawled from all over the political spectrum – for instance, Boris would legalise cannabis and then privatise the NHS – must have Hague's front bench terrified of the constant embarrassment, surely? “They seem to be taking it very well. I had a very nice letter from William Hague and I look forward to supporting him wholeheartedly [thump]. You think I'm going to be lobotomised by the whips and turned into some blurring bleating sheep on the back benches? Hmm. Maybe.” He claims to feel genuinely part of today's Conservative party. “The party is [thump] united! The party is [thump] united, isn't it! It's more united than it has been for ages, you have to admit that.”

And also much smaller. “It's smaller, yes, it's smaller than it has been...you mean that they've managed to unite themselves by eliminating the, ah...? That's possible, I suppose, that's possible...”

Westminster will not be an easy place for the lovely Boris. Regardless of whether he successfully evades the whips, even the superbly endearing Johnson line in self-deprecation – “I beg you to consider that beneath the veneer of a bumbling imbecile lurks a bumbling imbecile” – looks unlikely to save him from serial media assassinations. “All my chums in the press are just gagging for a chance to give me a good kicking, and it's rather heartening to see that they've started already. I gave several speeches at the Tory party conference... tumultuously received...uh, Nuremberg... oh, hang on, SCRATCH THAT! I shouldn't say that...they were packed out, you SEE? [thump] That's the kind of metaphor you can't get away with...Uh, there was one episode where I...well, admittedly I certainly bumbled around, and that was the thing the media attacked, made fun of.”

Behind the bumble, despite the protestations, lurks an active mind. “There's too much cant talked about asylum seekers. It's nonsense to pretend they're in fear of their lives and we should stop harping on about this. I say stuff this nonsense about asylum and have genuine economic migration. If people are willing to travel from their country to work in this

“How do you mean you're less posh? I'm not remotely posh. My family comes from Istanbul.”

country, then they should be looked on as favourably as possible. Why should economic migrant be a term of abuse?” This sounds a much more liberal line than either Labour or the Tories are officially taking at the moment. When Boris editorialised on the subject in the *Spectator* last summer, he claims government policy changed as a result. “I think they were so stunned to hear this from the Right that they turned round and said ‘why don't we do it?’” This is one of his favourite examples of his magazine wielding the influence on government it is often said to have lost when the Conservatives were turfed out of

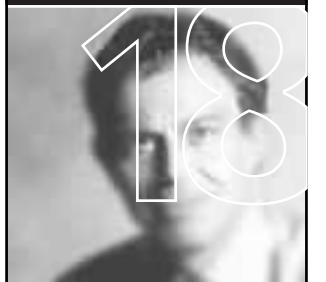
office. “I know Tony Blair is terrified of the *Spectator*.”

The reasons the Conservatives are out of office, incidentally, are very clear to him. “Because of their rhetoric they weren't really able to make a song and dance about the kinds of things they actually did, the amount of money they spent on welfare and so on.” So it wasn't about the Conservative party damning the poor to feed the greed of the rich at all? “It's nothing to do with wanting to grind the faces of the poor. It's...there are two approaches, the top down approach which involves taking money from the rich and giving it to the poor and the other approach which says that in the long term that's no solution, what you've got to do is help people get jobs, run their own businesses and build up the economy – that was the Conservative approach.”

“All that really happened in the last five or six years in politics is that Labour completely junked everything they used to believe in – accepted that on the management of the economy they had lost the argument. What does the Left believe in? That's what I don't understand. All they seem to believe in is a load of right wing ideas plus political correctness. It was perfectly obvious what the Tory party stood for for a long period: Labour's tried to usurp the good bits and add on a quivering chin of compassion. What they want to do is crowd the Tories out to the right and create a political landscape in which the Tories are occupying a sort of fringe of sullen objectionable views on immigrants and frothing xenophobia on Europe and free market ideas on health. But they won't get that, because the Conservative party is basically far too interested...too interested in power.”

Around an hour into an interview I

was told I would have no more than thirty minutes for, the tape recorder has run out, Boris Johnson is scribbling in his notebook, and asking me more questions than I put to him. It is odd, nice, but somehow in character, that there doesn't appear to be anything more pressing for him to be getting on with. He's stopped shouting so much, and the sentences don't trail off any more, though in contrast the sea of ideas is somewhat becalmed. “The other thing about politics I've suddenly started realising is that there are questions which don't have easy answers. It's a rather depressing conservative position. But there it is.” ■



What's the point of politics?



Bill meets Lily



Not just three dimensions



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To care or not to care

Johann Hari asks if politics matters

Contemporary partisan politics is a turn-off. To our generation, the images of people virtually rioting at Labour party conferences in the early eighties, or rising as if in worship of Thatcher at their Tory counter-parts, are incomprehensible. What made people so angry? How did they get worked up about something that seems so peripheral to our lives as we live them today? That sense of intense political commitment seems to be out of the history books, part of a past that is a foreign country of which we know nothing.

The contemporary political sphere is a vacuum that has been filled with either the market fundamentalism of the Tories or the benevolent but hazy triangulation of New Labour. In the face of her insistence that "there is no alternative", Thatcher's children have decided that the only politics that matters is the politics of self-esteem and personal advancement. As the Beatles sang, "you say you want a revolution? I think you'd better change your mind instead." Where our parents sought to resolve their inner conflicts by transforming society with a dream of a better world, we swallow our Prozac and our ecstasy, concentrate on our friends and the people we love, and shelter from the political weather.

This is partly because the core political decisions are taken in places over which we can have no substantial influence. We were brought up to believe that Downing Street or the White House are the places where political choices are made, yet now those buildings are husks along with the democracy they symbolise. This is not to say that they cannot affect positive change. The new deal, the working families tax credit, and skilful economic steering within the limited constraints available have had very positive effects for some of the most disadvantaged people in Britain. They would not have happened had the British people voted differently on May 1 1997. But the days of the territorially defined political unit, an enclosed landmass with autonomy over everything within its boundaries, are gone, and they're never coming back.

It is misleading to imply that there was at any point in the past a democratic golden age. The bounded nation state was to some extent always a heuristic fiction. But, for a brief time, democracy did jump ahead of a neo-liberal capitalist dynamic, and could therefore regulate and if necessary sublimate the dictates of the market to the will of the people (hence the Keynesian, and admittedly very imperfect, market manipulation of the Attlee/Macmillan years). Yet that dynamic has now moved up to a global level. The financial markets will crucify any national unit that tries to disobey the broad parameters they define.

One need only look at the fate of Oskar Lafontaine, Germany's former finance minister, for evidence of this. His politics are similar to those of, say, Will Hutton or Roy Hattersley: slightly to the left of the present government, but hardly a raving Trot. Yet his desire for the Euro to be run with not only the monetarist criteria of Maastricht in mind but also such human factors as unemployment led to a vindictive campaign of financial pressure on the Euro that made his departure from office inevitable. In the seventies, many on the Labour left protected the privileged position of the Trade Unions by saying that they were a fact of life that had to be dealt with and could not be "rolled back". The Tories and some Labour figures like Dennis Healey rightly identified that it was wrong that the Trade Unions had an effective veto over the politicians that the people had elected. Yet, two decades on, now that the financial mar-

kets can destroy a democratically chosen leader far faster and harder than any trade union ever could, where are those ardent defenders of democracy now? Sitting on the boards of large companies, arguing that the financial markets are a fact of life that have to be dealt with and cannot be rolled back.

Thus one reason that contemporary politics seems so insipid and lifeless is that all parties operating at a national level have had to absorb several tenets of market fundamentalism simply to be credible. It is pointless to demonise them for this, as many far-left groups do, since they have no other option. Within these constraints, New Labour have at least begun a programme which seeks to lift the poorest through extra investment in health, education and intelligently targeted taxation.



This way they can compete in the marketplace on better terms than if they were abandoned in a Hagueish fashion to raw market forces. But it is only when politics is reconstituted at a larger, supranational level that the real political debates (ones that do not have to take a Hayekian ultracapitalist international structure for granted) can commence once again.

The way to make politics matter once again cannot be, as some very nationalist Tories like Bill Cash suppose, to regress to the world of 'sovereign nation states'. Yet neither can it be the victory of a kind of anarcho-capitalism which pays no heed to the impact of the market upon communities and families - the kind of world that John Grey so depressingly but eloquently outlines in 'False Dawn - the Delusions of Global Capitalism'. In a nascent and probably subconscious fashion, however, the present government is slowly advancing towards a system that transcends these two cruel worlds. The doctrine of national sovereignty has been undermined in two key ways by the Blair government. The moves towards deporting General Pinochet established a vital precedent for saying that there are certain global norms and values that transcend sovereignty. To say simply, 'I did it on my own land, it has nothing to do with you' is no longer a legitimate defence. The global justice

which Geoffrey Robertson QC is leading the crusade for was given a vital boost.

The Kosovo war, despite its many flaws, established the notion that all the countries of the democratic world have a vital interest and an obligation to act where human rights are being violated. Whether it was effective in preventing those violations (a topic which remains a moot point), another vital precedent was set that creates its own dynamic. Once the global justice argument has been let out of the bag, no rhetorical manoeuvring can put it back: hence the sharp criticisms of Blair's apparent condoning of human rights abuses in Chechnya.

It is by thus matching economic globalisation with political globalisation that politics can be reconstituted and matter once more. The slow and tentative cre-

to spread education and democracy as opposed to market fundamentalism, famines and droughts are far less likely to happen due to the increased pressures for good governance. This is visionary politics at the cutting edge.

The danger, however, with proposing to surrender the nation state as the focus of politics is that it still remains the forum through which people understand democracy. Everyone knows the name of the Prime Minister, and we still - just - believe that we can hold him to account. When this locus of authority goes, where do people turn when they are dissatisfied with their lot? Will politics matter even less to the average citizen? The transcending of the nation state leaves our national politicians blinking in the headlights of a new reality they have little control over. The new world needs to be shaped and structured to allow democratic control. People need to be told a powerful narrative about the power structures of the new world - a narrative in which they can locate both themselves and the people to chuck out when things go wrong. The old narrative of the Leviathan sovereign which we have now transposed onto whoever resides in Downing Street resembles to a new generation of political thinkers the fiction of, say, Disraeli: interesting as a historical document but with little application to our lives today.

At the forefront of thinking about new models of sovereignty is David Held, an academic with the London School of Economics. He seeks to apply the notion of sovereignty not only to territories but to all loci of power: multi-national businesses for example. Industrial democracy has been rather tainted in British political discourse by its association with Bennism. The model advocated by the Labour left in the early eighties of trying to impose industrial democracy at the national level remains unworkable. Yet, in a world with globalised politics, this becomes once more a rich source of political potential. If real power is to be located with corporations rather than countries, then those companies must be rendered accountable with a process less flawed than unregulated market forces. There are those who will argue that people are too busy, too ill-informed, too stupid, to democratically exercise control over the companies in which they work, that they will be swayed by demagogues and bankrupt their businesses. The same specious arguments were used to resist democracy at a national level. We must aspire to educate the workforce so that they are capable of participating in a plurality of overlapping democratic structures, be it their city, their country, their company and their planet.

The first Italian Prime Minister, D'Azeglio, said once political unification of Italy was completed, "we have made Italy. Now we must make Italians." Today's politicians have a similar but even greater task: we are beginning, slowly and almost without knowing it, to craft a global political unit. The challenge is to create alongside that a body of global citizens who understand their place within world politics and can participate in it. So when the cynics say to me: does politics matter? I reply, when it comes to this politics, I answer that I can think quite literally of nothing in the world that matters more. A rallying cry for twenty-first century politics might be that we have a lot more than our chains to lose, but we may yet have a world to win.

This article, shortlisted for the Webb Essay Prize, will be published by the Foreign Policy Centre, an independent think tank. Details of next year's competition can be found at www.fpc.org.uk.

Venue

Molly Herron knows where it's at



If you've had enough of the mass-produced insipidity served up by the likes of Browns and All Bar One, then it's well worth heading that little bit further up St Andrews Street to this truly individual Venue. Despite the obligatory white walls and muted lighting this relatively new restaurant puts a distinctive twist on the minimalist look. With its split level eating area, coils of white fairy lights and walls filled with quirky line drawings Venue manages to be very cool without any self-conscious trendiness. But these surroundings do come at a cost, 'venue' is definitely at the pricier end of the Cambridge market (think Michel's and Pierre Victoire), with two courses taking you to over £20 before any thought of wine. With wine, and coffee or dessert you'll have to budget for at least £30 a head.

At Venue you're paying for more than just the food - six nights out of seven they give you live music as well. In the main you can expect some very good jazz and blues (never getting so loud as to be intrusive) which is totally in keeping with the fresh look of the place and makes. We rejected the two-course set menu (good value at £14.50) in favour of the more extensive à la carte selection. The starters, helped along by the impressive house white - reasonably priced at £10.95 - were a definite success. The sweetness of my slow roasted plum tomatoes and the distinctive flavour of the balsamic dressing lifted the dish above the usual mozzarella, basil and tomato offerings, but this didn't prevent much jealousy when tasting the gorgeous Goats Cheese Anti-Pasti of my companion. The caramelised onion and red pepper salsa were an excellent accompaniment. Unfortunately my 'adventurous' main course choice backfired. Chargrilled chicken, mango, melon and tabbouleh - all very fine things in their own right, but I never want to have them together again. This random collection of ingredients, unaided by a particularly limp dressing, simply did not gel. On the other hand, my companion made the right choice again (must be well practised in the art of gratuitous dinners by now...) again there was a mixture of disparate tastes, but this time they pulled it off. The chump (apparently between the rump and fillet, for those not in the know) of roasted lamb was very tender, and enhanced nicely by the surprisingly delicate carrot and sultana chutney and just the right amount of tzatsiki dressing. We then gave in to the temptation of the 'afters' menu (although normally you'd have to think twice, as they're slightly overpriced at £5.95). I enjoyed (but felt very guilty about) the most girly of deserts, the wickedly rich chocolate truffle cake, but again this was edged out by the choice of the experienced one, a decidedly non-stodgy hot plum and almond tart with vanilla ice-cream. With its creative and reasonably varied menu friendly and efficient staff and above all the quality surroundings and music, Venue has an atmosphere which is unique in Cambridge. Take advantage of the £15 dinner and movie deal (Sunday-Thursday) with the Arts Picture House or just enjoy a late chilled supper.

Us and them...

Sanah Faridi probes the town and gown divide

BLOODY TOWNIES. I never go into Cindy's on a Friday night – there are too many townies in there. It's not that I've got anything against them, they just don't have anything in common with students. They dress differently, they behave differently, and they don't use sad phrases like "townie" and "gownie".

This phrase has joined common Cambridge usage along with "bops", "ents", "plodge" and, "that's so random". Very few people here have non-student friends from the area. And in many ways, the aloofness is on both sides. Saffron Clackson, who lived here all her life and thus moved directly from town to gown said: "townies see students a bit like how students see tourists. The two worlds are so separate that it's as if there are two cities laid on top of each other."

We sometimes hear of students being beaten up by "townies" late at night – this happened to a friend of mine close to his college. On a less frightening note, Laura Cambell, a Cambridge mathematician, related an incident that happened in May Week when she went punting with her friends: "A bunch of 14-year-old boys shouted, 'students!' and tried to capsiz our punt. Mind you, they also took offence at my friend's beard, and yelled, 'Rolf Harris!'" But it is at least partly our fault, we encourage hostilities – a *Varsity* feature on break-ins last year was entitled "Townie – trouble".

What's serious about the huge barrier of distrust is not that it exists, but

that we accept it, and that many students use it to claim superiority. Admit this to yourselves: if you use the word townie at regular intervals, you are a snob. Chances are, you use it to describe the person who works at the supermarket, the waiter in the upmarket bar which is frequented largely by students, the people who go the local nightclubs on non-student nights. It signifies social and intellectual snobbery. Nazanin Azadi, a software engineer (that's "compsc" to us) from Manchester University who visited her student friend in Cambridge in May Week, was shocked by general attitudes: "it's sad how Cambridge people have to use these terms to make themselves feel more important", she said. We cannot therefore argue that students can only relate to each other – who here has any friends from Anglia University? It's right next door. Most students have never ventured beyond the far corners of Parkers Piece (known to the students who live in houses there as the "reality checkpoints").

Is there anyway we can all become friends or at least acknowledge each other's existence? Laura Cambell is a member of two societies situated right on the fringe of fringe groups: the 'Rock' (as in music) and Role Play societies, which include both students and non-students. The reason, as Laura puts

it, is that "Goths, metallers, and role players are bonded by minority musical tastes". Everything else is irrelevant. The members share a taste in music, but more importantly, an awareness that Cambridge is not the centre of the universe – they rebel against the bubble.

Such a bubble is perfect for those at the centre of the University's carefully constructed, self-sufficient world – the actor, the journalist, the campaigner, become so much more important if there are only fellow students, their peers, to applaud them. We forget that many of those who work in the University are non-students – we accept bedders, cleaners, those who run the science and computer labs, as a matter of course – yet it's still us and them. The only role they seem to play in our university lives is to be at our beck and call. Formal hall, for example, is traditionally Cambridge, to us it may be a mark of your membership of the University – but it's a crappy waitressing job to someone else. Conversely, students are usually not allowed to take similar jobs in town during term time.

It all boils down to the decision of whether to stick to the comfortable Ivory Tower or to interact with the real world. I decided to get an opinion on it all from a townie, and then I remembered...I don't know any.



Bill's Best Bites

Fishy Lily – an authentic Malawian dish (not a lady of poor hygiene)

Ingredients:

- 1 Sliced green pepper,
- 1 Red Chilli,
- 1 Onion,
- 3 Cloves of garlic,
- Tomato Purée,
- 1 Tin tomatoes,
- 2 Tins sardines or mackerel.

Directions:

1. Chop the chilli, onions and garlic and fry them together in a little oil. Slice the green pepper, add it to the pan and fry until soft. For the daring add another chilli.
2. Add the tinned tomatoes to the sardines in a large pan. Mix in the fried chilli mixture, and tomato purée according to taste.
3. Bring the mixture to the boil and then simmer slowly for 20-30 minutes. If Lily gets too thick, add some water. A little salt and pepper can spice it up.
4. Serve with rice.

Bill Badenoch is not head chef at New Hall

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Brave new world

Risto Paju explores the mysteries of the universe

“To The Inhabitants of SPACE IN GENERAL And H.C. IN PARTICULAR This Work is Dedicated By a Humble Native of Flatland In the Hope that Even as he was Initiated into the Mysteries Of THREE DIMENSIONS Having been previously conversant With ONLY TWO So the Citizens of that Celestial Region May aspire yet higher and higher To the Secrets of FOUR FIVE or EVEN SIX Dimensions Thereby contributing To the Enlargement of THE IMAGINATION And the possible Development Of that most and excellent Gift of MODESTY Among the Superior Races Of SOLID HUMANITY”

— Edwin A Abbott, in his dedication of *Flatland*

While we are most of the time comfortable with a world of three dimensions, it may be intriguing to ask why that is the number. Perhaps it isn't. For a century, scientists have been introducing higher dimensions into their theories of nature. Often it has merely been a mathematical convenience, for example the notion of time as the fourth dimension among the three of space. However, the practical results of Einstein's General Relativity suggest that space behaves as if it were curved in a further dimension, the fourth spatial dimension.

An analogue can be drawn with the most familiar of examples, the surface of Earth. Only for a few thousand years the Earth has been known to be a sphere. If we didn't know of the sun and the planets, most everyday observations would show the world as flat. In the larger scale, effects of curvature become apparent: two vertical poles of equal height will cast shadows of slightly different length, if they are separated by a sufficient distance. This is what made the ancient Greeks conjecture the idea of a world as a sphere.

The geometry of the surface of a sphere leads to the practical conclusion that, although the surface has a definite area, it has no borders. Travelling in any direction will eventually bring you back to where you started. If this is the case with the universe, being curved in a higher spatial dimension, it might naïvely look like it would solve the problem of the border

of the universe, and what lies beyond, for there would be no beyond.

On the contrary, there indeed is a border. On the Earth, we are aware of the third dimension. The situation would be more interesting if we actually perceived only the two dimensions of the surface. This kind of world is described by Edwin A Abbot in his fascinating classic of science fiction, *Flatland*. If we were two-dimensional beings on the surface of the Earth, we would have no direct way of observing the curvature, like that used by the ancient Greeks. In fact, our brains

“A worm, living in this two-space, finds a shortcut to the opposite side by digging through in the third dimension.”

would be so accustomed to the two dimensions that it would take a giant leap of faith even to consider the idea of the third dimension, let alone perform any measurements. The important lesson the book attempts to convey is that of a three-dimensional being who contacts the main character, doing his best to explain what his world of higher dimensionality is like. In fact, Abbott was a mathematics teacher and wrote the novel in order to give a hint

“Gravity might actually be aware of higher dimensions”

of a four-dimensional existence to us in three-space.

If some of us (in the two-dimensional world) had the arrogance to suggest a third dimension, there would, in fact, be a rather simple method for determining the curvature. If you draw a circle on a sphere, the circumference is generally less than pi times the diameter – note that the diameter is measured along the surface, if you think you only know of two dimensions. So far, such an experiment has not shown any signs of the curvature of our three-space in the fourth dimension. However, as predicted by General Relativity, the curvature will be larger in the vicinity of heavy objects such as the sun. Indeed, the first direct evidence for

the theory was obtained during the solar eclipse of 1945 when the position of a distant star was observed to differ from what it usually was. The ray of light from the star had been slightly bent, because of the curvature of space caused by the sun. From the two-dimensional analogy of a membrane curved in the third dimension, the universe which we perceive is thought to exist on a 'brane' contained in a space of higher dimensions.

Given the experimental evidence, why is it that we only observe three dimensions? More precisely, why does so

much of physics work as if there were only three of them? For example, the inverse square law of gravitation is a direct consequence of three dimensions: the flux of gravity from a massive object is evenly spread over an area proportional to the square of the distance. Similarly, in an imaginary four-dimensional world, the force of gravity would follow an inverse cube law.

Surprisingly, recent theories suggest that, of all the fundamental forces, only gravity might actually be aware of higher dimensions. This would require, however, that space be 'curled up' in the higher dimensions on a very small, subatomic scale, leaving only three dimensions accessible to anything practically observable. According to the theory, gravitational flux from a mass would expand into all dimensions in the small scale, but revert to the usual inverse square behaviour in all measurements in practical scales. This would explain why gravity is so much weaker than any other fundamental force, for instance the electromagnetic. Moreover, the gravitational law has only been tested down to the millimetre scale, while the scale of the curled up dimensions is supposed to be significantly smaller than that of fundamental particles.

Fundamental as electrons and quarks may seem, there are currently known to be 24 different 'elementary' constituents of matter, so it is no surprise that scientists are working on a more elegant and uni-

fied theory. A bold idea about as old as the higher dimensions, the string theories are based on a single kind of entity which would appear as different particles when in different working modes. There are several slightly different string theories, all of which require the existence of ten or more dimensions to work. As is the case with the above theory of gravitation, the extra dimensions would be curled up in scales of the so-called Planck length – about 1,019 times smaller than the atomic nucleus. In order to explore such details, we would need particle accelerators with about 1,016 times more energy than the present facilities, so there is currently no hope of directly testing string theories.

Zooming up to the cosmological scale, there are yet more mysteries to be solved. One of the currently most important is the notion of the dark matter. The observed amount of matter in the universe appears to be notably less, than what is required by General Relativity, to account for recent experiments of the expansion of the universe. These have shown that the universe has a critical mass density – ie if it were any higher, gravity would eventually draw everything into a Big Crunch. This result, by the way, also proves that in the large scale, the space is flat instead of being curved. To compen-

“Some day, wormholes may be viable method of transport”

sate for the mass deficiency 'dark matter' has been proposed. It is thought to be very different from ordinary matter, for instance in that it does not gravitate on itself to form clusters. This may be because the dark matter resides on a different brane – which, from our point of view, is truly a parallel universe. As expected by the new theory of gravitation, the flux of gravity may spread between two branes, although nothing else (eg light) can pass through. It may just be ordinary matter, but on this brane the only effect we see is that of gravity, which is why it appears so distorted in relation to

the rest of matter.

Probably the most famous known anomalies created by gravity are black holes. In the context of branes, these are places of extreme curvature created by ultra-dense masses. In the two-dimensional analogy, they are points very sharply stretched away from the plane of the membrane. It may happen that this stretch hits an adjacent brane and we get a 'wormhole' into the parallel world. Alternatively, the wormhole may form a shortcut into another place on our brane. The term was originally coined from the two-dimensional example of the surface of an apple. A worm, living in this two-space, find a shortcut to the opposite side by digging through in the third dimension. Some day, wormholes may be viable method of transport, but so far the problem with the extreme gravitational fields exerted on the passengers has not been solved.

A further consideration of black holes, suggested by Lee Smolin and others, is that in the 'inside' of a black hole, a sub-universe might start expanding into something not unlike our known brane of universe. In the two-space, the end of the stretch would expand into a sphere, while the connection to the 'mother brane' would stay infinitely narrow. The latter is what makes the holes black to us, for no information can flow out into this world. Smolin believes this is a widely occurring mechanism for the evolution of universes, and the origin of our world. The Big Bang would correspond to the creation of the black hole in the first place, but the origin of the first universe remains a question.

With the brave new theories of branes in higher levels of reality, it can be said that physics has once again peeked at a whole new world of phenomena that could hardly have been predicted, until some inquisitive minds had the arrogance to question the obvious. While the work on higher dimensions appears like an intellectual game, it is likely that we see real-world applications some day – a little like quantum mechanics, which although perceived as a mathematical amusement by some at the time of its conception, has brought us both electronics and computing. Maybe some day when this planet gets too crowded, we can just take the tube to the next brane...

The protein folding problem

Clare Fidler tries to find a needle in a haystack

This is 2004 and the race to decode the human genome is most definitely yesterday's news. The base orders have been set in stone – but what do those series of four little letters actually mean? This sees the arrival of the new whiz kids on the block – the 'Proteinomers'. These biochemists hold the key to determining which genes code for which proteins, and moreover, exactly how these proteins fold up to functionality. Genetic work is old hat, if you want to be the centre of the limelight, proteomics is the place to be. With over 36,000 different genes, and therefore 36,000 different proteins, this is not a facile task. But worthwhile beyond belief. Each of those proteins has a specific and detrimental effect on the way the human body works. They control everything that takes place in cells, from the colour of your eyes to haemophilia and predispositions to cancer.

If we know the way proteins fold up, control reactions and bind with receptors and activators, we can effec-

tively control exactly how the body functions. This has fantastic implications which will rock the medical world. To design drugs and intercept pathogens, one needs to know the exact nature and structure of the proteins involved. Neurodegenerative diseases, one of the main areas of medical research with very few usable results, are largely considered to be a result of protein misfolding. As is Alzheimer's disease, Cystic Fibrosis, Mad Cow Disease, emphysema. With the correct folding pathways defined, we could programme and correct these fundamental and detrimental problems. Think of the savings in lives, quality of life, and NHS treatment money that this will bring.

OK, so funding is rolling in and the public want results, but the protein world is not easily entered with some magic key. This is a mystical world of untold complexity and specificity. The 3-D structure of proteins can already be determined by X-ray crystallography. What is infinitely more difficult is

working out exactly how the proteins fold up in their defined pathways.

Take Cyrus Levinath's example. If left to fold randomly in search of conformational space, even the most basic protein would take longer to fold up into its specific structure, than the universe has been in existence so far. This is obviously not a two or three step process. And in nature, this takes place in microseconds. This is of course, oversimplifying, one wouldn't expect the change to take place randomly in nature, but following cumulative selection of advantageous intermediates. The discovery of partially-folded intermediates in the 1980s confirmed this common sense progression. In fact, the intermediates are intrinsic as the cause of deformed proteins. The effected proteins form insoluble aggregates following premature entanglement with the wrong molecules.

In the example of Alzheimer's, these proteins accumulate as plaques on the motor neurones, thereby impeding nerve conduction. The case of Mad

Cow Disease is interesting as this appears to involve a self-replicating pure protein – surely impossible in the absence of DNA or RNA nucleotides. Recent protein studies show that imperfect folding produces an insoluble aggregate (known as a scrapie prion) which actually bumps into other proteins, thereby disrupting its specific structure as well – the prions are effectively replicating without nucleic acids. The case of Cystic Fibrosis is slightly different – the appropriate molecular 'chaperones' do not release the transport proteins after folding and thereby stunt its functionality.

To work out the exact folding structure appears an impossibly long and arduous task, but once again technology will improve matters and reduce the trial and error methods that have characterised and prolonged recent research. At present, IBM are building a computer programme nicknamed 'Blue Gene' to understand the way in which proteins fold. Even if the amino acid constituents of a protein are

worked out (bear in mind that in itself this can be up to 10,000 in one protein) there is an impossibly large number of ways in which they can fold into a 3-D structure. The Supercomputer will be capable of more than one quadrillion operations per second (one petaflop) and the folding model will encompass more than a billion forces acting over a trillion different time steps. This level of performance will make Blue Gene 1,000 times more powerful than the Deep Blue machine that beat world chess champion Garry Kasparov in 1997, and about two million times more powerful than today's top desktop PCs.

And the most amazing fact of all, is that this research into the structures of antibiotics, nerve growth factors, and regulatory proteins (to name but a few) is at the forefront, right in Cambridge. Dr Sophie Jackson, of the University Chemical Laboratory talked to the CU Science Society this week on the mechanisms of protein misfolding and the subsequent therapeutic possibilities.

Tables bonanza

Men's Hockey League

Division 1	Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goal Diff	Points
Christ's	4	4	0	0	16	8	
Emma	4	3	0	1	10	6	
Queens'	4	2	2	0	4	6	
Jesus	4	2	2	0	5	5	
Johns	2	2	0	0	7	3	
Pembroke	3	1	1	1	3	3	
Fitz	3	2	0	1	0	3	
APU	4	1	0	3	-11	2	
Downing	3	0	0	3	-5	0	
Catz	2	0	0	2	-7	0	
Girton	3	0	0	3	-10	0	
Robinson	4	0	1	3	-12	0	

Division 2	Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goal Diff	Points
Cam City	4	3	0	1	22	6	
Caius	3	3	0	0	20	6	
Trinity	3	3	0	0	13	6	
Clare	3	3	0	0	9	6	
Selwyn	3	1	1	1	0	3	
Corpus	3	1	0	2	3	2	
Johns II	3	1	1	1	1	2	
Sidney	3	0	2	1	-6	2	
Churchill	3	0	1	2	-5	1	
Magdalene	3	0	1	2	-8	1	
Peterhouse	4	1	0	3	-9	1	
Jesus II	3	0	0	3	-23	-3	

Women's Hockey League

Division 1	Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goal Diff	Points
Catz	4	4	0	0	19	12	
Caius	5	3	1	1	8	10	
Jesus	3	3	0	0	12	9	
Churchill	3	2	0	1	0	6	
New Hall	5	2	0	3	-4	6	
APU	4	1	1	2	-4	4	
Homerton	5	1	0	4	-11	3	
Queens'	3	0	1	2	-7	1	
Pembroke	4	0	1	3	-13	1	

Division 2	Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goal Diff	Points
Girton	5	4	0	1	10	12	
St John's	4	3	0	1	6	9	
Trinity	4	2	1	1	1	7	
Fitz	3	2	0	1	8	6	
Emma	4	2	0	2	-2	6	
Newnham	4	2	0	2	-2	6	
Jesus II	3	1	0	2	-1	3	
Sidney	3	0	1	2	-6	1	
Clare	4	0	0	4	-14	0	

Division 3	Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goal Diff	Points
Magdalene	3	3	0	0	6	9	
Selwyn	4	2	0	2	2	6	
Trinity Hall	3	2	0	1	2	6	
APU II	4	1	1	2	0	3	
Downing	2	1	0	1	-1	3	
Robinson	3	1	0	2	-4	3	
Christ's	2	1	0	1	-1	2	
Corpus	3	0	1	2	-4	1	

Women's Netball

Division 1	Team	Matches	Points
Hills Rd	3	15	
Newnham	3	15	
Queens'	3	13	
Pembroke	3	10	
Jesus	3	8	
Girton	3	7	
Downing	3	7	
Caius	3	6	
Catz	3	3	
Fitz	3	1	

Division 2	Team	Matches	Points
Robinson	3	12	
St Johns	3	11	
Homerton	2	10	
Magdalene	2	10	
Trinity Hall	3	10	
Sidney	3	7	
Emma	3	4	
Trinity	2	1	
Selwyn	3	1	

Division 3	Team	Matches	Points
Hills Rd II	3	15	
Christ's	3	7	
Girton II	2	5	
Homerton II	2	5	
New Hall	2	5	
Caius II	2	5	
Clare	2	5	
Churchill	3	1	
Fitz II	1	0	

Division 4	Team	Matches	Points
Newnham II	2	10	
St John's II	2	10	
Jesus II	2	8	
Sidney II	3	6	
New Hall II	3	6	
King's	2	5	
Pembroke II	2	1	
Trinity Hall II	2	0	
Trinity II	0	0	

Women's Football

Division 1	Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Points
Girton	4	3	1	0	12	2	10	
CUR	4	3	0	1	11	1	9	
APU	2	1	1	0	4	2	4	
Downing	2	1	0	2	5	4	3	
Newnham	2	1	0	2	4	5	3	
Sidney	3	1	0	2	4	12	3	
Fitz	3	1	0	2	4	13	3	
Homerton	2	0	0	2	1	6	0	

Division 2	Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Points
Jesus	4	4	0	0	16	3	12	
Catz	3	1	2	0	5	3	5	
Queens'	3	1	2	0	2	1	5	
Trinity Hall	4	1	2	1	6	7	5	
Clare	4	1	1	2	5	10	4	
Emma	2	1	0	1	5	6	3	
Trinity	3	0	1	2	1	6	1	
John's	3	0	0	3	0	4	0	



Cambridge University Music Challenge

27th November 2000
St Catherine's College Bar
8pm

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Men's Hockey

3 Blues

Ipswich & East Suffolk

Tim Gallico

Ipswich and East Suffolk – agricultural in both name and nature – left Cambridge last Saturday without so much as a sack of fertiliser to show for their afternoon's toils. They even left their dignity behind when their frustration at a fluid Blues display boiled over in the final minutes.

In particular, the sight of the visiting captain and goalkeeper, all five feet of him, squaring up the Blues' defensive pillar Dave Hancock kept the small crowd entertained right to the very end. In truth, though, the Blues had wrapped this game up by halftime thanks to two excellent goals from Paul Bevan and a slightly bizarre deflection from Ali Arshad.

To be fair to the Ipswich keeper, his two fine second half saves from Gruslin and Parker had kept the scoreline respectable for the visitors. Nevertheless, his wrath might have been more appropriately directed at his own sweeper, whose physique suggested considerable Sumo wrestling potential. Although employing defenders with asses the size of lorries seems to be the latest tactical craze in the East League, there was no stopping Bevan in the 16th minute as he finished sweetly on the reverse stick from the edge of the area.

It was Bevan's replacement, the shy and retiring Arshad, who doubled the

lead five minutes later as he sought to control Gruslin's fierce pass and saw the ball loop in at the far post with what looked like a helping touch from the aforementioned defender's backside. Not that Arshad seemed to care "I'm not fussy how I score", he remarked afterwards.

The Blues, after a promising start to the season, had suffered a recent dip in form, taking just two points from the previous four games. But they wrapped up all three from this fixture with a fine finish to the first period. Although John Craven will want to forget missing what can only be described as a sitter, excellent attacking work from full-back Freddy Mulryne on the right flank ensured chances and corners kept coming Cambridge's way. And in the final minute of the first period, Bevan deflected skipper Gruslin's pass inside the right post from a well worked corner routine. Although he departed the post match press conference in a hurry, Bevan nevertheless looked overjoyed to have grabbed a double in his first start for the Blues.

Ipswich never looked likely to reverse the deficit, and although Will Fulcker was lively on the break and pulled one back for the visitors with a fierce shot across a crowded goal mouth, the Blues continued to create the better chances. In total they won thirteen short corners to Ipswich's four, and kept their tempers better when the umpires stamped their bizarre decisions on the game in the closing moments. For all the passion the visitors showed, the Blues know there will be tougher opponents over the next few weeks.

Comment

James Mythen

There is a certain dramatic irony attached to sport that at times makes even the most outrageous Greek play seem true to life. Just as the FA decided not to continue with their trials of video replays for disputed goals, England drew with Finland after Parlour's legitimate strike was ruled not to have crossed the line. Then to rub it in, this weekend the England rugby team beat the World Champions by the thinnest of margins as a result of TV evidence. It's a story line worthy of Sophocles himself, English football was punished by the gods for shunning the technology they could so easily have put in place. With a bit of luck now the Luddites at the FA can stop their machine wrecking and listen to the Chorus singing the moral of their woes.

The FA and FIFA have rejected video replays for several years despite the increasing number of cases where their use could have been invaluable. Ignoring 1966, for we all know that that was a goal, recent high profile examples of balls crossing the line without goals being given include Romania's Munteanu against Bulgaria in Euro '96

and Victor Ikpeba's supposed penalty 'miss', which led to Cameroon's victory in the African Nations Cup. Only three weeks ago Sunderland's Julio Arca had a goal ruled out under similar circumstances. These are thus not isolated incidents, but occurrences that have changed the course of footballing history.

The consistent arguments against video replays have been that they slow the game down. However, if video referees were limited to merely deciding whether a goal crossed the line or not, the delay might amount to one or two minutes every 1,000 games. With effective cameras such a pause would be minuscule and would take the referee a shorter time than that usually spent dealing with the complaints that take place after any disputed decision. Furthermore, the anticipation of a video replay result creates intense excitement in the crowd, as seen last Saturday at Twickenham and at Rugby League Grounds for the last two seasons.

Football today is a business and demands a more professional set of rules that eliminate mistakes and controversy. TV evidence can act to solve one of these potential areas of dispute. Its not inconceivable that without such TV support, referees or the FA could be forced to replay games or be sued by

clubs in the event of a crucial goal being ruled out. Though some may argue that video replays are not even conclusive in many instances, they offer a better guide than mere guesswork by a referee.

Trial by TV has been useful for disciplinary scrutiny in recent years and a number of high profile cases has seen a visible improvement in player discipline this season. Placing two cameras in the frame and back of the goal would be all that was necessary to record goal line decisions. This is hardly a difficult thing to do considering cricket has mastered the stump camera and the Snickometer, while tennis has the super slo-mo camera Cyclops to make immediate decisions on line calls from serves. Furthermore, other innovations are highly possible such as transmitters inside footballs that set off an alarm as they cross the goal line.

For such an innovation to work it would need standardisation, thus it may be limited at first to international tournaments, European fixtures, or the top three European leagues. However, as we enter a new technological era expect progress to be swift. For this to happen though, the FA will have to continue its new modernising streak and embrace the video referee. With his help England might even beat Finland next time around.

Flying high Jump!

Ospreys

Alice Ross

A short while ago, I received an e-mail from an irate sportsman, who accused *Varsity* of having utterly ignored his sport. He deemed this unfair on the grounds that his is one of the oldest half-blue sports in Cambridge. Age, it seems, is all-important. If you haven't been around for 150 years, then you aren't a priority. If these criteria were adhered to, what would happen to women's sports? Women, who have only been recognised as part of the University for just over 50 years, surely deserve no sporting recognition.

The performance gap between male and female athletes is closing rapidly. Cambridge is following some way behind, as women are still not given the support which their male counterparts receive. Yet, even within this ancient and immovable establishment, there has been a massive breakthrough in the last few weeks. The driving force behind it is the Ospreys: the society for Cambridge University Blues women athletes.

This breakthrough takes the form of the creation of the post of full-time administrator. Someone who is paid to look after the welfare of women athletes.

This administrator will be the new face of the Ospreys. She will liaise with the corporations whose sponsorship has, to a large extent, been the power behind the Ospreys, ensuring their continued financial support. These corporations, it seems, see the importance of attracting women where the Sports Syndicate do not. For whilst the Ospreys seek to increase access for women to play sport, just as the companies want to encourage women, the University has failed to achieve anything except distant, unfunded plans to build a sports complex.

She will interface with the University, mediating between patrons, the media, the Hawks club, Careers Service and perhaps even the Sports Syndicate, providing a contemporary network within the University. She will also be the link with alumnae who, as past athletes, are the



future of Cambridge sport.

From a student perspective, the administrator will be vital. She will act as a 'den mother', always available at the open door of the Ospreys Clubhouse. Girls who

have been hurt on the field, or are struggling to run their clubs, will have someone to turn to who can provide both practical and financial support, in the form of the new Ospreys bursaries. She will be able to relate to and aid the girls on the most practical level, even in matters as small as collating fixtures and results. It might even be possible to prevent the money-wasting fiascos which happen practically every week: where several sports teams travel separately to the same university, without the knowledge that other teams are going.

Little things matter to the students. Valuable resources wasted on transport, mean that clubs cannot afford to hire the facilities they need. Teams have long given up faith in the people at Fenner's. Tony Lemmons, the Director of Sport at Fenner's, has not contacted the netball club this year. Last week the team were forced to play away to Oxford, in a fixture scheduled to be played at home, because of the sheer unavailability of a sports hall. They lost by two goals, a score-line which surely reflected the home advantage Cambridge were forced to give up.

The Ospreys administrator is the first person in Cambridge who will be employed solely to aid and support sports-women like these. Yet the aforementioned emailer might suggest I am breaking those unwritten Cambridge sporting rules, by writing about something quite so contemporary. Perhaps I should wait another 150 years?

The Ospreys are considering applications for an administrator at the moment. For a job description, or to apply, contact Louis McCagg lm220@cus.cam.ac.uk

Trampolining

Claire Anderson

The Warwick University Open trampoline competition is traditionally the first major fixture of the season. The Cambridge University Trampoline Club sent a full squad to this event, containing many newcomers determined to prove their worth.

In their first competition for Cambridge, there were outstanding performances in the Beginners' category from Jamie Shotton, Keltie Dall and Heidi Clark, Jamie finishing a superb 8th with very high scores. Competition was fierce in the Ladies' intermediates and Nikki Timmins and Frances Galvin gained their best scores ever. Emily Machtelan also performed well in her first competition.

Claire Anderson was unfortunately forced to withdraw after one routine due to injury, however, In the Nico Stollenwerk finished 4th in the Advanced Men, recording new personal best scores.

The most exciting action came in the Tariff competition, with many competitors performing double somersaults and moves with multiple twisting. Unfortunately the Cambridge bouncers deviated from their set routines, unable to remember a sequence of 10 moves whilst in mid air. Yet half-blue Anita Friend performed well in her 2nd routine, whilst Gregg Capon did outstandingly in his first competition for 4 years, completing a double back somersault in his 2nd routine. He stands a good chance of becoming Cambridge's first ever male half blue trampolinist.

Beginners: Jamie Shotton (Queens) 8th, Keltie Dall (New Hall) 11th, Heidi Clark (Girton) 32nd

Intermediates: Nikki Timmins (Emma) 12th, Frances Galvin (Guest) 21st, Emily Machtelan (Newnham) 25th, Claire Anderson (Homerton) 49th (retired injured)

Advanced: Nico Stollenwerk (Guest) 4th
Tariff: Anita Friend (Newnham) 12th, Gregg Capon (Corpus) 13th

Sports shorts

Written By:

Paul Thompson, Tom Middleton, Adam Joseph, John Papadopoulos

Eton Fives

Cambridge took part in the inaugural British Universities Eton Fives Challenge last Saturday with both the Blues (Nick Shaw and Paul Thompson) and the Seconds (James Birch and Simon Maskell) progressing comfortably to the second round. Ironically, the Blues and the Seconds found themselves pitted against each other in the semi-final, from which the Blues emerged victorious 12-4, 12-5 to set up a showdown with Warwick 1, the only pair which the Seconds had lost to during the pool stage. In the final, the Blues were unluckily consigned to a 6-12, 9-12 defeat to Warwick. The Seconds also lost the 3rd-4th play-off against Oxford, 12-5, 9-12, 9-12. On a brighter note, the Fourths (Reuben Arasaratnam and Ed Ryder) played extremely well to win the Plate competition.

PT

Rowing

The Fairbairn Cup races take place next Thursday and Friday, starting from Jesus boat house. Favourites to win the men's senior division are Emmanuel, while Trinity Hall women are heavily fancied to lift the women's trophy.

Division times and other information are available from:

<http://www.fairbairns.com>

TM

College Rowing

Trinity Hall Boat Club continued its fine run in this term's weather interrupted rowing schedule in the Winter Head. The race held on Saturday 18 December took the form of a time trial from the lock to the Pike and Eel. The men's and women's races were won by Kings College, London, college crews took the next few places. In the men's Emma finished top college crew, with Caius and Tit Hall following closely behind. The Tit Hall women continued their unbeaten start taking the women's race with Caius in second place.

AJ

Men's Basketball

76 Blues
71 DMU Bedford

Having pulled off an astonishing 107-33 win over Coventry last week, the Blues came into this game full of confidence. Indeed, this showed as they cruised through the first quarter with a comfortable 21-9 lead. Cambridge's full court zone press obviously rattled DMU, and the second quarter saw much of the same dominance, with Mike Banach's drive and Jon Litton's incredible shooting lifting the team at crucial moments. Although DMU showed signs of a revival, Cambridge were not really troubled as it entered the second half with a comfortable 47-26 lead.

The second half was a different affair, however, as DMU managed to find their rhythm and began fighting back. At the end, however, the incredible depth of this squad was evident, as solid displays from Will Critchlow, Matt Hollowman and David Crawley allowed the Blues to grind out a hard-fought, but much deserved victory.

JP