



VARSITY

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15,000 drop in university applications

»Top-up fees blamed for discouraging prospective students

»Cambridge resists government scheme to benefit disadvantaged candidates

JO TRIGG
News Editor

In the same week that UCAS announced a 3.7 per cent drop in university applications, Cambridge is resisting government pressure to lower entry requirements for applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Provisional figures released by UCAS last

week reveal that the number of university applicants has fallen by more than 15,000 from 520,961 in 2005 to 504,748 in 2006. The number of successful applicants, either meeting their offers or being accepted through clearing, fell from 404,668 to 389,505. The statistics also show that a greater number of applicants withdrew their applications this year, a rise of more than 45 per cent from 9,608 in 2005 to 13,956 for 2006 entry.

The drop in applicants is blamed by many on the introduction of £3,000 a year top-up fees. Dr Geoff Parks, Director of Admissions for the Cambridge Colleges, told *Varsity* that "it is likely that some of the decrease can be ascribed to the aftermath of the rush to beat tuition fees in the previous admissions cycle". Luke Pickering, CUSU Access Officer, agreed, saying "I certainly believe that top-up fees have had an effect on applications to the university."

CUSU Higher Education Funding Officer Liana Wood sug-

gested that top-up fees would have a more long-term effect on applications. She told *Varsity* "Top-up fees are and will continue to affect University applications. The problem is two-fold. Firstly, top-up fees hit students from middle-income families hardest, and I would expect a drop in applicants from this sector. Students from low-income families are also very likely to be discouraged by top-up fees".

Applications to Cambridge are a case in point. Whereas 14,343 people applied to Cambridge for 2005 entry, this figure dropped to 14,090 for 2006. Entry numbers have suffered a greater fall of 4.6 per cent from 14,655 in 2005 to 13,983 in 2006, partly as a result of fewer deferrals. Dr Parks told *Varsity* that "Early indications are that application numbers for 2007 entry are very similar to those for 2006".

But at the same time, Cambridge is resisting a new government initiative that could increase applications. A report commissioned by Aimhigher, a government funded scheme that "aims to widen participation in higher education by raising the aspirations and developing the abilities of young

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Under the banner: Anti-tuition fees sit-in attracts proctorial attention



The CUSU banner hanging in Lecture Room 1

JAMIE MUNK

JAMIE MUNK

Proctors were called to the Sidgwick Site on Tuesday evening following the occupation of a lecture room by the Cambridge Education Not For Sale (ENS) group, protesting against the fees introduced at universities from this year.

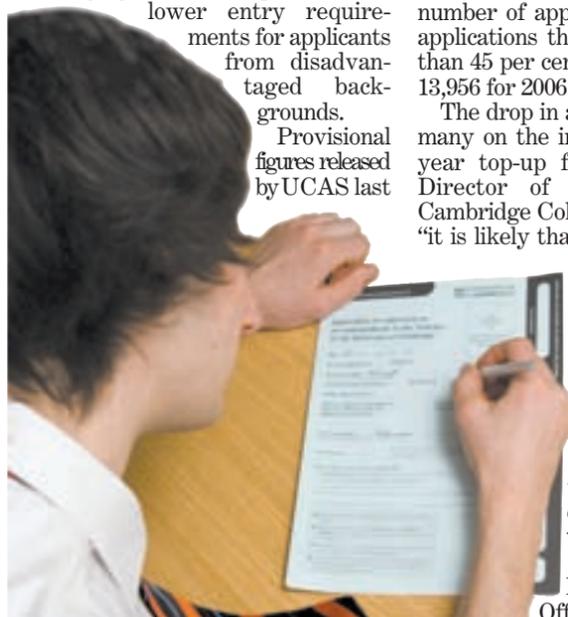
The ENS had legitimately booked Lecture Room 1 in the Sidgwick Site Lecture Block from 5-6pm for a talk on tuition fees and free education, but soon declared an occupation. University Security Staff arrived at around 7pm, followed by the two Proctors and a University Constable at 9pm. When the occupiers refused to leave, the Proctors recorded the names of all those present. But no further action was taken against the 30 or so relatively quiet protestors, who continued their programme of

lectures until around 5.30am.

The prominence of the "CUSU AGAINST FEES" banner in the lecture theatre has proved the cause of controversy. While *Varsity* was assured by ENS member Donnacha Kirk during the meeting that "Luke Pickering, CUSU Access Officer, knows we're doing this", the CUSU Executive was eager to distance itself from the occupation. Pickering, who lent the campaign banner to the group, admitted "I wasn't exactly told the details".

Kirk, a fourth year physicist at Churchill, denied that details of the occupation had been purposefully withheld from Pickering. But he did admit that "it was definitely a mistake we made".

Senior Proctor Dr Frank King declined to comment on whether any disciplinary action would be taken against members of the group.



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In Brief

Coldham killer found guilty

A patient on conditional release from a psychiatric hospital pleaded guilty to manslaughter last Friday, after striking a friend during an argument on Coldham Common. Jason Warwick, 37, left Mandlemkosi Neyla, 41, unconscious on the common one night last February, where he was found the next morning. Neyla was taken to Addenbrooke's Hospital but never regained consciousness. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mental Health Trust refused to comment on why Warwick had been deemed suitable for release, and how he was monitored afterwards. "But a full review will be carried out", a spokeswoman assured. **Katy Lee**

Replacement for Ewings elected

In an uncontested election held on Wednesday 25 Patrick Leonard was elected to the position of CUSU Academic Affairs Officer. Leonard won 90 per cent of the vote against the option of reopening nominations. Although the turnout was under 8 per cent, CUSU President Mark Ferguson seemed unconcerned. Considering the lack of other candidates standing in the wake of Dave Ewings' resignation earlier this month, he told *Varsity* "we're quite pleased with the turnout". **Jamie Munk**

Cambridge top in biomedicine

Cambridge University has been ranked first in the world for biomedicine according to a recent survey by the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (THES). Oxford and Imperial College London were also ranked in the top five. Although no nation can rival the 24 places held by Americans in the top 100, heavy investment by British universities seems to be taking effect. **Jessica King**

CUP pensions agreement

Staff at Cambridge University Press have this week voted in favour of accepting changes to their pension scheme, which were initially rejected on the grounds that they would reduce pension benefits. All employees at CUP now have the choice of a Defined Benefits Scheme with lower benefits and lower accruals, or a Defined Contribution Scheme that has been open to new employees since 2002. Both schemes are still believed to be generous in comparison to industry norms, despite initial complaints by Amicus print union members. **Amy Russell**

Sudan divestment

The Cambridge Campaign for Sudan Divestment, the first of its kind in the UK, is being launched this week. It calls on the University and its colleges to divest from holdings in companies financially backing to the Sudanese government, widely accused of sponsoring the massacres in the northern Darfur region. **Hamish Falconer**

»Concern over Government access scheme

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE
 people from under-represented groups", proposes that admissions tutors lower entry requirements for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Compact Scheme Report, released on Tuesday, proposes that "When admissions tutors for heavily oversubscribed courses are deciding to which applicants they will make offers, they should use holistic assessment. Some admissions tutors... may make more offers and give fewer rejections to applicants who have demonstrated disadvantaged circumstances." Admissions tutors are advised to consider candidates with results up to 40 UCAS points, equivalent to two grades, lower than a normal offer.

The candidates identified as "disadvantaged" include students with long-term illnesses or disabilities, caring for an infant or sick relative, under local authority care, as well as those with family problems. The Compact Scheme suggests that these applicants can gain extra UCAS points by participating in summer schools and access courses.

But Dr Parks expressed concern about the plausibility of the proposals. He argued that "the practical difficulties of implementing them are formidable", and acknowledged "there are some circumstances where lowering the conditions of standard offers is appropriate, but doing so formulaically runs counter to the principles of fair admissions".

Parks told *Varsity* "Taking applicants' circumstances into account is desirable in principle but fraught

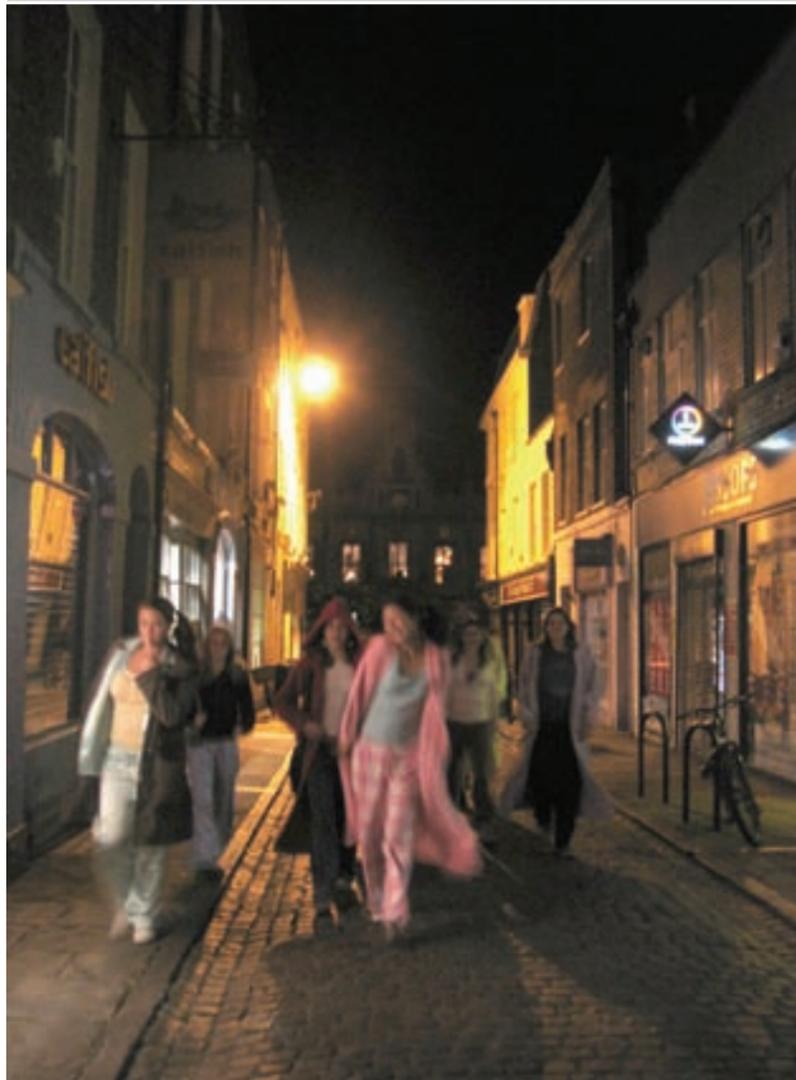
with difficulties in practice". Expressing scepticism about the initiative, he asked "How is the integrity and accuracy of any declared contextual information to be guaranteed?"

The report does not suggest implementing any nationwide entry policies, and implies that admissions tutors could retain a level of autonomy. But many universities already run access schemes. The Cambridge Special Access Scheme is a University-wide initiative that aims to recognise applicants with greater potential than their predicted grades suggest. It is designed "to assess accurately applicants who have experienced particular personal, social or educational disadvantage".

Through the scheme, schools and colleges can put forward candidates who have had their education "significantly disrupted" through health or personal problems, disability or difficulties with schooling; or who are from a school whose pupils rarely enter higher education and a family with little or no tradition of going to university.

In addition to this access initiative, Luke Pickering highlighted the CUSU Target Campaign, which aims to broaden the diversity of Cambridge applicants. Target visits to state schools aim to dispel the myths of Cambridge life for financially and educationally disadvantaged students who would not normally consider applying. Pickering told *Varsity* that this year information packs distributed during the visits will contain advice on fees and funding.

Glad-RAGs: Pyjama Pub Crawl



ALEX CONSTANTINIDES

The lighter touch of Cantab politics

GRACE CAPEL

New Labour candidate, King's College alumnus Daniel Zeichner, has promised to inject a "bit of fun" into the world of politics in his bid to wrestle the Cambridge seat from Liberal Democrat Clare alumnus David Howarth. Zeichner has emerged as the new candidate for the historic city seat after a bitter three month-long contest.

Describing Monday's candidate election, Zeichner told *Varsity* that he had

"never seen the hall so packed", and described the mood of the local party as "upbeat and euphoric". Zeichner describes himself as a "socialist in a modern context" and is positive about his chances of winning Cambridge for Labour. Speaking after his selection he claimed that by "leading from the front, taking local people seriously, rebuilding trust and working closely with Labour colleagues, we can and we will make Cambridge Labour again".

But current MP David Howarth was nothing less than vociferous in his

disagreement, arguing "Cambridge decisively rejected Labour at the last elections because of issues such as Iraq and top-up fees. I would be very surprised if more people voted Labour at the next election than at the last". Cambridge Student Liberal Democrats also added that in "the last General Election [the results] speak for themselves... a 15 per cent swing from Labour to the Liberal Democrats in which the student vote was instrumental".

Despite Howarth's confidence in the Liberal Democrats' popularity, Cambridge University Labour Club (CULC) is excited by the prospect of a new Labour candidate for the city. A spokesperson told *Varsity* "CULC welcomes Daniel's selection, and firmly believes that he has the experience, energy and enthusiasm to win back Cambridge from the Liberal Democrats". They praised the fact that "throughout his career, Daniel has shown that he is not afraid to stand up to the leadership on issues that he cares about". Speaking to *Varsity*, Zeichner said that his determination to "hold the line" against the Labour leadership on important issues has led to several "run-ins with the Deputy Prime Minister". He claimed that he had been put under "considerable pressure" to support a scheme of private and voluntary funding for council housing in Cambridge, when residents had "consistently voted not to do it".

Zeichner describes Howarth, a fellow of Clare College and lecturer in law and economics at the University,

as a "very serious academic", adding that he preferred to conduct politics with "a lighter touch". Given that Cambridge is "extraordinarily diverse", his concern is that Mr Howarth is not "in touch" with all sectors of the population, especially those such as "cleaners, cooks and porters". Zeichner claims that holding a senior position at trade union UNISON will benefit him as an MP since it involved "daily contact with the issues that affect thousands of ordinary people".

When challenged on these claims by *Varsity*, Howarth retorted that he had "personal experience" of hardship, having grown up in a "working class background" on a council estate in the West Midlands. In his 20 years on the city council, three of them leading it, he was constantly "involved in helping people from all parts of Cambridge, from every different background".

The Student Liberal Democrats believe that the Liberal Democrats still offer the best deal for students, pointing out that the Liberal Democrats are now the only major party to oppose top-up fees, and feel strongly that "education, at all levels, should be kept free as far as possible".

CULC voiced concerns about the introduction of top up fees but are "unequivocal that on balance, the best interests of students at Cambridge lie in a Labour MP for Cambridge locally, and a Labour government nationally". The Labour MP Anne Campbell had previously represented Cambridge in parliament for thirteen years before being ousted by Liberal Democrat David Howarth last year.



Daniel Zeichner, Labour candidate for Cambridge

LABOUR PARTY

Johnson slams coursework cheats in age of technology

»Shadow HE Minister thinks exams are the only reliable way of assessing students

»*Varsity* surveys the supervision cheats of Cambridge

ALICE WHITWHAM
News Editor

Boris Johnson, Conservative MP for Henley-on-Thames and Shadow Minister for Higher Education, has argued that coursework assessment is responsible for the ten per cent of University undergraduates allegedly cheating their way to academic success.

Speaking at the Universities UK conference on plagiarism in higher education in London last week, Johnson said that in the present "technological" climate students are able to cut-and-paste chunks of stolen material from the internet. Students also use websites such as UK Essays, which sell ready-made assignments on any subject with "queasy-making" efficiency. According to the Oxford-educated MP, examinations would not only curb plagiarism, but could serve to prevent the "intellectual tradition of enquiry" from deteriorating further.

Johnson told *Varsity* that while he thinks coursework is "extremely valuable and important", he sees examinations as the best way to "get something out of someone". When asked whether coursework was a good alternative for students who don't work well under pressure, he merely replied, "I myself can only operate under stress." He added that while examinations might not test all the relevant skills, they nevertheless allow for the possibility of a genuine moment of "intellectual excitement". As he emphasised in his conference speech, "some of us need the panic of the looming exam hall and in fact it is only then that the mental flywheel starts whirring".

In response to Johnson's comments, *Varsity* this week conducted a survey of undergraduate work habits, with the aim of discovering the extent to which students "cheat" in their weekly essays and coursework. We found that while only seven per cent of students use Sparknotes, online study guides available in both arts and science subjects, 52 per cent admitted to using internet encyclopaedia Wikipedia on a regular basis. One third year Medic from Emmanuel

52%
of students write essays using Wikipedia

30%
of students lie in their bibliographies

Carter, Jisun Lee, Xueni Zhu, Kaj Bernhardt and Yang Xu, are due to fly out for the "Jamboree", which begins on November 4. Chand explained that their entry "tried to genetically engineer two types of bacteria such that they would form patterns in swimming agar plates. Inter-cellular communication and differential motility would be the basis for this pattern formation", although he admitted that "we could not get what we set out to do". They did, however, "get some interesting results". They will have to present their work to an audience of over 700 people from all around the world, including many experts in the field.

Boris Johnson: Shadow Minister for Higher Education and MP for Henley-on-Thames

CONSERVATIVE PARTY

College even confessed that a quote from Wikipedia, "forms the first sentence of every one of my essays". A further 30 per cent of students said that they lied in the bibliographies of their essays.

While *Varsity's* survey highlights that a mentality of surreptitiousness is certainly a reality in Cambridge, Dr Andrew Zurcher, English fellow at Queens' College, Cambridge, said that examination revision may be equally conducive to "all kinds of anti-intellectual activity". Dr Stephen James, a lecturer at the University of Bristol concurred, suggesting that it is by no means self-evident that the work that goes on in the exam hall is necessarily the student's own. A semi-prepared response to an exam "may well involve the undeclared recycling of critics' ideas and phrases".

At Bristol, 93 per cent of an English student's final grade is determined by coursework. As well as emphasising the possibility for students to plagiarise in examinations, James further said that they are a "reductive, even parodic" way

of representing an individual's knowledge and ability. James also argued that examinations lead to a hyper-consciousness about class-marks and a utilitarian attitude towards learning. The clichéd image of a student burning his or her books at the end of a university

"some of us need the panic of the looming exam hall"

career "surely says something about the attitude towards one's subject that the exam system itself has helped to foster".

Rather than producing "synthesis and genuine learning", as Johnson states, the results of our survey suggest that examinations might

encourage many students to "coast" during term time. Asked whether they preferred exam or coursework-based assessment, many admitted that they preferred not having the continuous pressure of coursework. One third year historian answered "Coursework takes up too much time", admitting "I only really knuckle down to work for exams". A third year Classics student at King's responded to the survey, "I'm not sure that exams are fairer, I just don't like having to work hard all year long".

The *Varsity* survey also highlighted a balance between those students who think that exams are a fairer form of assessment and those who prefer coursework. But when Johnson was asked whether students should be given a chance to choose between the two, he replied that it would be difficult to organise. While Zurcher suggested that a combination of both is the most reasonable way of testing "agile minds", he added that a "practical, fair and cheat-proof" system of examination is yet to be devised.

Cambridge team fly to America to contest iGEM 2006 at MIT

JOE GOSDEN

A team of Cambridge students will travel to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) next week to contest the international Genetically Engineered Machine competition (iGEM). The competition, which has been running since 2003, will this year feature teams from 37 different countries, all attempting to help answer the question of whether "simple biological systems be built from standard, interchangeable parts and operated in living cells".

The team of six, comprising Nikhilesh Singh Chand, Elizabeth

Jim Haseloff, one of the advisors to the Cambridge team, told *Varsity* that "with the arrival of new synthetic DNA today" the team would be "conducting experiments up until the day that they left".

James Brown, an international ambassador for iGEM who is just starting a PhD at Downing College, said that the competition had put the students "at the cutting edge of research and up against the best uni-

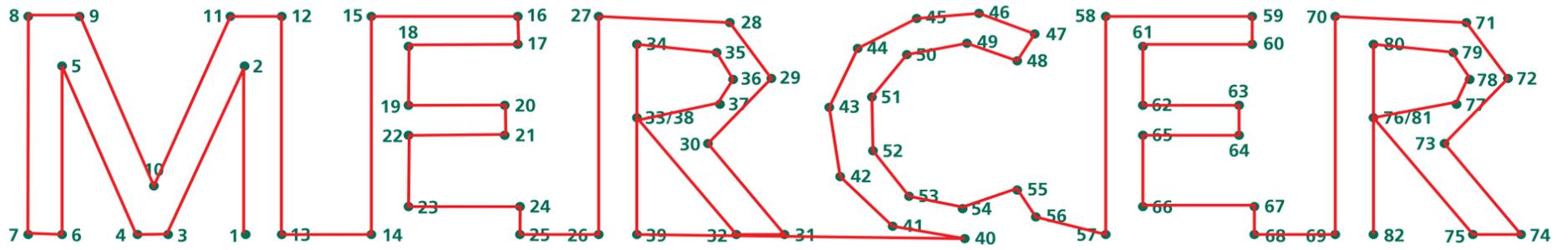
versities in the world". He explained that the "massive crossover between nano and electrical engineering" was of great importance and had implications in fields such as bio-fuel and GM food production.

Haseloff emphasised that the competition represented "much more than just a standard summer project" because of the breadth of the remit that the students were given. He told *Varsity* "We provide the environment and they do the work", with "no intellectual constraints". The Cambridge project has been made possible as a result of funding from Jeremy Minshull's DNA 2.0 molecular biology company.



The Cambridge iGEM team line up in the lab

NIKHILESH SINGH CHAND



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Sanskrit and Hindi not axed

»South Asian language courses have been curtailed but “not abandoned”

TOM PARRY-JONES

Dr Gordon Johnson, Director of the Centre for South Asian Studies (CSAS), has stressed Cambridge's continued dedication to the study of Hindi and Sanskrit, despite the University's announcement that the subjects will no longer be offered as part of the Oriental Studies undergraduate course.

Speaking to *Varsity*, Dr Johnson said that whilst there is “never any good reason for stopping good subjects”, there is “only so much the University can support”, with a small number of students creating an immense “burden” on two teachers. A new focus on graduate research is necessary to ensure that South Asian Studies remains buoyant, and that the study of the languages “in the longer term ... is safe”.

His comments come amidst confused reports concerning the future of the subject. On October 13, the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (THES) reported that the University “is to abandon the teaching of Hindi and Sanskrit to undergraduates”, whilst the *Times of India* reported how Cambridge “has finally closed the door on Sanskrit as a hallowed subject of undergraduate study”. But in a letter to the THES last Friday, Dr Johnson stressed that “Sanskrit will continue to be taught to undergraduates reading theology”. He also promised that teaching in Hindi would be

offered to undergraduates who require it to pursue research interests, and expressed a commitment to postgraduate students in both subjects.

Nevertheless, options for undergraduate study of Sanskrit at Cambridge are now severely limited. Within the Theology Tripos only one paper a year is offered in the language, and Dr Johnson admitted that it is focused too heavily on religion. Meanwhile, the promised undergraduate teaching of Hindi will be completely separate from the Tripos, although existing facilities and staff will be used, with plans to “expand” these for the increase in graduate students. Dr Johnson is in particular seeking to promote an MPhil in Classical Indian Studies, to take advantage of the “huge resources” that the University Library and Queens' College collections provide.

Academics and students have expressed unhappiness over the cancellation of the course. John Smith, one of the two readers in Sanskrit at the University, told the *Times of India* that Sanskrit is “simply worth doing. You cannot understand the culture of the Indian sub-continent and the world outside it without learning Sanskrit”. He also accused the University of being “tactless”, as the news coincided with the presentation of an honorary degree to the Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh. Dr Johnson's statement on the cancellation of the course was attached at the end of a press release celebrating “a


Dr Gordon Johnson, Director of the CSAS

TOM PARRY-JONES

continuing relationship of excellence” between the University and India.

The cancellation of the course has sparked lively debate in the Indian press. In an editorial on October 19, South Indian daily *News Today* accused the University of a “planned and deliberate act to run down Hinduism”, calling the decision “culturally disastrous”. The columnist asked

“whether the Cambridge University would have dared to abolish the Chairs in Arabic or Persian?” The editorial in the *Times of India* on October 13 was more reflective about the subject's demise. Understanding that “knowledge has to be justified in its utility”, the writer nevertheless argued that Indian universities should emerge as the new “centres of excellence in Indic studies”.

Drunk intruder in the King's choirboys' dorm

NIKKI BURTON

A naked and inebriated man was discovered asleep in a young boys' dormitory at King's College School last week, reported *Cambridge Evening News*. A matron responsible for the boarding school's sleeping quarters found the man sleeping off a hangover on the morning of Thursday 19 October. The dormitory room belongs to Year 7 choristers, who are all between eleven and

“Parents were shocked by the breach of security”

twelve years of age. The incident is not believed to have been reported to the police, but an internal enquiry “with a view to tightening further procedures” is underway at the school.

Parents were shocked by the breach of security, and are demanding answers from the school. They were informed via e-mail of an “incident in the boarding quarters” by Deputy Head Lesley Edge, who is also responsible for pastoral care at the school. Angus Gent, Housemaster, told *Varsity* that the man in question “was in fact a guest of a female staff member”. But parents

have not been told how or why he was able to gain access to the private area. One parent admitted, “I am worried by [the incident]; all parents have the right to expect that their child will be safe in their school environment.” But Gent maintained that, “Security at the accommodation used by the boarding pupils makes it impossible for an outsider to gain admittance”.

The independent preparatory school, situated on West Road, is famous for its Choir: they perform each Christmas in King's College Chapel and their recordings are sold worldwide. Fees start at £15,000 a year for the 300 boys and girls aged between four and thirteen who attend the school.

Their website states that King's College School “has a duty of care towards each pupil while they are in attendance at school. The happiness, safety and security of each is a matter of paramount concern”.


King's College School

JOE GOSDEN



The Maypole

Online Romeo seeks Pretty-in-Pink

On Wednesday, a Cambridge Flyer was spotted on Facebook, addressed to a girl in “pink earmuffs” whom the amorous author had seen at the Maypole. It proclaimed that he wished to have the pleasure of taking the lucky lady out for a drink. When our spy called the number left on the flyer offering to help, the anonymous admirer signed his response Henry Hamilton Stubber of Downing College. But an e-mail to Stubber led only to confusion, and the discovery that he knew nothing about the matter. Someone's been playing cupid...

Sidney Sussex

Fresher stops out

One fresher had an eventful trip to Old Orleans in Millers Yard, drinking so much that she passed out on the toilet floor. She lay there undiscovered until 4am, when she finally woke up. Finding herself locked in, she was forced to climb out of a window, setting off the burglar alarm in the process. She didn't wait around for the police to arrive, instead quickly stumbling home.

The Union

Shut Up and Get Trolleyed

An unfortunate reveller was spied last Friday in a compromising position on the back of an ADC trolley. The happy-snapper had been previously spotted with his head examining the inside of a cardboard box in the Union lobby at the Shut Up and Dance club night. But this seemed forgotten as he was wheeled home down Trinity Street, projectile-vomiting as he went. For the carers of the sickly soul, the highlight of the evening was yet to come. On arrival at Queens', our spy reported seeing the individual being given a fireman's lift up four flights of stairs, providing his chivalrous carrier with more of the same content left behind in the cardboard box. Lovely.

Emmanuel

Student accused of dealing drugs

Last Sunday, a third year was accused by an Emmanuel College porter of dealing in illegal substances. Feeling wholly bemused, the student went out, expecting to return to find himself in vast amounts of trouble. But after a much needed night's sleep, the porter seemed to get over his suspicions, and let the issue drop.

Botanic Gardens: an apple a day



Lord Derby stands to attention at roll-call during the tenth annual Apple Day, held at the Cambridge University Botanic Gardens last Sunday, October 22.



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Latest Oxford Protest

EMILY GOSDEN

Oxford animal rights activists this week staged their first major demonstration since being served a High Court injunction limiting their right to protest. Over 600 marched on Saturday but key figures including Speak leader Mel Broughton were banned from attending.

In a change from previous demonstrations Speak did not rally on Broad Street, instead marching along George Street, where they remained silent in memory of a monkey called George who they allege was blinded by Oxford researchers.

Speaking before the march André Menache, a Scientific Consultant to

Animal Aid, told the assembled crowd "Think critically and analytically...and just as important question, question, question, what you are being told".

A heavy police presence supervised the event but there were no reported troubles. Five people were arrested at a similar demonstration in January.

Oxford University won a High Court injunction in May banning animal rights activists from demonstrating within 100 yards of all student residences and thereby outlawing spontaneous protest from most of the city centre. Speak gained special police permission to hold their demonstration this weekend, which attracted protestors from across the country.

Mel Broughton and 18 other protestors were subsequently banned from

taking part in Speak demonstrations in Oxford city centre, as part of their bail conditions following an incident at the Sheldonian Theatre in June.

Speaking after the injunction was passed Robin Webb, a spokesperson for the illegal Animal Liberation Front, warned, "when lawful protest has been curbed in the past, it has driven people to unlawful methods of protest".

The group has since claimed responsibility for a number of acts of vandalism on properties it alleges to be linked to the animal laboratory. There have not been any direct attacks on the University since college boathouses were burnt down in an arson attack in summer 2005.

Meanwhile members of Pro-Test, the campaign group which supports the animal laboratory, are petitioning students in an attempt to bring an OUSU referendum in favour of vivisection. Student opinion at Oxford has consistently supported the lab, with over 80 per cent telling *Cherwell* they supported animal testing in a poll last year.

Pro-Test, which caused a national media sensation after it was founded by schoolboy Laurie Pycroft earlier this year, held two major demonstrations attracting up to 800 people. However the future of the group was called into question recently after rumours of a split were reported. Pro-Test members denied the claims, but said they were not currently planning any more demonstrations.


Mel Broughton of Speak leads the protest
THE OXFORD STUDENT

ARU students top literary talent in Eastern England

EMILY MINETT

Two members of Anglia Ruskin University, Verity Holloway and


Holloway and Forshaw
ARU

Judy Forshaw, have been selected to participate in Escalator 2006, an Arts Council Talent Plan. Holloway, a student, and Forshaw, a lecturer, will join "the best artistic talent from the East of England" in a scheme that aims to develop their careers on both the national and international stage.

Named among the East's top ten literary talents, Holloway and Forshaw will be mentored by one of the 2006 judges and will attend professional workshops. The programme, which includes financial support from the Arts Council, will culminate in a public showcase of the nurtured talents in June 2007. The Talent Plan is administered by Norwich-based company New Writing Partnership. The board of judges remain confident that the scheme will "provide crucial careers development" for the writers and

"open up the public eye to fresh literary talent". Seven of last year's ten winners now have agents for their work.

Holloway, a third year studying for a BA in English Literature and Creative Writing, has previously had poems published, although her main interest lies in fiction, particularly in relation to themes of madness and reality. Holloway told *Varsity*, "the mentoring aspect is great", adding that her advice to aspiring writers would be to "write at every chance you have". Forshaw lectures in screenwriting and has contributed to television shows such as *Byker Grove* and *Eastenders*.

The Escalator Programme focuses on a range of art forms including dance, choreography, music and composition. The East of England is currently thought of as the leading region in the UK for artistic excellence.

Hawking divorces for the second time

»Ground-breaking theoretical physicist seeks end to eleven-year marriage

SIMON ALLEN

Stephen Hawking, Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, is to divorce his second wife, Eileen. Divorce papers have been filed in Cambridge County Court seeking to end the couples' eleven-year marriage. The reasons for the split remain shrouded in mystery.

Despite intense speculation, rumours of an affair have been labelled "libellous" by a source close to the family. Judith Croadsell, Hawking's University spokesperson, refused to comment on the divorce, preferring to focus on Hawking's current academic commitments which include a shortened version of his seminal work entitled *A Briefer History of Time*.

Hawking, born on January 8 1942, has been awarded twelve honorary degrees and a CBE, and has made headlines through his personal, as well as academic, life. In 1995 he divorced Jane Wilde, his first wife of twenty-six years, with whom he had three children. He then married his long-time nurse Eileen Mason. Both his wife and daughter have commented on the stresses associated with living with Hawking. In 2004 police investigated a suspected case of assault after Hawking was admitted to hospital suffering from pneumonia. No evidence was found to back the claims. Hawking, who requires 24-hour care, was alleged to have been physically and emotionally abused by his second wife, much to the distress of his first wife Jane, who issued a statement saying "the revelations have made me feel ill". Hawking vehemently denied that the allegations had any basis in fact.

Hawking remains one of Cambridge's best-known celebrities. The author of the best-selling *A Brief History of Time* he has even made a cameo appearance in *The Simpsons*'s.

He has held his Cambridge professorship the same post once held by Sir Isaac Newton, since 1979 and has written ground-breaking theories on black holes as well as the origins of the universe. He suffers from a rare form of motor neurone disease called Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), which has left him paralysed and unable to speak. He was diagnosed with the condition at the age of twenty-one, shortly before his first marriage, and told that he would be lucky to live more than two or three years. As the disease progressed, he lost the use of his arms, legs and voice, and now is almost completely paralysed. He converses and writes through an electronic voice computer, which was invented by his second wife's first husband. It is operated via an infra-red "blink switch" clipped onto his glasses. By scrunching up his right cheek, he is able to talk, compose speeches, research papers, browse the internet and send e-mails. The system also uses radio transmission to provide control over doors in his home and office.

His work in furthering awareness of his disease has added to his academic acclaim, leading to his being voted Greatest Disabled Person in a 2003 BBC poll.

Hawking: A History

- January 8 1942: Born in Oxford.
- 1963: Diagnosed with ALS. Gets engaged to Jane Wilde.
- 1979: Appointed Lucasian Professor of Mathematics.
- 1991: Divorces first wife Jane.
- 1995: Marries second wife Eileen.
- 2004: Police investigate a suspected assault.


Lucasian Professor of Mathematics Stephen Hawking

Cross Campus

The best of the rest from around the country

Sweeties for silent students

Lollipops are being handed out as part of a unique attempt to curb late night noise levels among students at Queen's College, Belfast. The student union hopes that the lollipops, given out to revellers leaving the student bar, will reduce the rowdy and drunken behaviour currently causing sleepless nights for local residents.

Insurrection at Student Direct

A campaign team at the Manchester newspaper *Student Direct* on Wednesday threatened editor Sajid Rafiq with a vote of no confidence in an attempt to force him out of the job. Accused of plagiarism and breach of contract, Rafiq has been given until Monday 6 November to make important changes to the newspaper.



Exeter Christians get new name

Students at the University of Exeter have voted in a referendum to change the name of their Christian Union to the Evangelical Christian Union. The Students' Guild of the university claimed that the former name was misleading, as it was not representative of the evangelical views of the society.

The complacent ladies of Oxford

Female students at Oxford have been criticised for being "too complacent" about the risks of night-time attacks. A survey in student newspaper *Cherwell* this week revealed that 53 per cent of female students did not feel vulnerable when out at night, compared to the national average of only 30 per cent.

News Feature

Sleeping rough: street life from the insider's perspective

» This week, *Varsity* went to meet some of the least-valued residents of Cambridge

JOHN WALKER &
GABRIEL BYNG

Hidden in alleyways, hostels and nightshelters, Cambridge's homeless regularly go unnoticed. But homelessness and its associated crimes is a growing problem in the city. This week, *Varsity* investigates how a large web of charities, councillors and students are setting out to solve it.

In the Council's last head count 22 people were found sleeping rough on the Cambridge streets, more than

Streetbite: a day out on the town

Earlier this week, *Varsity* joined Mark Power and Helen Sharpe of Streetbite, a University organisation that hands out food and hot drinks to homeless people in the city centre. It also organises the placing of boxes in Cambridge colleges at the end of term, to donate food to homeless hostels and shelters.

Mark and Helen both agreed that the realisation that the homeless are real people rather than simply annoyances or embarrassments was vital to improving matters. One homeless man explained, "lots of passers-by look at the ground, the trees; anything but me".

Streetbite find that vendors appreciate being given food as well as money, since an average day is often punctuated by long journeys to buy extra magazines. Mark also said "It would be interesting to see what the Council are doing to stop the beginning of homelessness in the first place".

double their target of ten, and six more than at the same point in 2005. But the headcounts are only completed every three months. Many homeless people *Varsity* spoke to thought the real number of rough sleepers could be as much as double this figure. Even the Council acknowledged "we still miss people".

In June of this year, the most recent month for which statistics were available, 153 people declared themselves homeless to the City Council. Currently around 110 people are housed in council-run accommodation around Cambridge, but the number of homeless people is difficult to quantify as a large proportion are not in the city long enough to be counted.

Inspector Chris Porter is the police officer tasked with addressing anti-social behaviour. He spoke out against making generalisations about homeless people and against criticising those who are employed in acceptable activities such as selling the *Big Issue* magazine. But he admitted "This problem has got bigger, certainly. We've had an influx of "Street Life" individuals, who may not be truly homeless but spend a lot of time on the streets doing activities we might find unacceptable, such as being drunk and disorderly... We're looking at about 50 problematic people last year and 100 now."

He also drew attention to the crime associated with the "Street Life" community. "The average drugs spend amongst those individuals who are drug-dependant is about £300 a week. This means that around £3,000 of property must be stolen, due to the conversion rates involved in selling stolen goods. Begging is quite lucrative for these individuals, as is burglary and shoplifting."

153

people declared themselves homeless in June

£300

a week: the average addict's drugs-spend

110

housed in council-run accommodation



A homeless person asleep under the building works on Trumpington

This is not a problem the Council are taking lightly. Ian Nimmo-Smith, the Liberal Democrat Leader of the Council, told *Varsity* that "it is at the forefront of our concerns, we've increased spending on the problem and we have developed services with partner agencies to address the particular needs of homeless people".

But Labour Councillor Ben Bradnack rejected this, saying "The City Council has not always offered a clear sense of policy direction".

He added, "It was central government which made resources available and gave clear policy direction to what up till then had been a hopelessly piecemeal activity by the City Council, which danced to the tune of the voluntary organisations who ran the show".

Nimmo-Smith described these accusations as "a generalised swipe at the council", claiming "some is inaccurate, for example we've been praised by the audit commission on the quantity of affordable housing".

But Shelley Moram, former President of Streetbite, a University society that gives food to the homeless, was similarly critical of the Council. "They are really rubbish with dealing with homeless people.

We need more facilities, but there is a lot of local opposition from people who think that by providing facilities they will just attract more unsightly homeless people to Cambridge."

Yet some charities disagreed with Moram's claims. Lucine Harrison, Deputy Centre Manager of Winter Comfort for the Homeless told *Varsity*, "We speak to the Council a lot, they are fantastic, they paid for our kitchen to be refurbished so we can do nutrition exercises and they funded the winter care centre where the homeless can sleep if it gets too cold."

The 1996 Housing Act compels local councils to find accommodation for all "priority need cases", including the elderly, families with children, and pregnant women. But those judged "intentionally homeless" or without a local connection can struggle to get housed.

If temperatures fall below freezing, the only provision the Council must make for the homeless is accommodation. But Robert Young, the Council's Homelessness Monitoring Officer, defended the decision, telling *Varsity*, "the Government's advice was that this accommodation should only be provided when three consecutive

Varsity Asks



So how much of a an essay-blogger are you anyway?

- My account with Oxbridge Essays is £30k in the red.
- Well, I occasionally add a few lines to my Sparknotes printout for a conclusion.
- It's not plagiarising if you commit it to memory.
- I'm shocked you even thought I might borrow my facts.

» Poll results on page 29

Vote online at varsity.co.uk



Is there no end to the depravity in this parish? A well-known political butterfly was spotted hurrying at great speed towards John's this week. It transpired that she was attending a soirée held by a certain well-known John's alumnus for the purpose of arranging simultaneous polyamorous homosexual encounters. When asked what her function in such a delectable scene might be, she

replied that she would be passing round drinks, raising morale and, if required, giving the boys occasional stimulation with the benefit of her ample bosom. The Bishop shudders at the thought of the cleaning bills alone, and sincerely hopes that college funds will not be diverted from the needy.

It's a shame a certain other student hadn't heard about this party as it might have saved him a rather embarrassing brush with his college authorities. After having not been seen by his fellow students for two weeks, ear-busting strains of reggae were heard (and felt) emanating from his attic

bedroom. Fearing for his safety after he refused to answer the door, college authorities saw fit to break in. Whereupon they discover our friend, to the beat of *The Specials*, standing naked in front of a full-length mirror and in a state of stimulation, balm himself with a certain product otherwise used for cleaning surgical instruments.

And to those for whom these antics raise feelings of envy, get ye to King's as yet another couple has been caught behind the rare book stacks...

Send your confessions to thebishop@varsity.co.uk



Nelson

“I’ve been homeless for 6 months: I lost my job and my flat, and together with health problems I was pushed into homelessness. People are willing to help the homeless, but *Big Issue* vendors have got bad publicity recently. The worst thing about being homeless is the loneliness”



Michael*

“I was born in Cambridge and I’ve been homeless for the last 8 years. I find I get a mixed reaction from the public: people tend to be either really nice or blatantly obnoxious. I think the embarrassment for my family is the worst thing about being homeless”



*real name withheld

Nick

“I’ve been homeless for 2 years due to mental illness and other factors. The reaction from most is very good: most people are friendly. It’s really annoying to be waiting for a long time to hear about finding a hostel to stay in. This often takes a long time, especially for men”



Clive

“I’ve been homeless for five years. I moved to the city after my mother committed suicide when I was 28. I was very messed up in the head. After a year of homelessness I started selling the *Big Issue* outside Sainsbury’s. I’ve been threatened with being stabbed and punched”



Analysis: Cambridge and the melting ice shelf

REBECCA BIRrane

The Cambridge-based British Antarctic Survey (BAS) this week published a report that for the first time directly links the collapse of the Antarctic ice shelves with human agency.

The report ascribes the sudden collapse of the 3250km² Larsen B ice shelf in March 2002 to the strengthening of warm westerly winds, which melted the surface layer of ice, widening deep crevasses on the ice shelf, thereby increasing the likelihood of shattering and total collapse. The collapse of the 11,500 year-old Larsen B is attributed by the survey to “both ozone depletion [due to CFCs] and increasing greenhouse gases”.

Lead author of the report, Emmanuel alumnus Dr Gareth Marshall, emphasised how “inter-linked” the whole Earth system is, stressing “we can perturb it in one place and, due to some local amplifying effect, it can have a big impact somewhere else”. In his view, the BAS research provides a “physical mechanism linking human activity to the Larsen collapse” rather than relying on vague ideas of the effects of “global warming”. But the report does not prove whether this is a “temporary phenomena or long-term change”.

It is estimated that at present 250km³ of the west Antarctic ice sheet is disappearing every year with serious consequences. The collapse of Larsen B alone, according to the report, resulted in the velocity of the surrounding glaciers increasing up to eight times, causing sea level rises. Melting on a larger scale would effectively raise sea levels by 2mm per year, a volume capable of flooding the world’s low-lying regions and submerging coastal areas, including London and Cambridge.

To date, no definitive governmental action has been taken on the subject of climate change. But the findings of this report comes in the context of the popularisation of green issues in both the politics of David Cameron and mounting media pressure. Whether these developments come to a voting representative, there are a number of possibilities for improving the system that will hopefully be discussed both openly and extensively during the next academic year.



The Larsen B ice shelf

BAS

MICHAEL DERRINGER

Street in the small hours of Wednesday 25 October

nights of temperature at or below freezing were expected. We have already gone beyond this to provide such accommodation when the temperature is expected to drop to freezing for a single night”.

Preventing homelessness is one of the council’s chief priorities. Simon

“passers-by look at the ground, the trees, anything but me”

Scott Bailey, Shelter’s regional representative in the East, noted “there’s a whole range of reasons why people become homeless, but affordability is a key problem. The East is seeing less houses being built than ever since the war. Nationally we create 30,000 more households than homes each year”.

The City Council’s Homelessness Review in 2003 recorded that the main reasons for loss of accommodation included leaving parents (21 per cent), leaving relatives or friends (17 per cent) and escaping from a violent partner (17 per cent).

Both charities and councillors suggested that one reason Cambridge seems to have a large homeless population is the high quality provision offered by charities and the council. Councillor Nimmo-Smith commented, “Our critics say we are too welcoming”.

A student volunteer added, “It is a relatively safe place to be homeless, small enough that homeless people can find each other and stick together... the wealth and education of people in Cambridge, alongside the thriving tourist industry, means that homeless people may think they are more likely to get assistance”.

Hunt, the Principle Housing Aid Officer, told *Varsity*, “We’ve been working hard to prevent people becoming homeless. We work with the Cambridge Mediation Service to prevent family disputes, we make more use of private landlords by offering them incentives to rent out, we’ve introduced security measures into private homes to prevent domestic violence”.

Got a story?
email news@varsity.co.uk

VARSLITY

A Bid for Education

We have learnt this week of the alarming effect top-up fees have had on undergraduate admissions. These results, it seems, were as predictable as the Cambridge winter weather which draws in, vindicating the doom-mongers and causing CUSU and the NUS to join in self-congratulatory hand-rubbing. This week's failed deflated protest is thus almost satisfying. It is easy to point out the detrimental effect of the new price of a degree, but only if you can put a price on a degree at all.

Why do we insist on economically appraising something that is surely the way to a good career, the key to the professional lives we wish to lead? If an undergraduate degree is such a vital acquisition, why do we mark an auction price above which we will not pay? Surely, we either accept that a degree is the commodity for a decent working life, and one which will therefore pay multiple dividends in the long term, or we can decide that the Higher Education route is not the best bargain.

Three weeks ago *Varsity* reported on the inaugural speech made by University Vice-Chancellor Alison Richard, in which she called for a reaffirmation of the "importance of education" within the university – but what does this mean? If education itself is given the emphasis it deserves, surely top-up fees, so long as they are at a financially viable rate for those paying them, should not be considered by students themselves such a barrier to obtaining it? If the product itself is something worth buying, we can shop away.

This week's survey into essay bluffing itself points to the flaw in the diamond: that academics and students alike can become more concerned about facts on paper than the intellectual sculpting of our minds. We can end up reciting, parrot-fashion, facts that can be easily obtained from Wikipedia – and why shouldn't we? We all know students get away with it, and surely being deft with the tools available to us is as important a skill as having all the answers? That is, if a degree is just a game we play.

The undergraduate degree needs to be reassessed and revalued; we need to reform ways of testing knowledge and ability. In talking to *Varsity* this week, Boris Johnson mused that exams "create that genuine moment of intellectual excitement", reminiscing that use of the internet to write essays was "unheard of in my day". We could draw excessive attention to the generation gap between ourselves and the Conservative shadow minister, but should instead surmise that times have changed. The solution does not lie in exams that simply draw from our carefully-crammed short-term memories facts which will carefully be washed away by our first post-exam celebratory drinks. Is a certificate our only souvenir?

Top-up fees are here for long enough at least that we must learn to live with them, and they are non-negotiable for the 3,000-or-so students who began their degrees at Cambridge this year, as well as those who will join in the future. So perhaps now we've made our protest, both the University and ourselves need to get on with creating an undergraduate education that, at a price of £30 or £3,000 would be cheap at twice the price, instead of a purchase that leaves us wishing we'd kept the receipt.

VARSLITY *The Independent Cambridge Student Newspaper since 1947*

Varsity has been Cambridge's independent student newspaper since 1947, and distributes 10,000 free copies to every Cambridge college and ARU weekly. *Varsity* is proud to be the holder of numerous student media awards and a vast number of alumni now working in international media. *Varsity* also publishes *BlueSci* magazine, *The Mags*, and an online edition at www.varsity.co.uk.

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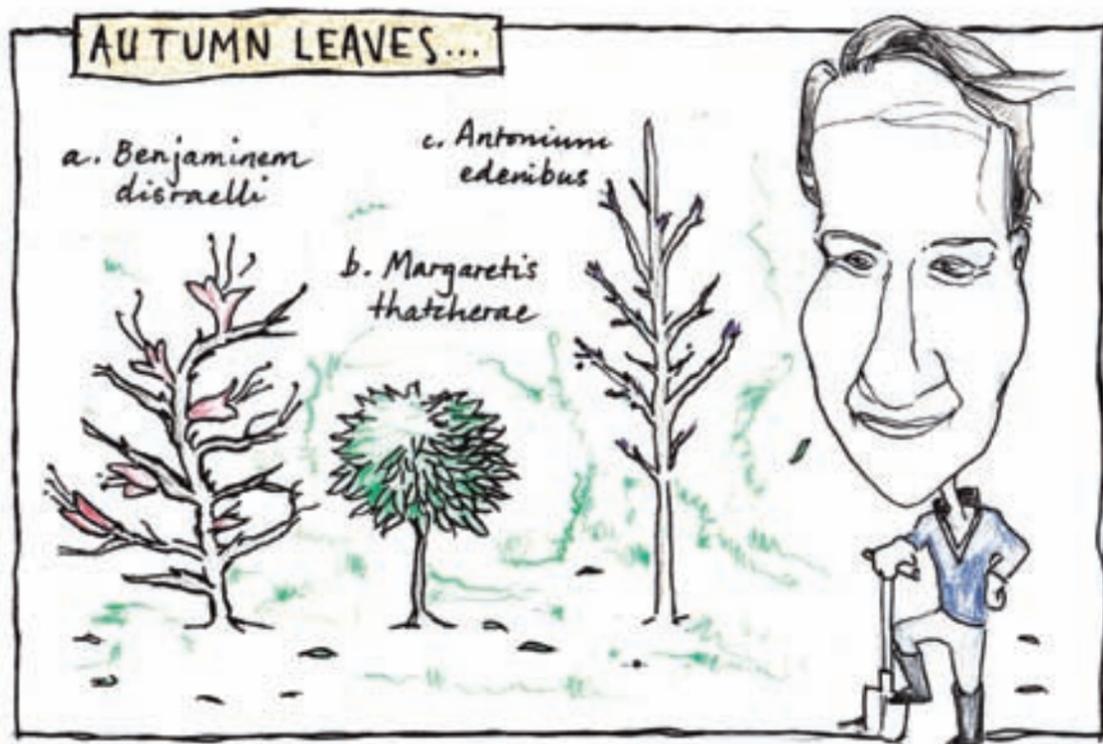


ILLUSTRATION: JULES HUNT



Henry Cook

Conservatives with crunch Conservation and Conservatism coexist in harmony

Right kids, prepare to be shocked. Conservatives conserve, and that includes the planet. A controversial, nay, downright outrageous claim, I hear you scream. Cameron is a liar, a fraud, a spinster (or should that be spinner? Images of David Cameron spinning wool into cloth appear...) He doesn't care about the environment - he's a Tory!

Hush now. I wish to tentatively suggest there exists a narrative of environmentalism in the long history of the Conservative Party. My tale of 'crunchy' Conservatism begins with Edmund Burke – the original (though not the best IMHO) Conservative. He grandly declared that the vast sweep of history is "a pact between the dead, the living and the yet unborn." For Conservatives, the concept of leaving something behind for posterity which is as good, if not better, than that which was inherited, is essential.

As far back as 1875, Conservatives were foremost among the nation's eco-warriors. Benjamin Disraeli, replete with green stockings and joints of finest wacky, put the Public Health Act on the statute books to reduce the environmental impact of the industrial revolution. Travel forward in your TARDIS to 1955, and you will find Anthony Eden (not, ahem, perhaps the shrewdest diplomat) who answered the cries of the nation with the Clean Air Act. Smogs were banished – but by Tories, not Greens.

Another fine crunchy Conservative was Ted Heath (if one can excuse the three-day week and, pardon my French, the European Community. Relax! I'm joking – you Guardian readers can be so tetchy!) In 1970 Britain had for the first time a 'Department for the Environment' and a member of Her Majesty's Privy Council responsible for Environmental matters. This was in fact no joke, and up the political salience ladder went our great planet.

We move swiftly on to that most uncontroversial politician, that bringer of harmony, that queen of consensus. Try this quick quiz: Question 1 – Who was the first world leader to stand up and confront the international community with the fact that climate change was a real threat? Question 2 – Which one of (a) Tony Blair or (b) Margaret Thatcher

"Benjamin Disraeli, replete with green stockings and joints of finest wacky, put the Public Health Act on the statute books to reduce the environmental impact of the industrial revolution"

said to a United Nations general assembly unwilling to hear hard truths that "it is mankind and his activities, which are changing the environment of our planet in damaging and dangerous ways"? Question 3 – Which Prime Minister gave £2 billion to a programme reducing acid rain from the UK's power stations? Here's a clue – the answer is the same to all three, and she inspired lots of riots.

With Mrs T, there was a funny combination of seeming to ignore the

environment come election time, whilst actually doing quite a lot in government behind closed doors. She walked the walk, but didn't talk the talk, if you like. The Food and Environment Protection Act 1985, and the Environmental Protection Act 1990 both contained hugely significant provisions for protecting the environment. These included: statutory powers given to the Environment Secretary to control pesticides and the deposit of pollutants in the sea, the criminalizing of litter-dropping in public spaces, powers given to local authorities to control air pollution and the tightening of the Radioactive Substances Act. In addition, under Maggie there was a 50% rise in tree planting in the UK, tax incentives leading to the decline of 4-star petrol, and the donation of hundreds of millions of pounds to international schemes to preserve tropical rainforests.

John Major introduced the Environment Act 1995. Michael Howard, as Environment Secretary, persuaded George Bush Senior to sign up to the Climate Change Convention, forerunner to Kyoto. Carbon emissions were falling when Labour came to power. Alas, this is no longer true. If we want to find evidence of crunchy Conservatism today, it's there. Did you know that four out of the top five councils for recycling are Conservative? Interesting little gem of information, isn't it?

While many are surprised by David Cameron's green agenda, there is no logical or ideological reason to suggest that a concern for the environment is somehow irreconcilable with the Conservative tradition. Of course, there are different ways of tackling the problem – one can opt for the collectivist, control-based programme of the Green Party, or the Conservatives' economically liberal approach, rich in incentives. Either way, the aim is the same: to conserve the planet for those 'yet unborn'.

So I think you'll agree, Dave 'webcameron' really can save the world with a wind turbine and a cute husky.



**Georgianna
Vaughan**

Creepy Cambridge

This Halloween, be sure to keep your wits about you

Ostensibly, Cambridge could be placed amongst the finest locations for Halloween. Misty mornings, howling winds, stones that echo when you're sure there's no one around and gothic spires, you couldn't design a Hollywood film set better. Sadly, this wealth of visual effects pales when compared to an infinitely more terrifying spectre that haunts Cambridge, the student body.

For all that we're warm and cuddly, easy to get on with, etc. etc. there are haunting resemblances between some Cambridge students and the stuff of your worst nightmares. We've all witnessed certain students sweep a little too eagerly into the role of drooling vampire. Still on a haemoglobin high from Freshers' week, they pounce on the opportunity to prowl the college bars in disguise, desperately seeking new blood. Beware, they will probably be ADD afflicted, or have such a bad track record that their only chance of redemption lies in the anonymity of a good costume.

Slightly less repulsive, though potentially just as terrifying, are the werewolves. Loud, brash and only too ready to announce themselves, they like to hunt in packs and are otherwise known as male drinking societies. Fortunately you don't need a full moon to spot these ones as, more often than not, they miss the point of Halloween. Of

course, for yet another fancy dress party how could the customary board shorts and a Hoola garland not be a suitable outfit? 'Standard mate!' Forget Macbeth and Cauldrons, I for one know several people whose idea of a magical ritual is the annual piss against Kings College Wall. (I'm not wishing to offend any King's members here but if you didn't already know about this, wise up).

Perhaps we might fare better with the University student ghosts - of whom we have a plentiful supply. Sadly our phantom friends are so rarely seen, they're much more likely to flee from the prospect of human interaction than they are to excite alarm in anyone, except perhaps the after-hours library staff. Although, if the wolves prove a little visually disappointing the university ghosts, however, are spectacular. Who needs white make up with skin that's been deprived of years of daylight through its self-inflicted burial in the bookcases in of Cambridge?

As if this ghoulish line up weren't enough, how could we forget the witches? So, Roald Dahl taught us the easy way to avoid witches is to steer clear of people wearing gloves. The only problem is that, given the climate in which we've all foolishly elected to live, come November you can't leave the house without every inch of skin covered up. I for one would be more inclined to suspect students

who can walk around bare-handed.

So Perhaps then, we could substitute the gloves for another warning? That exaggerated flick of the hair, that secret signal from the darker corners of Cindies, the green light to "accidentally" send

“Loud, brash and only too ready to announce themselves, they hunt in packs and are otherwise known as boys in drinking societies”

that cocky new girl crashing to the floor with one casual slip of a vicious looking stiletto. These days burning them at the stake might, unfortunately, be a little frowned upon.

Amazingly, this fiendish array does not account for everybody. The politically correct amongst us couldn't possibly engage in wilfully

scaring people let alone risk offending vegetarians by intimating that the pumpkin is in any way threatening. As for goblins, discrimination against short people is a definite no, and don't even go there with the religious implications of celebrating an essentially pagan festival.

For these students with a conscience, the prospect of complimenting the outfit of someone, who is not in fact in fancy dress, makes the minefield of Halloween costumes more petrifying than the evening itself. Clearly we'd all be much safer if we stayed at home. If it's true piety you're looking for, try the students with the scary superiority complex. "Of course, I'd love to partake in the Halloween party but sadly my numerous obligations as president of the College Darts Team, leave me no time."

And if you get very lucky, you might be treated to a special All Hallows sermon on the grave dangers of commercialism, or the oh so childish nature of your contemporaries who actually still think dressing up is fun. Eek.

With so many horrors surrounding us in Cambridge, how can we have any hope of surviving this Halloween? I'm not sure but I will say this: if a black cat crosses your path you'll probably survive but I'd run a mile from the drunken Morticia who lurches towards you in the pub and seductively slurs "Trick or treat?"

**Ethics
Girl**

Grave issues



Last week, very sadly, Charlie, a lovely man who has helped my granny for years with her garden, passed away. However, he had a good life and was surrounded by family when he died. His funeral was set for Friday at 2pm. Unfortunately for my granny, she had taken her dentures to be altered (ahem) two days earlier and was not due to collect them until Friday at 5pm.

"You cannot go to the funeral without any teeth" shrieked mum down the phone. "Yesh I know but ish not like I've got much choyshe" replied granny. Oh dear.

With all respect to Charlie and my granny, this is amusing. Luckily, nanny found her previous dentures and wore them, even though they don't fit too well now. She avoided the buffet and spoke infrequently.

Death. It is a truth universally acknowledged that we're all going to die. This may not sound very jolly. It's not. In fact, it's pretty grave.

But, there is a bright side. For those who enjoy making lists, death provides an opportunity for the ultimate list: the funeral. This includes everything from the music you want played as you are lowered into the ground - "Never Let Me Down" by Bowie? - to the guests you (don't) want invited.

For the fashionistas out there, take note; since we cannot know when we will die, stipulating what you'd like to wear entre-coffin is risky. Just think of the embarrassment of requesting to wear flares only to die ten years after the sixties, or to request a fringe-bob only to depart this world once you've hit Tatler's 'What's Not' list. Nightmare.

The green-minded amongst us are playing their part. Not satisfied with finding ways to make our lives more ethical, we've moved onto our deaths. And quite right. The 450,000-plus wooden coffins annually cremated release poisonous gasses and contribute to climate change through carbon dioxide emissions.

Eco-coffins, such as willow pods, are now easily available, fully biodegradable and much cheaper than traditional coffins. Moreover, they meet the regulations stipulated for woodland burials, allowing much greater undertaking (excuse the pun) of individualised DIY burials. Before you get your spades out, there are still limitations...

In the fifties, the top TV game-show was Take Your Pick, hosted by Michael Miles. He bid against contestants for the unseen contents of various boxes, containing anything from foreign holidays to toothbrushes. As he did so, the studio audience shouted "Take the Money!" or "Open the Box!"

Miles died in 1971. Legend has it that when his coffin was carried into the church, the congregation, as one, shouted "Open the Box!" That's certainly one way to go.

The ethical way? Let's wake (not literally) up to sort how we're going to go down. I will, so make your will, and make sure you will too.

Tess Riley



**Ruth
Wallace**

Asnacs are people too

Medievalists, mystics and mead

Asnacs (those reading Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic if you're unfamiliar) are scattered across Cambridge like random Greek letter-forms in early Irish manuscripts - a bit out of place, hardly understood, and ever so slightly twisted. Let's face it, the subject is weird. It's easy to imagine Asnacs as Tolkien fanatics, too helpless even to make it into the Tolkien Society and too geeky to be allowed to live in the real world.

Well, it's true that the number of freshers rose quite a bit after the Lord of the Rings film trilogy was released - although that's a fact we try to ignore - but there have been Asnacs in Cambridge for fifty years or so. Surely there must have been some in that time who only valued Tolkien for his revolutionary article on Beowulf? What are real Asnacs like? Did they ever wear horned helmets? And is 'asnac' really the language Aslan speaks?

If you want to catch an Asnac, the best place to go is the common room, on the second floor of the newish English faculty building (the Salmon of Wisdom, on the Sidgwick site). Here, beneath the posters of Anglo-Saxon art and the

paper strip of the Bayeux Tapestry, watched over by a plastic Viking with his pink parasol, are as friendly a group of nutters as you'll find anywhere in Cambridge. You'll only find them in Cambridge. Fellows and lecturers wander in

evenings more or less the whole department moves to the top floor of the Castle, coming and going, singing and passing round drinking horns.

The question Asnacs hear most often is about the nature of the



and out of the room, chatting to undergrads and fighting over the biscuit tin.

It's a universe of in-jokes about the death of Bede, a place where the world ends in 1066. On Friday

course: what exactly do you study? It's easy to get the impression that the questioner resents you for working at something that sounds both pointless and, heaven forbid, actually quite fun. Or possibly they



» A post from Paris



Alicia Spencer-Joynes

Apparently, us English have no future. Grammatically speaking, of course. Our attitude towards grammar is at best misguided, at worst irrational. No Academie Française? That explains the grammatical carnage! The English are "quite nice but fundamentally inept, not to be trusted with anything important, like language". Such were the cultural revelations of my first English grammar lecture.

Though I'm not entirely sure I agree with the above, being forced to view one's own culture from a foreign perspective is fascinating, galling. It's not just grammar the French object to. British trains are incapable of running on time, we're rubbish at football and can't make a decent bottle of wine, let alone a decent loaf of bread, for all the tea in China. Good point, well made.

However, the most interesting thing has been viewing Cambridge from "the outside." In many ways, the stereotypically English traits; politeness, eccentricity, death before dishonour, are those of Cambridge University, even if the dishonour is purely academic. As a Cambridge student, am I fundamentally culturally different, even to other English students? Take the "Iliad Incident", for example. Picture the scene: a packed amphitheatre, banks of disinterested students. The hair-styles say it all: dreads, afros, mullet, even a spectacular beehive.

The lecturer breaks his two hour rant about mythology to announce sternly: "and the Iliad, you must read the Iliad, all of it, by next week".

There is a stunned silence. Thirty seconds later, a French student shouts at our esteemed lecturer "to fuck right off". This sentiment is echoed by all of the students. Except for the cohort of eager Cantabrigians: "a week, not bad at all to read a book we don't even have to write an essay on. In fact, that's pretty damn good."

I am even more confused when the lecturer grins at his fractious audience "I'm kidding, read a page or two to get the idea, oui...?". No one gets thrown out for ribald behaviour, no one calls the proctors, life just goes on. The world keeps turning, the Eiffel tower is still standing, and French trains remain reliably early. Is it a matter of being in France, or just being away from Cambridge, anywhere in the world?

Granted, France is very different to England. But Cambridge is ethically, if not geographically, miles away from most other educational institutions. I guess we all knew that, but it's a shock to the system when it's brought home.

» Letter of the week

"Why can't Girton College make proper, sensible safe arrangements for their students?"

Dear Sir,

I am writing to express my derision at the current situation regarding transport for students travelling to and from Girton College.

I myself am currently studying in a central Cambridge college but I have close friends studying at Girton as freshers who face an unnecessary and in my opinion unacceptable situation which is the source of endless stress and problems for students there.

The difficulties and dangers faced by students returning to Girton at night is of particular concern to me. This evening I attended a society meeting in central Cambridge with a friend from Girton. The meeting went on until around 21:30, and afterwards

I walked to Bridge Street bus-stop with my friend where we waited for 20 minutes on the 21:48 bus. It never came, so my friend suggested walking to the bus station. When we arrived, the bus station was in darkness (to the extent that it was impossible to read the timetables which even by day require considerable brainpower to decode) and there was virtually noone around.

It occurred to me that if I hadn't offered to walk my friend - a young female fresher - to the bus, she would have found herself standing alone, out in the cold, with no way of discerning when the next bus (if any) was coming and - except for the police who were questioning some drunken youths across the courtyard

- nobody to render any assistance. Not exactly a pleasant situation for anybody to find themselves in, let alone an 18-year-old fresher in an unfamiliar city with no clue how she is going to get home.

Within two weeks, at least three Cambridge students have been assaulted walking home at night. A Girton student was killed last year in a road traffic accident whilst cycling, so why can't the college make proper, sensible, safe arrangements for their students to travel to and from central Cambridge? Here's an idea - why doesn't the College pay for a shuttle bus service (which runs later than the last bus at a pathetic 22:48)?

I feel this is something which needs to be drawn to students' attention

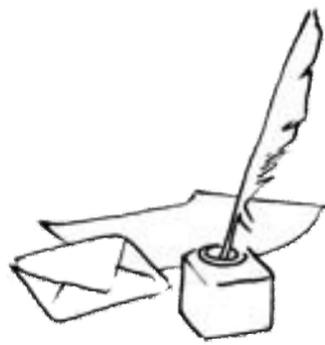
before we have another serious assault, or worse.

Yours faithfully,
Nick McCarthy
Corpus Christi

Tell Varsity what's on your mind - each week, the best letter will win a specially selected bottle of wine from our friends at Cambridge Wine Merchants, King's Parade



» And the rest...



Dear Sir,

I thought that Dr Ruehl's contribution to last week's Cambridge Crisis column was absolutely fantastic. It was really refreshing to come across relationship advice peppered with literary references and German proverbs. Dr Ruehl's clear and concise counsel was better than that of

the two other pundits put together. May I suggest that *Varsity* offers Dr Ruehl a more permanent fixture as resident agony aunt in its pages?

I did have just one criticism: perhaps the romantic German needs to be a little more culturally sensitive. He did make some rather unfounded comments about Yorkshire men with comb-overs (there is no mention whatsoever of where Charlotte's boyfriend comes from in her letter). I would have thought that deciding which way to comb his luscious locks is more of a dilemma that Dr Ruehl himself suffers from? Although for someone with Dr Ruehl's aesthetic attributes, it's surely a no-brainer.

Yours Sincerely,
A.N. Other
(address withheld)

Dear Sir

I would like to congratulate and

thank Ms Haigh for her article in *Varsity News* (13.10.06) regarding the discrepancies in rents paid by New Hall, Churchill and Fitzwilliam colleges, compared to those paid by Trinity Hall students ("New Hall rents 'unacceptable'", page 6).

It was only, in great part, as a result of the issues highlighted in this article, that students from the aforementioned three colleges were made aware of the discrepancy, and indeed, it was only thanks to this article that we were able to ask about possible 'compensation in the form of a discount on rent', which was being made available to TH students to reflect the inconvenience suffered from having to live on a building site. I was particularly shocked to be living in such conditions, as I was not told I would be living on a building site until the actual day of the move!

In line with the TH students, and I

believe, only as a result of the published article, we have now been offered a 10% discount on rent for this term. For many, this is not much recompense considering there have been several serious incidents, including a toilet overflowing with kitchen waste and problems arising from not being able to use a convenient coded gate (so having to walk 10-15 minutes through unlit muddy fields and paths to get out of the complex), but it is better than nothing.

Yours sincerely
Anon

Dear Sir,

I am an avid reader of *Varsity*, and have noted with appreciation its homage to the *Guardian*. but one thing is missing: where are the wallcharts?

Yours hopefully,
Jeremiah Scrote
Homerton

Way Back When: Varsity Archives

» February 10th, 1981: Queens' Fee - Charging tourists admission to colleges commences



Queens' College has announced that, as from April 2, it is to charge tourists an admission fee of 20p. It will be the first Cambridge College ever to impose such a charge.

The scheme is being implemented to curb the enormous number of visitors that the College receives each year, estimated to be between seventy- and eighty- thousand. However, students and City residents will continue to be admitted free, on production of documentary evidence of their address. In order that students may enter the College without being stopped, tourists will be directed to the College gate in Queens' Lane and restricted to that entrance. Anyone may enter freely via the other gates, and Dr R. D. H. Walker, Junior Bursar, therefore agreed that the scheme could only operate with "a certain element of trust". Mr Scarr said that students entering from Queens' Lane would

be liable to be checked, but he thought that porters could recognise students anyway and would not have to stop them. There are no plans for a turnstile as yet.

A window will be set up in the present Porters' Lodge for the issuing of tickets, and tourists will be given a map of the College, a suggested walking route and notes on the College's history.

Some porters are in favour of the idea, however, as they feel it will restrict the number of "slovenly" tourists passing through the College. "Foreigners and London school-kids are the worst", said one. "They trample on the grass, enter the kitchens, loiter, and make a nuisance of themselves."

Questioned as to the use to which the admission fees would be put, Dr Walker said that he expected very little profit, and in fact the aim was to break even. Any surplus would be spent on keeping the College in good condition. £10,000 was spent a few years ago on repairing the Mathematical Bridge and the

Backs, after cumulative damage caused by the steady flow of visitors.

After the precedent of charging admission set by Christ Church College, Oxford, plans to restrict visiting to Colleges in Cambridge were discussed at a University level by a sub-committee of the Bursars' Committee. Queens' was the only College to decide to charge for entry because it felt it was the worst hit. It is one of the most cramped Colleges in Cambridge and suffers doubly because it is right next to one of the favourite parking places of tourist-coach drivers, in Silver Street.

A statement by Queens' College Council said that over the years "the College has become increasingly aware of disturbance to its work and its life as an academic community from the great number of visitors who are mostly tourists. Consequently, the Governing Body has decided that to protect the purpose and the academic life of the College, it must restrict visitors."

Features & Arts

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Cultural

In CUSU Anti-Racism Week, and following the leaked governmental report that supposedly advises universities to keep tabs on Muslim students, **Sarah Wilkinson** examines the state of modern multicultural society



Jack Straw's recent remarks on the potential barriers created by Muslim women wearing the veil have caused an inevitable backlash from some in the Muslim community, but the number of supporters backing his comments suggests that this is a debate that will not die down any time soon. As the response to last week's leaked document from the DfES (supposedly proposing the monitoring of university Islamic societies in order to stamp out extremism on Campus) has shown, government involvement in issues of race and religion must be sensitively carried out.

Before this leak occurred, there had been a steady filter of ministerial statements over the past few months feeding into the debate. Phil Woolas, the Race Relations Minister, sparked controversy when he intervened in the case of a female Muslim teaching assistant in Wales who refused to remove the veil before her male colleagues despite having failed to wear the veil in her interview. He demanded that she be sacked. Shadow home secretary David Davis recently averred, "there is a growing feeling that the Muslim community is excessively sensitive to criti-

cism, unwilling to engage in substantive debate" and asked whether "we are inadvertently encouraging a kind of voluntary apartheid". The latter remark encapsulates the concern residing at the heart of the issue. Has Britain's brand of multiculturalism created communities living "parallel lives" in segregated or ghettoized societies where people from different ethnic origins and cultural backgrounds live side by side yet never interact?

» Has Britain's brand of multiculturalism created communities living "parallel lives" in segregated or ghettoized societies?

Fundamentally, the notion of multiculturalism sounds positive. Encouraging people to respect diversity, to appreciate difference and treat each other's cultures as equal. But herein lies the problem: can all cultures necessarily be considered equal? If our

barometer of cultural value is a constitution or a set of laws, how should we respond when these rules are broken? For example, a conflict of moral interests arises when the activities of Islamic Fundamentalists clash violently with human rights and British laws. Killing legally innocent people in the name of religion may be acceptable to extremists, but to the majority of Britains, including most British Muslims, it is quite blatantly wrong. Respect for other cultures was obviously never intended to allow those with foreign origins to breach human rights and British laws on the pretext that their actions would be acceptable back at home, and yet this, for critics of British multiculturalism, is the direct result of our emphasis on diversity and the necessity to tolerate difference, and our compliance with Political Correctness. Michael Portillo is one such critic, stating recently, "The time for sophistry has passed. Our citizens and our society are under threat from those who believe that difference is a justification for terror and murder."

Acceptance of multiculturalism as "sophistry" is one thing. Making changes which will avoid stirring a

Above: Cambridge thespians line up during rehearsals for *In The Blood* by Suzi Lori-Parks, the ADC Main Show performed as part of events for Anti-Racism Week

Mix



counterproductive backlash from targeted cultures is quite another. Ruth Kelly has defended the proposals to oversee university Islamic societies claiming, "This is not about picking on individual students or even spying on them, it's about sensible monitoring of activities to make sure individual students on campuses are protected." And yet the Muslim communities, as represented by the head of the Muslim Council of Britain, Muhammad Abdul Bari, feel they are being "stigmatised" and even "demonised" in these attempts to stamp out terrorism. The lesson that seems to emerge from this response is that reforming Britain's brand of multiculturalism cannot be achieved by highlighting the differences that have been emphasized by cultural diversity; we must focus instead on what should have been the primary objective from the start: creating solidarity by stressing similarities. Multiculturalism may have failed as an ideal, but as an experiment its results have the potential to bring about a positive progression for the future of this country as a diverse, yet unified, intercultural nation.

VIEWPOINT

"Just as our reasonable desire to recognise diversity has sometimes ossified into a version of multiculturalism that preserves difference at the expense of equality, it may be that the necessary drive to stop offensive racial "jokes" and stereotyping is beginning to be warped into a stifling suppression of free expression."

Trevor Phillips

"We could have coped with the outrage (the 7/7 bombings) more easily had the murderers been foreigners, raised in squalor, brainwashed under a theocratic dictatorship and shipped here to massacre people for whom they had no kindred feelings."

Michael Portillo

"The fruits of 30 years of state endorsed multiculturalism have increased inter-racial tension and inter-racial sectarianism," the report said."

Patrick West in a report for right-wing publication *Civitas*.

Faith Relations

Tom Smith on the success of religious integration in Cambridge.

Once upon a time, men at Cambridge had to attend compulsory chapel five or more times a week. Things have certainly changed since then. There are no statistics kept on the religious persuasions of contemporary students, but you can find twenty-five religious societies in the CUSU directory, and it's hard to miss the posters all over town advertising talks, discussions and free lunches. Many college chapel services, on the other hand, are almost entirely empty.

There is, in fact, a whole world of religious activity that carries on almost unnoticed under the surface of everyday university life. The various societies hold talks and discussions, as well as dance lessons and garden parties; there are lunches and brunches and afternoon teas; the Jewish Society keep a drop-in centre above the Fudge Kitchen. There's even an inter-faith society, the Cambridge University Faiths Forum, whose aim is to foster communication and understanding between the various religions in Cambridge.

» Pluralism may be fun, but CICCUs are not really interested.

With all this mutual cooperation and chatting, is there any serious intolerance in Cambridge? Every so often you come across, say, a controversial journalistic piece, or a handwritten addition to a provocative poster. But is it any more widespread than that? I spoke to the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of several religious societies, and they all agreed: the University is, on the whole, a remarkably tolerant place, however the level of tolerance does depend to a certain extent on which religion we're talking about.

Alpa Shah, President of the Young Jains, has never had any problems. On the other hand, Umar Ahmad, Vice-President of the Islamic Society (ISoc), says he is aware of a certain level of background, public concern about Islam. World events have made it harder for those who adopt traditional Muslim dress to avoid being singled out at a time when intolerance, fear and a strongly nationalistic sense of what it means to be British have widened the cultural divide. There are occasional incidents of abuse towards Muslims from strangers on the Cambridge streets, but Umar is keen to stress that this is much rarer in Cambridge than elsewhere in the country.

Probably the people who face the most intolerance from within the University are those who are members of CICCUs (Christian Inter-Collegiate Christian Union). CICCUs are and have been for many

years by far the most prominent of the Cambridge religious societies, thanks to a persistent focus on Christian evangelism and (as they like to put it) "making Jesus Christ known to students in Cambridge". This has not often got them a good press, given their hardline position on other faiths and in particular on homosexuality. Pete Snow, the CICCUs Vice-President, points out that they're in a difficult position: there simply isn't a way to avoid the clash between a postmodern, multireligious society, and a belief that you're in possession of an absolute and vital truth. CICCUs is also notably absent from the inter-faith scene. They're not involved with the Inter-Faith Forum. According to Pete, they are "not a society that exists for its members" – which is to say, pluralism may be fun, but they're not really interested.

Interestingly, other religious societies don't seem bothered by CICCUs's pro-active approach. Debbie Danon, one of the Presidents of the Jewish Society, told me she empathises with their desire to share what they see as an "ultimate love", even if it forces them into uncomfortable situations – what Pete calls "social disgrace". But none of them seem to share that desire. ISoc, for instance, deliberately avoids any provocative, in-your-face marketing style.

The people who some find most difficult are the ardent atheists: those whose belief in the non-existence of any God is as absolute as anyone else's faith. On the other hand, some find it invigorating: "at least they've thought about it", says Pete. It seems pretty obvious that the problem with any sort of religious dogmatism, whether belief or unbelief, is that we just can't know. But there is a certain kind of atheist who, convinced of their rightness and of the idiocy of others, sniggers contemptuously at any manifestation of faith; or who tars all believers with one brush, extrapolating from extremists in Kashmir or Jerusalem to an entire religion, or even to all religions. Perhaps it's a symptom of the previously unexperienced freedom of expression available at university: a reaction against, say, a religious education or prescriptive family. Debbie told me that many freshers avoid JSoc at first for exactly this reason, feeling they've "grown out of it", only to come back in the second or third year.

It may come as little consolation to those atheists, or indeed to those who would like to see the chapels filled daily again, that none of these problems are new. There have been religions, sects, evangelists and unbelievers at the University for hundreds of years; that nothing has really changed is a testament to the strength of Cambridge tolerance.

Political Islam

In an illuminating essay, **Fatima Alam** discusses liberation theology, variations of belief and the political impetus of religion

Think Islam and the thought that might come to mind is of a religion left behind by modernity; a religion half of whose followers are oppressed – voiceless creatures hidden behind veils – while the other half is engaged in a constant battle against the modern, liberal, democratic west; a violent, oppressive religion, isolated from the outside world. Islam exists in many forms globally. There is Islamism (or fundamentalist Islam) where the past seems to have been rarefied to the point where it becomes beyond review or reinterpretation. Contemporary, fundamentalist interpretations of Islam are infallible. The past becomes monolithic, inaccessible to the people and not open to criticism. In fact, this kind of inflexible historiography means that

» Being “Muslim” certainly has certain spiritual and cultural connotations but it also underlines one’s own politics.

much can be understood about the power structures of the present from current representations of the past.

There is also the liberal Islam which draws from the liberal individualist rights discourse. It is at pains to establish that religious pluralism, equality, freedom of speech and expression and the right to personal liberty are all intrinsic, albeit suppressed, parts of Islam. However, what it lacks is a clear agenda of how individual rights can be balanced with group rights and socio-economic rights with civil and political rights.

How you view these different forms has to be influenced by an understanding of what religion means. Is it only a set of rituals or are there deeper principles of spirituality and politics that underpin it? Should it be relegated to the private sphere in favour of a secular public space? Liberation theology, introduced first by Gustavo Gutiérrez in the 1970s, serves to interpret religion from the point of view of the most marginalized in society. It allows an individual to read the text from their own specific context. Religion becomes as much about social and political justice as about personal salvation.

An interesting example of this is provided by Fatima Mernissi, a Moroccan scholar, who looks at various Islamic beliefs and Hadith (traditions relating to the words and deeds of Muhammad) to see how, when viewed from alternative perspectives, they sometimes pres-

ent two very different meanings; a popular meaning and a probable one.

She states that there is a well-developed scientific method that dictates the system for collection and recording of Hadith. One of them relates to tracing back the isnad (chain of transmission) to the Prophet’s time. Only if the isnad does not break, or if there isn’t a “weak link” – an untrustworthy source – is the Hadith considered authentic. The origins of a Hadith are usually traced back to Muhammed’s companions and then indirectly through history to those who heard it from them, who then passed it on to the next generation etc.

Having commented on the need to review the credibility of each “link”, she considers the following controversial

Hadith, a commonly accepted dictum in Morocco and certain other North African states: “Those who entrust their affairs to a woman will never know prosperity”.

This Hadith is supposed to have first been used in The Battle of the Camel, December 4, 656 AD, about 28 years after the Prophet’s death. This was at a time when the Prophet’s wife, A’isha, led a revolt against the then Caliph Ali. There was a situation of civil war – the prophet’s wife herself having risen in revolt against the Islamic Caliph of the time. Both parties were looking for support amongst the Prophet’s erstwhile companions and among the other influential men and women of Mecca. It was a difficult time for those who wanted to

Islam: subject to many internal variations in belief and scholarly debate.

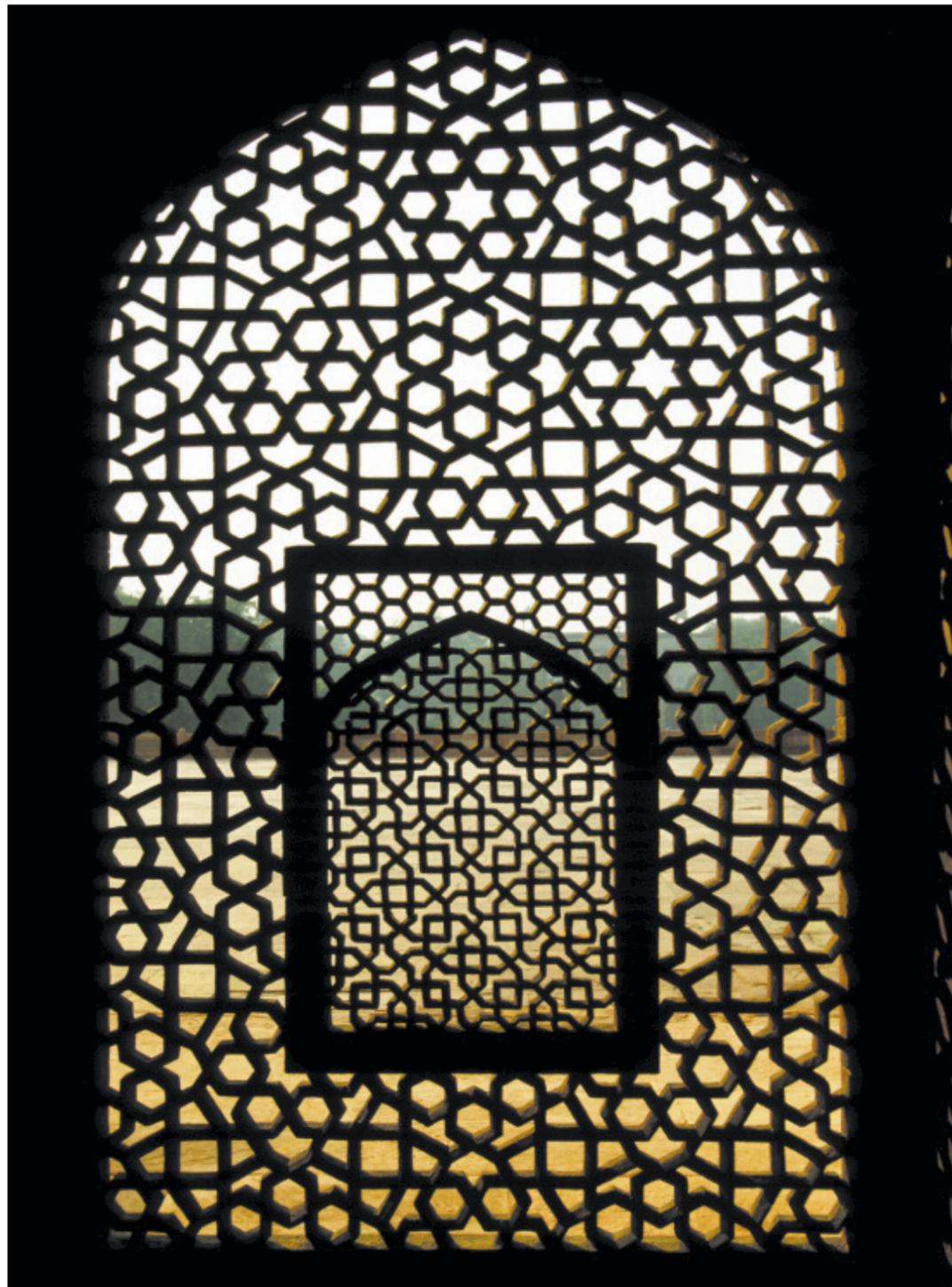
keep that influential position and yet had to pledge their support to either party, without being sure who would win.

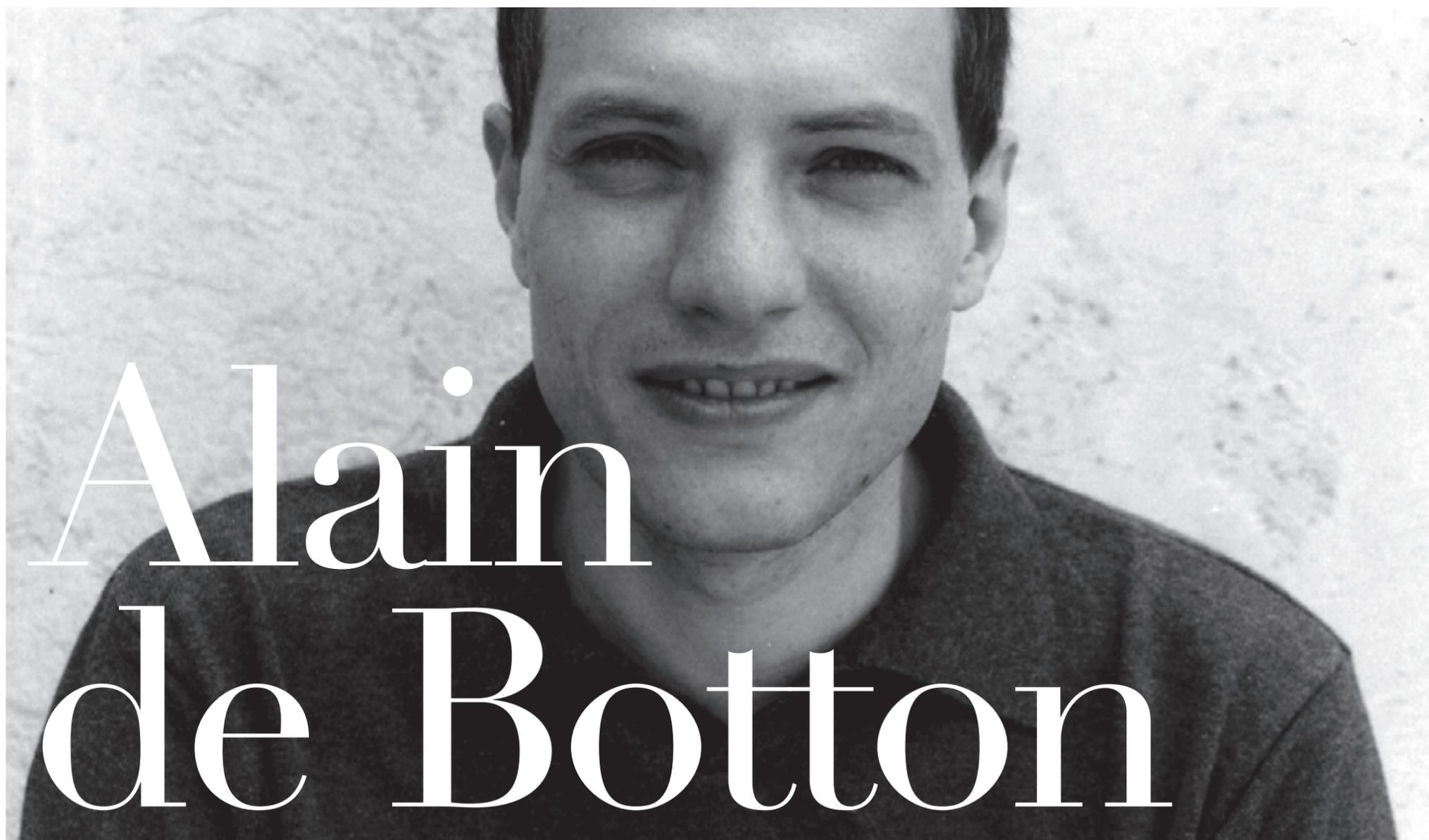
Abu Bakra had been the prophet’s companion. He was a former slave who had risen greatly socially and economically because of his conversion to Islam. A civil war therefore meant that his personal position was in great danger. He remained mostly non-committal through the war, but just after A’isha lost, he claimed to have suddenly remembered this Hadith that declared that “women should never be allowed to lead in matters pertaining to politics”.

I view these readings by Mernissi as that of someone who is seeking to interpret the text through her lived realities. She describes how, as a Moroccan woman, she has had to deal with such Hadith and thus the need for a gendered critique of its historical contexts. I feel that it was perhaps important for her to “reclaim” that piece of history rather than shift to a “secular space” where such histories become irrelevant.

In the event, since the tools of interpretation change from the usual ones – gender in Mernissi’s case, race and class in Farid Esack’s – the idea of being “Muslim” also changes. Being “Muslim” certainly has certain spiritual and cultural connotations but it also underlines one’s own politics. It has the potential to become an inclusive identity marker based on the commonalities of socio-economic realities rather than the differences of prayer practices. It is somewhat like a movement started in certain progressive and anti-racist circles in England and Ireland, in the seventies and eighties, claiming that the Irish were in fact “Black”. The movement was based on the theory that “being black” was not merely a skin description but a politics of solidarity, based on one’s experiences of marginalization. Farid Esack talks of the “South African expression of Islam”. As a religion that came to South Africa with the Malay slaves, Islam had different needs to fulfill here than from the empires. It became a religion of liberation, from all racial and economic exploitation. The mosque was often the centre of political mobilization (as it still is in Cape Town) and the Imam was not just a spiritual leader.

Religion is made an important space because of the great significance it has in the imaginations of people. If an engagement with it could change the way it reviews the text and the (historical) contexts, it will only be a good thing. It can then be “re-appropriated” by those to whom the present meanings make no sense for they disregard those on the margins.





Andy Wimbush meets the prolific thinker to talk about lust at university and his new book *The Architecture of Happiness*.

Alain de Botton is in the enviable position of being able to make a living by writing about whatever he feels like. So far, he has tackled everything from love, travel and anxieties to Proust and philosophy. "I don't find any difficulty in finding possible topics," he tells me. Inspiration for his latest book, *The Architecture of Happiness*, came quite simply from staring out of the window of his study in Kensington, over rows of terraced houses, car parks and tower blocks, towards Shepherd's Bush.

"The view is a mixture of some pretty terrible things really. If you live in London, you very quickly become aware that lots of things have gone really wrong when it comes to architecture. I just wanted to ask three very basic questions: what happens when it goes right, what happens when it goes wrong and what exactly is a beautiful building?"

De Botton was born in Zurich, where he lived until he was twelve. "Switzerland," he says, "is the home of Modernism. It's one of the places where modern buildings have been widely accepted. Whereas in Britain we often try to make a new house look old, in Switzerland, the New has been accepted as unambiguously good. It would be as odd to try and make your house look old as it would to make your telephone or your bicycle look old."

The stories and characters of buildings are some of de Botton's main preoccupations in his most recent book. He tells the

tale of a man who tried to build a house as if it were a self-portrait. I wonder what an "Alain de Botton house" would look like.

"Probably a bit like this." He reaches for his book, flipping the page open at a photograph of a stone house designed by Herzog and De Meuron, the Swiss architects who gave us the Tate Modern. De Botton describes the photo: "It's in the Italian Alps. It's got this amazing kind of drystone wall – a very ancient technique married with a very geometric, precise concrete frame. One blank face, with big windows on the other side. That's where I'd like to live."

De Botton read History as an undergraduate at Gonville and Caius, before doing a Master's in Philosophy at Kings. Did Cambridge offer better views than Shepherd's Bush?

"It's certainly an environment where you are always looking at things that have been made with real care and love. There is that extraordinary sight across the backs to King's Chapel, which has that bizarre sense that you're both in a town and yet you're in the country because there's a cow there. When there's nothing around you that seems modern, you can easily lose sight of where you are and what time you are living in."

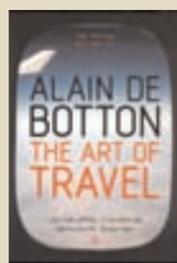
Despite great academic success, de Botton found Cambridge disappointing. "I was not a particularly happy undergraduate. I came to Cambridge with very high hopes – especially in the romantic sphere.

BIBLIOGRAPHY



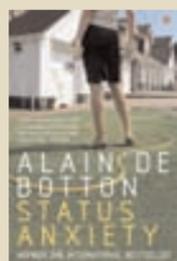
How Proust Can Change Your Life

Unpacks the feelings and opinions of Marcel Proust from his book *In Search of Lost Time*, as well as discussing the wider power of literature over our lives.



The Art of Travel

Questions the human preoccupation with travel and explores the glories of such things as hotel mini bars. The book draws on Botton's own and other writers' musings.



Status Anxiety

Entertaining and wry, the book examines why we are so concerned about what other people think of us. It also offers advice on how to alleviate "status anxiety".

"I'd gone to all-male boarding schools previously and was basically expecting to find Cambridge a hot-bed of beautiful, sensitive, attractive women who'd be interested in me! But, for whatever reason – probably down to my own inabilities – these encounters never quite happened."

Ironically, de Botton seems to have spent his free time in what most undergrads consider to be Cambridge's least attractive building: the University Library. Where does our beloved phallus of information feature in his "architecture of happiness"?

"I like it!" he says, smiling because he sees I'm genuinely surprised, "It's got a slightly fascistic quality because it was built at that time. It's also very imposing. But it does something very well by being a modern building that's nevertheless quite classical. Ultimately, it's making a big statement about knowledge: it's saying "why not?"

Having dismissed the idea of becoming an academic, de Botton set about writing his first book, *Essays in Love*, shortly after graduating. It is a semi-autobiographical fiction, which grew out of his undergraduate journals. "Writing", he says, "was really a sort of mental housekeeping."

Ultimately it seems his dissatisfaction with university initiated his career in writing. "To be totally happy at Cambridge might cause a bit of a comedown in later life. Perhaps it's best to be productively dissatisfied."

VARSITY

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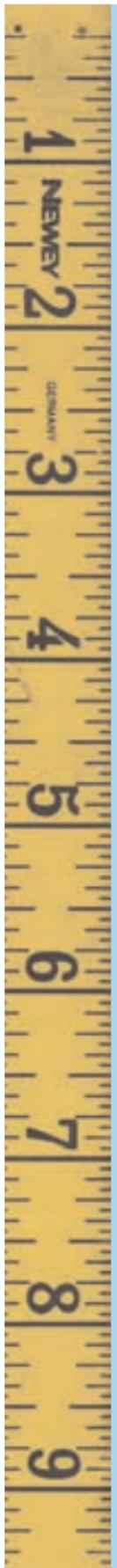
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Tess Riley talks to the *Big Issue*'s founder on the eve of the magazine's fifteenth birthday

John Bird

Having cycled for half an hour through the pouring rain to meet John Bird, I turn up ten minutes late looking like a soggy tissue. Luckily, Bird is not there yet, giving me time to change in the toilets and attempt to comb my dripping hair. When he finally walks into the café, he comes straight up to me, beaming smile on his face, and says "you look a bloody mess". Excellent. We sit down and John's phone rings. "I won't answer it. I will not answer it", he laughs, before glancing down to see who's calling. "Hold on. I need to take this." As I squelch off – I failed to bring spare shoes – to get two cups of tea, I can hear Bird's voice boom, "Gordon old chum! How are you? Look, can I phone you later? I'm being interviewed by an extremely important person. A newspaper called The Tess Journals. You've heard of it, right? Really? I'll send you a copy."

This joking around sums up why my afternoon was so fun. Although you're never quite sure when he's pulling your leg, he keeps you guessing – and laughing – enough not to mind. When I return, tea in hand, he's not impressed. "What? You didn't get us any cake?" Bird knows what he wants and how to get it. With the past he's had, I'm not surprised.

Homeless aged five and living in an orphanage from seven, Bird began shoplifting at the age of ten. By his late twenties he'd been imprisoned numerous times. "I realised there were other ways – legal ways – to succeed." He set up a printing business, became a father, and "made good".

At 45, Bird founded The Big Issue. The "Gordon" who phoned turns out to be Gordon Roddick – married to Anita – co-founder of The Big Issue with Bird. How did they meet? "I was in a pub. I'd had a few beers and met another fellow also helping prop up the bar. We just hit it off"

For many, The Big Issue means the guy outside Sainsbury's selling magazines. Those who don't see beyond the front cover might not realise that this publication is written by leading journalists and provides a unique space for homeless individuals to contribute.

And it's not just magazines. The Big Issue Foundation coordinates housing, education and health programmes. Described as an "international movement helping homeless people help themselves", the Foundation "is not about charity. We show people how. It's up to them to sort them-



The *Big Issue* founder John Bird

» "It's not about charity. We show people how. It's up to them to sort themselves out. We're here to support but we don't take any shit."

selves out. We're here to support but we don't take any shit."

Bird is passionate about what he does. His devotion to this, and his drive to succeed, earned him an MBE for "services to homeless people". What did the Queen make of the man who refuses "to stop saying 'bollocks' just because someone's of a higher rank. Social ranks. Bollocks". She clearly thinks pretty highly of him since he was elected one of the Most Important Pioneers in Her Majesty's Reign in 2003.

Suddenly he's talking about the government. "They're a bunch of cunts. There's no knowledge. Look at history. Wars. We're not learning. We're not progressing. Constant conflict. Take Tony Benn: dead from the neck up. Take liberalism. Liberal kindness has produced the poor – it enslaves poor people due to its kindness because it's not facing up to the limitations of poverty."

I suggest another cup of tea, with cake this time. "All the systems have failed so

far. Communism, capitalism, the left ending up in the middle." Where does he think the answer lies? "I know this much. If someone found a way to profit from homelessness you can be certain there wouldn't be any more people living on the streets."

"It's all about the furniture. You've got to get the furniture right." Furniture?

"George is great and I'm all for what he's saying [George Monbiot is guest editing one of the special editions celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of 'The Big Issue' this month] but his furniture is all wrong. I'm one of the brightest guys on earth – modesty's a waste of time; before you know it you're dead – but I can also go into prisons and talk to people. George can't do that."

I'm quite relieved when Bird's phone rings again. "Sorry, it's another important one. I'll be quick", he smiles. How could anyone say no?

"Hello light of my life. How are you? Right, let me get a pen." I realise I'm sitting in a café with John Bird as his very pregnant wife dictates a shopping list to him. He hangs up and orders tea number three before asking, "What the hell are aubergines?"

Bird is so boyish that it's very difficult to believe he turned 60 this year. How did he celebrate? For the first time, Bird looks a little sheepish. Then he roars with laughter, "I had a huge party – it was great! Filled with people I love. But I punched a friend. Pow. Just like that. That was a night to remember."

He's very interested in remembering. He's currently writing a semi-autobiographical novel. Anything else planned? "The Wedge Card. It's about buying local. The only way we're going to sort the fucking mess in the world is if we think local, act local. Forget all this global nonsense. Everyone needs to sort their own doorstep first. That way we can make a difference, little by little, wedge by wedge."

We talk more about this while walking towards the shops. I seem to be accompanying him to buy aubergines. "For me, it's about how to get people back on their feet, whether that's a struggling addict in Manchester or an African farmer. We're blinded in the West by this enslaving notion of charity."

"Climate change is another one. Turn the issue on its head. Make it sexy. Then people will get interested. I'm good at my job because I know how to make things sexy."

UNDER THE LABCOAT



Mico Tatalovic On Shopping

I went to Rome over the summer with two girl friends. We had a great time: lots of sightseeing, and even more shopping. On our way to the Colosseum we stopped at about 10 different shops: shoes, dresses, hats. You name it, they had it in Rome. And we had to look at it all. It made a 20 minute walk from our hotel to the Colosseum into a two hour and 40 minute walk. Now, believe it or not, this made me think about what it must be like for a guy in a polygamous relationship to go shopping. It is extremely difficult for most guys to do extensive shopping. This is an evolutionary thing: women as gatherers would collect fruits and nuts, and have therefore become hardwired to enjoy shopping for hours on end, as their "animal" mind tells them that it's good to be collecting things. Men, on the other hand, were hunters, and there's no lengthy choosing and collecting going on there.

But regardless of the origins of men's reluctance to shop, imagine a man with three or four wives: wouldn't their shopping needs alone outweigh the benefits of having more than one wife? Yet some men do live with more than one wife, and even more surprisingly perhaps, some women live with more than one husband. Considering that we often think of humans as monogamous creatures, why do these polygamous marriages occur?

The answer came partly from research at Cambridge Botanical Gardens by Nick Davies, who studied the mating systems and social lives of dunnocks. These little birds live in almost all possible combinations of mates: one guy with one girl, two guys or more with one girl, one guy with two or more girls, two or more guys with two or more girls. The traditional idea that the males fight over territory and then attract females was quashed by Davies' research. It showed that it is the females who choose and fight over territory. So, what determines a mating system is underlying ecology or habitat type (available territories) which a species lives in. The mating system of humans is, to an extent, similar. For example, African people who live in polygamous (one man with two or more women) groups do so because the men have large territories which they can share with more than one wife. Similarly, the Tibetan people who live polyandrously (one woman with several men) do so because territories are too small to be split among brothers and cannot support more than one family. Therefore, these people share a wife and bring up a single family because of a lack of land and the need of more than one man to support a family in a tough environment.

BlueSci Headlines:

New Method of Imaging Infections

Researchers from Cambridge have developed a pioneering new method for modelling the spread of bacteria within the host.

Experimental Malaria Treatment Shows Promise

An experimental treatment for malaria could improve the outcomes of many patients, according to Professor Nicholas White OBE from the University of Oxford.

National Scale

This week both the ADC and the NT are staging *The Alchemist*. The National has hundreds of affiliated actors, directors and other contributors. Cambridge productions might not operate on the same scale, but are there any similarities? **Eva Augustyn** compares the two



STEPHEN CUMINSKEY

Below: The National Theatre in London's South Bank was designed by Denys Lasdun and opened in 1976.

To go through the stage door of the National Theatre is to be engulfed in the most gargantuan operation that lies behind any theatre anywhere. As stage managers chime over the tannoy, eight-hundred people shuttle through a sprawling maze of corridors and staircases that extend from the depths of the basement that smells of sour milk, via the yellow neon-lit corridor to the thirty-five dressing rooms, and up to the plush sixth-floor, sound-proof rehearsal rooms.

The disparity in scale might make a comparison between Cambridge drama and the NT seem silliness, but one day our ADC protégés may well be treading the boards of the National. And the ADC does embroil a huge number of enthusiasts in its projects, only via the indefatigable network of Facebook rather than a vast complex of offices.

The huge scale of the NT's operation is due to the fact that everything is produced in-house. Costumes, props, press, marketing, casting, ticketing and set - built in workshops the size of aircraft hangers - if a play needs it, the NT has a department that does it. The consultant's jargon of "streamlining" and "outsourcing" are words that have clearly never penetrated its concrete walls.

The reality of such a mammoth operation is that the creative process is so dispersed across the various offices that it becomes almost unfelt. This is in marked contrast to a typical ADC production where the stage manager will be painting the set, while the lighting director is recording a voiceover and the actor still



Left: Alex Jennings and Simon Russell-Beale as Subtle and Face in Nicholas Hytner's production of *The Alchemist*. Hytner chose the play to suit the acting styles of the two leads.

sewing her costume as the curtain goes up. Backstage should not be boring and perhaps it's easier to achieve proximity to creativity in smaller, more enterprising organisations such as Cambridge's theatres.

The NT may turn the creativity of theatre into a nine to five desk job for some of its employees, but between these people there is nonetheless a strong egalitarian ethos which is one of the theatre's most charming aspects. You can sit shoulder to shoulder with Simon Russell-Beale in the canteen, and Nicholas Hytner will always smile when he passes you in the corridor. Participation in Cambridge productions is open to everyone. However we are a university people by over-achievers and egos, so it's no real surprise when the ADC's egalitarian halo slips a little amidst the familiar cries of "bloody thespans!".

» It's easier to achieve proximity to creativity in smaller, more enterprising organisations such as Cambridge's theatres

The NT is further distinguished by its commercial orientation. This is not to say that it compromises artistic integrity and stages an array of crowd-pleasers, but it is quite refreshing to see the creators of theatre place their audiences as the focus of their efforts. Cambridge actors and directors can sometimes be seen to indulge their own pleasure at the expense of their responsibility to the audience.

This might stem from the more ambiguous divide between front of house and backstage in Cambridge. At the NT there is a far stronger sense of "them" and "us" - the paying punters and the staff behind the scenes. Here, on the other hand, there is a real intermingling

between those who make up the audiences and those who will have acted or worked together on past shows. There is perhaps more of a collaborative effort between audience and performers toward artistic exploration in the Cambridge drama scene as a whole. Many theatre-goers here go for more than a night out. They are on the lookout for ideas and inspiration that they might use the next time they act, direct or design.

Student theatre of course offers more license for experimentation and variety in the university's array of mainshows, lateshows, sketch shows, pantos, monologues and dance. The ADC may be constricted by its single proscenium-arch stage (or not, as the phallic confidence of Closer and its catwalk demonstrated), but, for all their "bling", NT productions tend to be restricted to plays and musicals of standard length.

The NT is a repertory theatre, assembling a company of about 100 actors who, in different combinations, fill the roles of all the plays. As everyone who has done the audition rounds at the beginning of a Cambridge term will know, this process differs from the ADC's where directors of each play cast independently. While the NT's method saves legwork, Cambridge drama at least offers an enormous number of acting opportunities. (However, with the same faces popping up all the time you might sometimes think that there is an ADC company!)

Nicholas Hytner chose to stage *The Alchemist* because he was looking for a play that would accommodate the double act of Alex Jennings and Simon Russell-Beale. Hytner is now part funding the West End run of Alan Bennett's *The History Boys* whilst as far back as ten years ago Hytner directed Bennett's script of *The Wind in the Willows*. If anything, professional theatre seems to go beyond nepotism to the point that the talent you know determines the plays you stage rather than the other way round. "It's who you know..." is one maxim that, love it or leave it, is as true of the NT as it is the ADC.



Hermione Buckland-Hoby
On Kubrick and the Canon

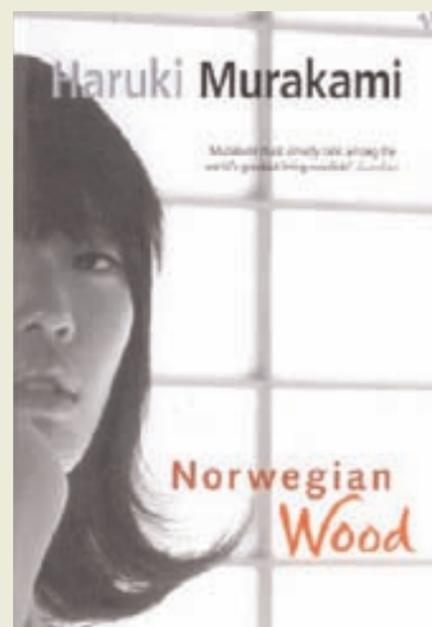
A perception of Cambridge as a fortress of intellectual reactionaries seems as simplistic and mistaken as Bob Dylan titling his latest album *Modern Times*. We all know that the times are a-changing, or at least have changed greatly since, for example, the stuffy Oxbridge that *The History Boys* portrays. For the most part, the English Tripos reflects this. The spires and the cobbles may be the same ones that Spenser and his other canonical chums gazed at and trod, but which books we read and deem great is thankfully not set in stone.

A national newspaper article published this week suggested that the readership and canonisation of novels owes a huge amount to what goes on the A-Level syllabus, which in turn is driven by expediency and individual political agendas. Margaret Atwood, for example, is thought to owe her popularity and book sales to the pages and pages of coursework on the

» We are guided by the loose boundaries of papers, but for the most part students can decide what they read. (You're a big girl now, after all)

arguably rubbish *Handmaid's Tale*.

At first sight, this doesn't seem to be a problem that transfers to the Cambridge English course. We are guided by the loose boundaries of papers and a few core texts but for the most part students decide what they read. (You're a big girl now, after all). Consequently, dissertations could even be, or rather, have been, written on the lyrics of Bob himself. Part II's "Post 1979" paper encompasses everything written from then until now, joyfully waiving the concept of the canonical. However, its sister paper, "Literature and Visual Culture" raises problems. This year, its focus is the films of Stanley Kubrick - a radical leap from last year's fusty "Grand Tour" - marking the long overdue admittance of film to the syllabus. Great that we can now study what is probably the most powerful medium we have, but why Kubrick? He appears an arbitrary choice. Perhaps his Cambridge canonisation, like Atwood's A-Level one, is not solely down to artistic greatness. Kubrick is a timid choice - with the majority of his films based on novels, including the "literary" and great Nabokov and Thackeray, the implication is that film needs literature, including canonical literature, to qualify for our study. Too scared to relinquish the canon, the "direction home" remains literary: the introduction of film isn't such a radical leap after all.

THE
BOOK
CLUB

» Life is not based upon “forever”, but about valuing rare moments of beauty.

Haruki Murakami's 1987 novel, *Norwegian Wood*, is a raw examination of the universal feelings of adulthood. It is a nostalgic piece of writing but it rejects sentimentality for a troubling atmosphere of inevitability. On hearing the Beatles' song of the same title, the narrator, Toru Watanabe, is transported back to his life as a student in 1960s Japan. During this time he is introduced to the delicacy and fragility of human relationships. Watanabe is an intriguing, solitary figure and his character develops as he becomes emotionally involved with two very different women. The most defining of the two is the love he shares with the girlfriend of his deceased best friend. Watanabe and Naoko are drawn together in grief for Kizuki but they find that they develop a tender and dependent relationship. Haruki charts the failure of this intimacy with a tender frankness.

The vulnerability of relationships is exposed, yet the delicate moments between Watanabe and the women he encounters create the sense that life is not based upon finding someone to function alongside, but is about valuing the rare moments of beauty, understanding and passion. Haruki does not hide from the idea of loneliness and his gentle acceptance of the inescapability of suffering means that these moments, when they occur, are all the more tangible and moving.

It is a chilling book, exquisitely written and well translated by Jay Rubin. Despite the theme of isolation and melancholy, it becomes uplifting and powerfully alluring. Its relevance to modern life is inescapable.

Lucy McSherry

London Film Festival

Vika Evdokimenko sums up three weeks of celebrities, screenings and red carpets

It may not be in that “ivy league” of film festivals, certainly not a celebrity-jammed Cannes, or a sun-drenched Venice, but the London Film Festival, in its 50th year, has found its humble identity as “a people’s festival”. A public and primarily “audience friendly” event that caters for the “ordinary intelligent cinema goer” (as the press release says), there is little excuse not to try and see at least some of what the coming year has in store for us on celluloid.

At the opening and closing night galas are Kevin Macdonald's *The Last King of Scotland* and Alejandro Gonzalez Iñaritu's *Babel*. Then there is the “Galas and Special Screenings” section. This year featured (among others) are Todd Field's *Little Children* starring Kate Winslet, Marc Forster's *Stranger Than Fiction* with Dustin Hoffman, Richard Linklater's adaptation of Eric Schlosser's shocking expose *Fast Food Nation*, as well as two of this year's larger UK features; *Venus* written by Hanif Kureishi and directed by Roger Michell, and *Breaking and Entering* from Anthony Minghella, starring Jude Law and Juliette Binoche. Below these sections, the program is structured in accordance with the geographical distribution of the selected films. The UK with almost 50 entries and France with 20, are both entitled to separate sections in the program. Awkwardly for this “national” logic, although the States are the festival's main contributor with nearly 60 entries, they get no section of their own, perhaps an attempt to play down their presence. Evident, but not articulated is a Western, or (excluding the French presence) rather Anglo-Saxon bias.

Trends aside, my personal favourites would have to be the scandalous and delicious new Sacha Baron Cohen film starring Pamela Anderson - *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan*. There was a surprising treat for the all-enduring Lars Von Trier fans, in *The Boss of it All*, a kind of Dogme version of *The Office*, with Lars's irresistible black humour never losing its London audience despite the overabundance of rather culturally remote Danish jokes about Icelanders. If you're in the mood for some, tasteful, slow-paced realism, there is Djamilia Sahraoui's *Barakat!*, pensively journeying over the breathtaking Algerian landscape, following two charismatic female leads. Or Andrea Arnold's award-winning *Red Road* that explores the world of a run-

down Glasgow estate through the all-watching eye of CCTV and the woman behind the monitors looking for a man from her past. For those on the look out for new documentaries, not to be missed is David Leaf's and John Scheinfeld's *The U.S. vs. John Lennon*, which might just awaken your dormant political instincts through its subtle contrast of our docile reality with the vibrant world of 1960s activism. Also unmissable is Marc and Nick Francis's UK-made *Black Gold* that challenges the multinational coffee giants in its portrait of classic corporate exploitation of some 70,000 struggling Ethiopian farmers. But don't be tempted to see Davide Ferrario's *Primo Levi's Journey*, a documentary that retraces Levi's journey home from Auschwitz, more “protracted” for its tedious filmmaking, than for the nature of the protagonist's actual voyage - a sad case of bad storytelling undermining some interesting subject matter.

For those with a taste for the fantastic, highlights will include György Pálfi's *Taxidermia* - one of the most provocative and revolting films you're likely to come across, delighting in lus-

cious close-ups of human parts and juices, making even the most grotesque seem perversely beautiful, but often indulging to the point of neglecting the coherence of the actual story. A more hyped-up, but less interesting phenomenon is William Friedkin's *Bug*, a thriller prophesized to be “one of the most talked about films at this year's festival”, but which horrified through-poor dialogue and the carelessness of its technical execution. Its tension is fatally undermined by the total incredibility of the dramatic action, which makes the whole thing more comic than frightening. Finally, if you're looking for a freebie, the Portrait of London event will screen a series of “digital postcards” from around the capital, conceived by some of the most celebrated British artists and filmmakers, this Friday in Trafalgar Square.

London is 45 minutes away, and this “people's festival” has something for everyone. Whether you want to get ahead of the game for whole film seasons, or just discover a couple of rare festival gems, check out the program at www.lff.org.uk for the week and a half of the festival that still remains.



Right: Kate Winslet, starring in Todd Field's *Little Children*, wows the red carpet

Turner-prize winning potter Grayson Perry is an artist, transvestite and cultural icon. He talks dirty laundry and psychoanalysis with **Emily Stokes**

Grayson Perry

Grayson Perry's studio in Walthamstow is filled to the brim with pots. I realised that I was expecting something quite different from this particular potter. Unconsciously, (Perry likes talking about the Unconscious), perhaps I thought that it would be a little more dramatic, like a theatrical set. This workshop seems to belong to a different world to that of Claire, Perry's female alter-ego, who wears dresses and patent leather shoes (although she did wear a fifties style ball dress made of rubber last night at a party). Grayson Perry is wearing tracksuit bottoms and pads about his studio rustling bags of clay. Perhaps for lots of us, even after three years in the public eye, the very idea of the Turner Prize winning potter and transvestite is still intriguing. Which is lucky because, as Perry readily acknowledges, it is his apparently paradoxical identity that comprises his work – not just pots.

His ceramics are in many ways old-fashioned in their meticulous decoration, but are glazed with humour and irony; his work is, he explains, "a play on the role of artist as eccentric". It is immediately clear that you can't take the girl out of the pottery; several of his vases are decorated with women – Perry corrects me, "they're trans-nies" – of different varieties, some like dowdy housewives, some powerful business women, some like little girls, some exposing their knickers to those who look past the pots' classical shape and shiny surface. Airing dirty laundry (or red knickers) could seem to be what Grayson Perry is all about; the word "confessional" doesn't cover it. As he settles down into his chair, next to a giant unpainted pot, he tells me that he likes doing interviews because he thinks out loud, and he talks about the erotic fantasy of humiliation – of which Claire is a manifestation – with coffee-break ease. He sees psychoanalysis as "tidying the tool shed" and says that his "tools" are now in perfect order for his work. Perhaps it is the easy confidence with which he presents his own complexities to the public that has made him a cultural icon since he won the Turner Prize in 2003; he writes a weekly column for the Times, has made television programs, and pops up on Radio 4 constantly.

Grayson Perry seems in many ways to be a new kind of social commentator and he talks about the "preachiness" of his pots quite openly. I realise that this is the problem I've had with his some of work; a single pot can seem to represent a social evil – paedophilia, child-death, poverty – just a little too neatly. But I've changed my mind about this. Firstly, he isn't pompous or self-righteous; he often laughs a huge, bellow-



EMILY STOKES

Grayson Perry has worked in various media, including embroidery and photography, but is best known for his ceramics and their disturbing and witty decorations.

ing laugh after saying anything a bit serious (for instance after phrases like "the beauty of form and colour"), and you can see in the television shows that he has made – one called "Why Men Wear Frocks" and another called "Spare Time" – that he won't patronise people. More importantly, conveying his "moral message" is itself another way of challenging his identity, like a hoax. He adopts personas and these personas are women; the work is self-obsessed and yet his "self" is not easy to pinpoint. In his latest show, "The Charms of Lincolnshire", he was a Victorian farmer's wife, grieving for a lost child. He is about to make a pot on which he will feature as the

» He talks about the erotic fantasy of humiliation – of which Claire is a manifestation – with coffee-break ease.

Queen. His next show will create a "one-man culture" with his dresses, pots, paintings, furniture, everything, by and about him. And Claire.

He takes me to the kiln in the middle of the room and opens the door triumphantly. Inside is a huge golden pot – the biggest he has ever made – with a model of Alan Measles, Perry's teddy-bear, on the lid. It is called "What's not to love?" He gazes at the pot as if it were an ancient shrine. The objects on the pot – footballs, mobile phones, soft-porn, price tags – encapsulate everything he hates, and he tells me that it is a pot "for people who don't like art but would rather go shopping and drink beer". Somehow his laidback way of talking makes these words far from snobbish. Yes, it is a comment on the lifestyle of ordinary people. It also expresses serious anger towards cultural leaders who think that art has a public moral function ("Send the chavs off to an art centre and they'll see the error of their ways", Perry jokes). But it is also absurd and satirises its own social aims; he can't change things through pottery, but he wants to show us what would happen if he could.

Grayson Perry is thinking of starting his own religion, with Alan Measles as God. The religion will have no rules, only two questions: "Who am I?" and "What do I want?". It is testament to his special brand of wisdom and humour that a religion with a teddy bear as a god could make so much sense.

Reviews

Londonistan: Melanie Phillips

★★★★★

In *Londonistan*, Melanie Phillips makes a series of bold assertions designed to get under what's left of the left's collective collar. It is, of course, good to unsettle the complacency of the majority (if the left-wing is indeed the majority), but *Londonistan* never thinks to unsettle itself. The important thing, it seems, is to take a hard line and stick to it.

» If you scream against hate you are not working against it.

Her basic theses are that British institutions are brainless appeasers of Islamist terrorism, that Britain has lost its sense of purpose and identity, that multiculturalism is just another word for "nothing left to lose", that Israel is the victim of Palestinian aggression, that the Palestinian resistance is – wait for it – "the cause of choice for every heart that bleeds", what the EU and the UN are undermining British liberty and replacing it with the Barmecide of international law, and finally, that Britain is a decadent society.

Each of the above propositions has a grain of truth in it. It's true, for instance, that Israel is the victim of violence. But that does not stop it from also being horribly aggressive, just as Palestinian aggression doesn't

stop them from also being victims. Given a political conflict, Phillips's strategy, to adopt the words of King Lear, is to change places, and handy-dandy; which is the just, which the thief? That America is the victim of terrorism does not stop it from being an aggressor in Iraq; that Muslims, homosexuals, feminists and Romany are often resistant to the "host" culture doesn't stop them from being victims of prejudice. That both sides of a conflict can be found wanting does not seem to have entered her head.

Her invective, whilst locally persuasive, too often calls up the spectre of Bob Dylan's *My Back Pages*: "Rip down all hate," I screamed". If you scream against hate you are not working against it. Phillips's rhetoric sounds at times like Milton's two-handed engine, which stands ready to smite once and smite no more; she seems to think that if you describe something as "appalling" and "astounding" enough times, it will suddenly be made simple.

Phillips has written a book that whilst often well-researched is prone to repetition, and more often than not, simple-minded. Her arguments deserve to be heard, but by painting her opponents as entirely without the power of reason, I doubt they will listen. The best I can say about *Londonistan* is that it is unashamedly serious.

The American Dream: Corpus Playroom

★★★★★

As the dulcet tones of "Jeepers Creepers" welcome you in to *The American Dream*, Edward Albee's dark tale about a dysfunctional American family from director Lowri Jenkins, and you can sit safe (though ill at ease and just a little alarmed) in the knowledge that you're in the right place: you want to see this show.

The stark contrast of the costumes brilliantly echoes the interplay between Mommy and Daddy, as Rory Mullarkey's dry, laconic boredom compliments and feeds off Sarah Lambie's chilling, manic, all-American cheer to great tragi-comic effect. His "I'm going to blush and giggle" provokes genuine laughter, as does Sarah's outstanding narration of a fiasco involving a beige hat. Her one moment of

authentic emotion leaves you reeling with awkwardness at the collapse of her pretence and begging for her no-less-disquieting façade to return.

» Bizarrely real unreality.

Lowri Amies' Grandma maintains this atmosphere of bizarrely real unreality, as her convincing performance is superbly offset by the others' artificial theatricality, which in turn reflects that of this "jolly family". Grandma's relationship with Mrs Barker (Megan Prosser) develops deliciously throughout the play, condescension turns to collusion, with frank insincerity remaining constant. When Chris Stephenson

walks through the door, you might consider that his Young Man is not quite right; he seems wooden at being wooden, as it were. His poignant, affecting monologue, however, proves that a more understated approach is exactly what his character requires. His accent, however, doesn't quite match up to those of the rest of the cast, which are so excellent that you don't even notice.

Don't expect a fulfilling conversation after this show: its atmosphere of tense artificiality leaves you unable to relate to anyone, just like the family and society represented. This is a funny, disturbing play and very well done: Daddy's wrong, you certainly can "get satisfaction these days" in *The American Dream*.

Moya Sarner

Grow Up: ADC

★★★★★

As can be expected from the Cambridge Footlights, their back-from-the-Fringe show *Grow Up*, directed by Tom Kingsley, is a tightly packed series of sketches that leaves the viewer little time to stop laughing before the next punchline. Fine-tuned after their national tour, *Grow Up* mixes traditional staples of sketch-based comedy – performers pretending to be bees or balloons, the occasional well-timed pun – with more original elements. A projector screen is used as a dynamic background adding

visual or textual humour to all the sketches and also for a brief behind-the-scenes "mockumentary" reminiscent of *The Office*. The humour was fresh, and even the occasional sexual jokes avoided tired clichés. The Super Mario sketch did pander to all of us children of the 80s in the audience, but it didn't come off as gimmicky in this well-rounded show. A few of the sketches recurred in several segments, which added to the show's fast-paced nature by interspersing additional punchlines in between

sketches. Each of the performers added their own unique talents to the show, with Tom Sharpe putting on a delightfully stereotypical Italian accent, Anna O'Grady acting convincingly like a homicidal psychopath, Alastair Roberts as a maths-obsessed uncle and, unforgettably, Tom Williams as a dimwitted pot of mousse. With this ensemble of actors and writers, we have a lot to look forward to from Footlights this season.

Nicholas Swetenham

Ports of Call: Trinity Hall

★★★★★



ALEX CONSTANTINIDES

We are taught that art in the early *quattrocento* was a family business, and that it wasn't until the heroic personalities of the High Renaissance, so the myth goes, that the creative bond of son to father was broken. Here in Cambridge, artistic dynasties are alive and well, and apparently flourishing. Trinity Hall is currently hosting a sale and exhibition of the works of Jonathan Clarke, son of the sculptor Geoffrey Clarke.

Geoffrey Clarke's sculptures are monumental explorations of the urban landscape. *Battersea II* and *Battersea III*, both in the permanent sculpture collection at Jesus College, are huge eulogies to the wreckage of post-industrial Britain. These massy, metallic works, corroded and twisted, evoke a sense of utility now redundant, whilst *Call it Hadrian's Wall* has a natural sinuousness, snaking across an unkempt corner of the Jesus Orchard. All are cast in alumi-

um, a process pioneered by Clarke. Clarke would sculpt in polystyrene and then pack casting-sand around them; molten metal would then be poured directly onto the polystyrene, causing the material to volatilize while preserving the texture of the sculpted surface imprinted on the sand. The surface patina makes them appear carved, thus leaving traces of human agency.

With filial fidelity Clarke has followed Clarke. *Ports of Call* at Trinity Hall is an exhibition with a number of large cast-aluminium sculptures by Jonathan Clarke. The solid architectonic pieces feel like Clarke senior crossed with the work of Anthony Caro. The welded sections bare the scars of their construction and the surface is pock-marked with the characteristic sculptural gouges peculiar to the medium. The exhibition title is a rather twee allusion to both the touring nature of the show and the mildly nautical feel of the

works. The back lawn of Trinity Hall is dominated by the skeletal remains of Clarke's largest exhibited sculpture; it looks like the armature of a boat half submerged beneath the grass. A series of large, solid legs rise from the master's lawn, their silhouettes punctured with the memory of geometric shapes: a metallic tribute to redundant sea defences?

Trinity Hall doesn't have the space of Jesus and in the main court Clarke's tabular tribute to Caro uncomfortably dominates the 18th century architecture. All the work feels slightly derivative and old fashioned, the kind of modernist abstraction being produced in the 60s and 70s. The retro use of roughly hewn geometric shapes combined with the unusual patina, makes the work feel like Troika pottery. They are definitely worth a visit, but afterwards, go and see the sculpture at Jesus.

Jonny Yarker

The Alchemist: ADC

★★★★★

I was wary as I took my seat in the ADC to see Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist*, as it easily could have been a long evening: Jonson's play is famously difficult, very dated, and potentially indecipherable.

» All play their parts with genuine understanding, and comic aplomb. There isn't a weak link anywhere.

A string of "sober, scurvy, precise neighbours" come along the street and into Lovewit's house, where Face; played in this production by Alastair Roberts, have set up shop as alchemists. They proceed to bleed them of everything they've got, even making them feel honoured to give their stuff away in the process. Jonson

intertwines, I think, seven separate plots, and they move so quickly that putting it onstage must (or so I thought) be almost impossible.

But, to my surprise, the Swan Theatre Company production manages to surmount the difficulties of the play in a flawless production that makes the play and its characters seem as fresh as a daisy.

The ADC stage is stripped naked to its back wall, with all costume-changes done in view of the audience and no effort to conceal the workings of the set: simply several doors, banged, beaten and battered by Roberts and Lau as they move from Christianity to chemistry as the plot rolls on. There's an astonishing scene after the interval when one of the doors blows off its hinges and, through its frame, we see Lau snap into character, mourning the loss of the "retorts, receivers, pelicans, boltheads" that we know were never there in the first place.

But if no chemistry is provided by the plot, it is found in abun-



dance in this production from Roberts and Lau, who give outstanding performances, playing beautifully off each other throughout. Roberts is the more comic half of the two, shuttling from a camp, beaded hippy to a biblical prophet, to a gravely turbaned new-age guru with total ease. Lau more often plays the serious, stressing the amoral blankness of Face; his last speech to the audience is truly chilling.

They are surrounded by one of the strongest casts I have ever seen in Cambridge. There is a deliciously deluded Sir Epicure from Henry Eliot, a sad, sexy Dol Common from Vivienne Storry, and a hilarious Kastrill from Tim Smith-Laing: all play their parts with genuine understanding, real style and comic aplomb. There isn't a weak link anywhere.

With a superb cast, a great production and genuine inspiration, the Swan Theatre Company has transformed literary lead into 24-carat theatrical gold.

James Laurenson

Shitmat The Loft

★★★★★

At the Loft on Monday, a night of drum and bass/electro house was promised by the touring talents of Wrong Music Industries. The first act was DJ Ladyscraper, a long-haired blur dancingly energetic character, hunched over a laptop. He composed his frenetic fusion of drum 'n' bass/ thrash metal with a Nintendo joystick. One's first impression upon entering was that an audio-visual re-enactment of the Blitz was taking place. The DJ's enjoyment of his own music rather eclipsed that of his small audience. Inserting colourful confectionary from a glass on the bar (which disappointingly turn out to be earplugs) into our ears, this epileptic exponent of "digital hardcore" and the chaotic strobe lighting which accompanies it.

The next act, helpfully named DJ Floorclearer, is a demonic bald man whose veins pulsed angrily to the beat. Delighting in the violation of our ears with screams of agony, he writhed dramatically over the laptop. Sadly, my memory of the unforgettable named "I shit on the chest of fun" is now indistinguishable from the rest of his set. That is, apart from his last piece, an interpretation of YMCA which managed to arouse in me some outrage at the desecration of the memory of the Village

People, whose work almost seems virtuous by contrast.

Ladyscraper, who apparently has played for crowds of around three thousand in The Hague, tells me that Shitmat is named in reference to the nineties rave artist Slipmat. His music combines the typical rave soundtrack of jungle and drum 'n' bass with unlikely samples of "There's No Business Like Show Business" and Atomic Kitten. Wearing a green boating blazer with black shirt and red bow-tie, he stands out from his fans, the majority of whom are pallid and hairy men bearing beaded necklaces, ribbed beanies and characterised by a general sartorial irresponsibility. Shitmat announces that it is "time to get extremely silly" to the no-longer empty dance-floor. His music, which draws from samples of reggae and even one country ballad, has a distinctly more rhythmic quality than that of the earlier acts and the repetitive beats awaken the crowd to energetic appreciation. Bawling "dance your fucking balls off", he launches into a tirade of abuse against his audience, who are apparently "privileged wankers", he promises not to play any drum 'n' bass, ("because I don't like drum 'n' bass"). Ten minutes of climactic drum and bass revelry ensue.

Badly Drawn Boy: Born in the UK

★★★★★



Oh Damon. Why? Why would you record over twenty songs, bin them, then resurrect them a year later claiming that they aren't, after all, so bad? In fairness,

you're right - they're not *bad*. But there's nothing good about them either. Nothing special, nothing interesting, nothing to draw me back. I wanted *Born in the UK* to be good, but clearly, I wanted too much.

Much like his last two albums, this too plods along at a snail's pace. The songs go on for too long, you hum along non-committally to a few of them and when it finishes you turn on *Hour of the Bewilderbeast* and remind yourself of how quietly beautiful he used to be. The title track aims for Springsteen territory

but is neither bombastic nor evocative enough to justify comparison. "Welcome to the Overground" is a choir-infused mess of an overly-ambitious song. Later on, when the production is pared down and the songs become more piano or voice driven, the album starts to sound less like a failure. Instead it just sounds dull. The closing lovesong, "One Last Dance" chillingly warns us: "I'll be with you for quite some time." Doubtful, if he keeps churning out albums as uninspired as this.

Sarah Pope

Squarepusher: Hello Everything

★★★★★



As the title suggests, Tom Jenkinson's tenth record in as many years is an attempt at bringing together the many musical faces of Squarepusher; from scattershot rhythmic assaults to the menacing neo-jazz

experiments, fusing live instrumentation with fizzing electronics. The result is a record full of humanity and intense purpose. Standout track "Plotinus" most successfully achieves the synthesis, fusing spacious live instruments with immaculately twisted breakbeat and intriguing chord progressions to create something genuinely innovative and fresh. "Theme from Sprite" and "Circlewave 2" recall "Music is Rotted One Note", as shimmering keys, guitar and taut drums allow sparse electronics to breathe through the texture but never dominate. "Vacuum Garden" is an odd ambient interlude, but the

more one listens, the more one is drawn in to its shape-shifting electronic microtones.

In the midst of this innovation, the return to "classic" Squarepusher on tracks such as "Planetarium" and "Welcome to Europe" is almost a disappointment. Both are enjoyable enough, but the clear forward-looking purpose of the album is broken by these near-routine d'n'b cuts. But there's enough invigoration, interest and entertainment here to show that Squarepusher is still pushing music into new and exciting places. Bring on the next decade.

Michael Chilcott

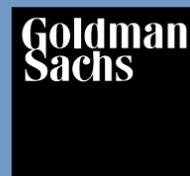
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Wednesday 1 November, 2006

Crowne Plaza

Downing Street,

Cambridge

6.00 pm - Drinks

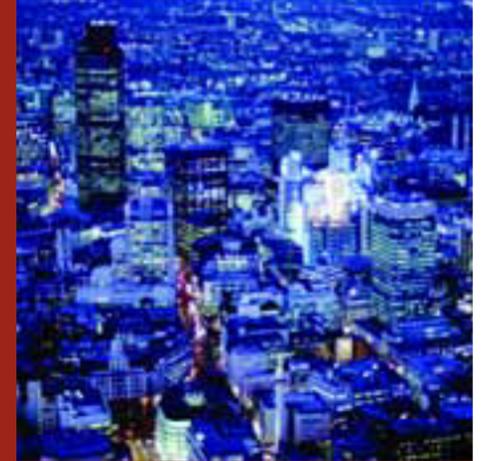
6.30 pm - Presentation Commences

8.30 pm - Close

Please sign up online with Arlene Davis at arlene.davis@allenoverly.com or 020 7330 4137 if you wish to attend

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C/M'S/ Cameron McKenna

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If you are thinking of a career with an international commercial law firm, come to our presentation to have a chat.

CMS Cameron McKenna will be visiting Cambridge University on Thursday, 2nd November 2006. If you are interested in applying, come and meet us in Beves Room, Kings College at 6.00pm

Listings

PICK OF THE WEEK

FILM

Future ShortsArts Picturehouse
Fri 27 Oct, 23.00

An under-publicised gem at the Arts Picturehouse. Future Shorts, a selection of 10 short films from around the world, ought to be a regular fixture in the schedule of any self-respecting culture vulture. A particularly political collection this time, ranging from a documentary following the 2005 Iraqi film festival in Baghdad to Israeli checkpoint drama. Useful for those of you with the attention spans of brain-damaged aqualife.

All films showing at Arts Picturehouse unless stated otherwise

THEATRE



In the Blood ADC, 19.45, Tue 31 Oct- Sat 4 Nov, £5-8
Presented in association with CUSU anti-racism week - loud, percussive and really racial.

MUSIC

Cooper Temple Clause Junction

Wed 1 Nov, 19.00, £11.50
The first thing anyone (i.e. the NME) noticed about the Cooper Temple Clause was their epic haircuts; horrifying swathes of bristles seemingly gelled by gods. The second thing was that much of the indie/prog/metal mash up on their 2002 debut *See This Through and Leave* was pretty rubbish. But 2003's *Kick Up the Fire and Let the Flames Break Loose* was more adventurous, electronic, and well more Kid A. They sound like robots combusting, and if that isn't brilliant, then what is? Exactly! Catch them this Wednesday at the Junction.

EXHIBITIONS

Amnesty Weekend of the Letter

Sat-Sun, 28-29 Oct
Support human rights and fight abuses by writing letters for Amnesty this weekend at your college. It'll only take a few minutes of your time, and you'll feel more moral than your rubbish (a)pathetic friends.
www.cuamnesty.org.uk



GOING OUT



LOCK IN at the Kamar
Get over your sickening prejudices about the Kamar you bastards, the toilets might look like a scene from *28 Days Later* but it's homely and host to a vibrant student DJ scene. LOCK IN is an Amnesty fundraiser with great DnB, dubstep and dance DJs.

FRI 27

Be With Me 14.10, 20.45
The History Boys 18.20, 21.00
Red Road 16.10, 20.30
The Queen 16.10, 18.30
Future Shorts 23.00
Notorious Bettie Page 23.15

The Living Room Corpus Playroom, 19.00
Gorilla in a Coma Christ's New Court Theatre, 20.30, £2
The Alchemist ADC, 19.45

Rooster Junction, 19.00, £6
Liam Noble Quartet Kettle's Yard, 19.00, £8
Wolves Stole My Childhood The Loft, 20.00, £4

Amnesty UK director speaks The Union, 19.00
Kate Allen will be giving a speech entitled "Amnesty Works. Human Rights Advocacy - its challenges and successes"

Shut up and Dance, Union, 21.00-01.00, great electro, cheap drinks
A&E, Queen's Ents 21.00-00.45, £4, you deserve A & E if you go to this

SAT 28

Be With Me 14.10, 20.45
The History Boys 18.20, 21.00
Red Road 16.10, 20.30
The Queen 16.10, 18.30
Notorious Bettie Page 23.15

The Living Room Corpus Playroom, 19.00
The Alchemist ADC, 19.45
The American Dream Corpus Playroom, 21.30
Grow Up ADC, 23.00

Cosycosy + The Hope Portland Arms, 20.00, £6
Tankus the Henge Man on the Moon, 20.00, £4
CU Chamber Orchestra W. Road Concert Hall, 20.00, £3

SPEAK OUT! Howard Theatre, Downing College, £4
You don't have to be black to celebrate Black History Month. an evening of performance, poetry, live jazz and food.

Disintegration, 21.00-00.45, £4
Queen's Ents, indie rock
Drop it Like It's Hot, Queens, 21.00-12.45, NONONO
Dirty Beats, King's, 22.00-00.45, £2, raging DnB, cheap

SUN 29

Be With Me 14.10, 20.45
The History Boys 18.30, 20.50
Red Road 18.40, 21.00
The Queen 16.10, 18.40
Walk the Line (Christ's Films) 20.00, 22.30

Footlights Smoker ADC 19.45
Great comedy. Book early to avoid disappointment and your friends shunning you because you couldn't remember *that*

Maybe tonight you can finally get round to doing some work, or you could get so drunk you go blind and are willing to do awful stuff, like listen to Toploader and go to Club 22.

Launch Party: In the Blood Ta Bouche, 20.00-00.00
Free entry, all night Happy Hour, cut-price entry to the Sunday Service. Drink while still being anti-racist. Er.

Sunday Service, Club 22, 22.00-01.00.
Heaven & Hell Theme. But mainly hell. Live PA from ex-Hollyoaks 'hero' Will Mellor, the 21st century Voltaire.

MON 30

Be With Me 14.10, 20.45
The History Boys 18.20, 20.50
Red Road 18.40, 21.00

Arsenic & Old Lace Cambridge Arts Theatre, 19.45, £10
Classic screwball comedy. Warning: might not be that classic.

Howling Bells The Junction Shed, 19.00, £7
Acoustic Cafe The Bun Shop, 21.00, free entry
Delphi + Actionforce + LUCC Portland, 20.00, £6

Figures on Fabric Fitzwilliam Museum
An exhibition of beautifully done English 17th Century needlework. Take that real world.

Crowd Control, Soul Tree, 22.00-01.00, £3, indie-electro!
Fat Poppadaddys Fez, 21.00 - 02.00. Pleasingly generic. Like sweaty tofu
Lock In Kamar, 22.00-02.30

TUE 31

Rome, Open City 13.30
Strangers on a Train 21.15
The History Boys 18.30
Red Road 16.20, 21.00
The Queen 16.20, 18.40

Uncle Vanya Corpus Playroom, 19.00
In the Blood ADC, 19.45
Improvise This! ADC, 23.00

Lily Allen + New Young Pony Club The Junction, 19.00, SOLD OUT
Orson Corn Exchange, 19.30, £6

Speaker: Action for South Africa Cambridge Union, 20.00, free
Speaker event as part of the NUS anti-racism campaign. You can't heckle you racist

Precious* LGBT Night Club 22, 22.00-02.00
Pigeon-hole your sexuality.
Hallowe'en special Ballare, 21.00-02.00, £3
YES DO IT DRESS STUPID

WED 1

Be With Me 14.10, 20.45
The History Boys 18.20, 20.50
Red Road 18.40, 21.00
The Queen 16.10, 18.30

Uncle Vanya Corpus Playroom, 19.00
In the Blood ADC, 19.45
Liberdad! (Freedom) ADC, 22.30

The Cooper Temple Clause The Junction, 19.00, £11.50
Yes Boss + Club Goo DJs Soul Tree, 20.00, £5
WOB Portland Arms, 20.00, £5

Mark Fisher and Peter Shreve Broughton House Gallery, 10.30 - 17.30
Highly contrasting acrylic painters - expressionism vs. abstract. Girls vs. boys, etc.

Melamondo Fez, 21.00-02.00
International Night. Poitiers!
Rumboogie Ballare, 21.00-02.00
Pretty much indefensible.

THU 2

Be With Me 14.10, 20.45
The History Boys 19.00, 21.20
Red Road 18.40, 21.00
Taxi Driver (Christ's) 22.00
Amores Perros (John's) 21.00

Uncle Vanya Corpus Playroom, 19.00
In the Blood ADC, 19.45
Liberdad! (Freedom) ADC, 14.30, 22.30

Badly Drawn Boy The Junction, 19.00, £15
The Pete Seeger Night Romsey Labour Club, 19.45, £4
Live Jazz No. 1 Kings Parade, 20.30-23.00

Rodin: All About Eve Kettle's Yard. Read about the two pieces on display, wax lyrical about the beauty and psychological intensity of Auguste Rodin's sculptures. Get laid

Urbanite is killing Cambridge Souttree, 21.00-02.00
Spoonfed Fez, 21.00-02.30, £6
monthly DnB event, hectic

BOOK NOW

**WORLD VEGAN DAY**

Wed 1 Nov
£12.50
Emmanuel College

Emmanuel College, in support of that radical and subversive force for good, international veganism, will be celebrating World Vegan Day. They will do this by hosting a vegetarian formal hall with a vegan option and Fairtrade ingredients. £12.50 might seem like a lot to pay for what you might assume is the contents of a latrine emptied onto some hazelnuts, but the food actually looks excellent, and

wine will be provided. So it works out as little more than a normal formal hall. You can also meet like-minded worthy people who weep at the thought of animals feeling sad. Then you can get pissed with them. And you won't have to see them eat a slab of cow's ass from Gardie's.

Contact Dharini Bhuvanendra at db397@cam.ac.uk with your name, college, email and food preference. I'll be there, We can swap insults.

BOOK NOW
Nina Nastasia
The Junction, 19.00, £9
Sun 26 Nov

Nina Nastasia brings her astonishingly beautiful voice and complex arrangements to the Junction, and even if you don't like good music you can look at her and cry.



Cambridge Crisis: answers to your problems

»“Every time I go to the cashpoint again, my heart sinks”

Dear *Varsity*,

I was always told not to talk about money, but in this case I have to! I'm a first year student, and although I'm having a great social life, I can't keep up financially with my friends.

I'm from a modest family background and worked all summer to put some money aside for univer-

sity. I'm terrified at how fast I'm spending money here and I can't afford to keep going out every night, buying drinks and so on. At the same time, I don't want to seem boring and have to stay in whilst my new friends are out partying and shopping. None of them seem at all concerned about money, and they all appear wealthy. I'm trying to keep up

appearances, but every time I go to the cashpoint again, my heart sinks.

I don't know who to turn to at my college, as I don't think my bursar would be willing to give me financial assistance to spend on my social life, rather than books and the like. I don't feel I can confide in any of my new friends, as I don't want to be considered differ-

ent from them, or be pitied. When I tried talking to my parents about the problem, I just got a lecture on the fact that money doesn't grow on trees. I've heard that I'm not allowed to get a job in term time at Cambridge and I just don't know how I'm going to cope. Please help!

David

Dear David,

There are actually two issues here: a) you don't have much money and b) you're struggling with what it means to have a good social life.

Many people find that it takes time to learn how to budget. Part of that skill is to manage your money so that you can put aside a bit for 'treats' as well as for essentials. After all, everyone needs a life! You come from a low-income family, so ask your Tutor to see if you are entitled to a Newton Trust bursary, or any other hardship funds. There's no shame in that, but you do need to show that you realise that you've messed up your expenditure so far, and that you want help to learn to prioritise what you spend your money on.

It also seems to me that you are socialising with people that you are not too comfortable with. You don't have to spend a shedload of cash to have a good night out. Cambridge is a great place for cheap (and free!) things to do, where you can meet people without spending a lot. If this doesn't appeal to your current crowd, then maybe the people you're spending your time with are not as good friends as you think they are!

Finally, do carry on talking about your problems, after all, as the old saying goes, 'a problem shared is a problem halved'.

Jan Leaver
Tutorial Administrator
Corpus Christi

Dear David,

Don't worry, there are a lot of people in your situation. Whether people talk about it or not, most students actually spend more than they have, and end up getting into a financial mess. I certainly did, and I've survived!

The fact of the matter is, your parents are probably right that you're spending more than you should, but that's all part of being a student, and what makes these three years the best of your life. I have a few suggestions:

Make sure you are getting the maximum student loan that you are entitled to. This includes an exemption from fees depending on your parents' earnings.

Ask your tutor for all the options in College for extra money. He/she should give you confidential advice and will hopefully know all about various funds. There are hundreds of these funds just waiting to be applied for (and they are not all just for books). Get anything you are entitled to!

Talk to your parents honestly about what you expect from University. After all, this government expects parents to fund their children at University (that's why the loan is dependent on what they earn).

Be honest with your friends about your financial limitations. You may find that they feel the same and are relieved that you brought it up first.

No one can afford to spend money out every night partying. Even the people you consider rich are probably not receiving as much money from their parents as you expect. They are simply doing what you are doing. Enjoy it.

Dr David Naumann
Alumnus of the Hawks' Club

Dear David,

My reading your problem really took me back to my first term in Cambridge. It's easy to forget how difficult that first term can be, financially as well as everything else. And that would be my first point to reas-

sure you. I would be willing to bet my whole degree on the fact that you are not alone in feeling this way.

Even among your group of friends, there'll be people just as anxious as you about how fast they're spending their money. In the first few weeks, everyone is crazily trying to take up every possible opportunity, and not miss out on one single night out.

And this is coupled with the fact that for many, this is their first time away from home properly, in a new town, with a brand new student loan and overdraft. A dangerous combination.

Cambridge is an odd place. Some of my friends have no money worries because their parents top up their accounts each week. Other people, like myself, have forgotten the last time they saw their bank account in positive numbers and live off Tesco's value food. What I have learnt is that it doesn't really matter. Mention to your friends that your money situation is a bit tight. I expect, that you will be met with at least some relieved replies of "mine too!" But even if not, it probably just hasn't occurred to your rich friends yet that not everyone is as lucky as them. Let them know and my experi-

ence is that most people are understanding. And then suggest doing something cheap. Rather than going out for expensive cocktails, invite people round to your room for pasta and cheap wine. It can be just as fun.

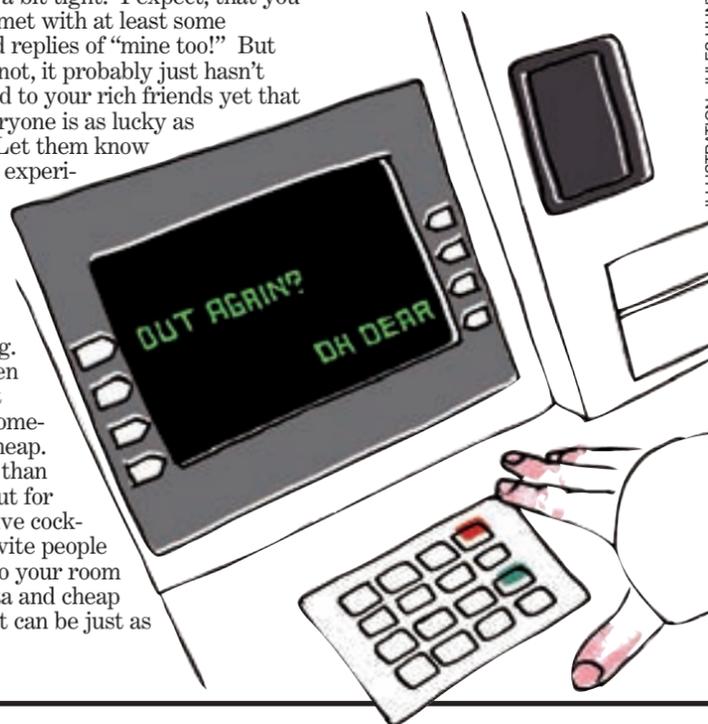
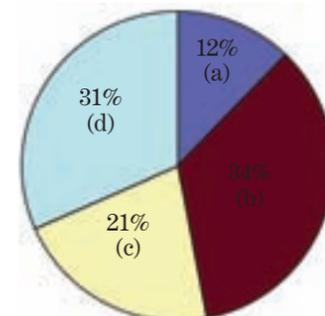


ILLUSTRATION: JULES HUNT

Varsity.co.uk: Poll Results

We asked: So how much of an '80s child are you anyway?

- a) As the Berlin Wall fell a piece of my heart went with it.
b) Thatcher wasn't all that bad really.
c) Footless tights? Leggings, I'll have you know.
d) I could never live without my iPod.



Go to varsity.co.uk for games solution and to vote in our poll

» Road to recovery: Grace Bowman talks to Sarah Wilkinson about her struggle with anorexia

» "I want both aunties and grannies and the ipod generation" Simon Schama on great art's lack of manners

» Borat's big adventure: the man from Kazakhstan on *Varsity's* podcast

varsity.co.uk

Games



Pub Quiz

1) What nickname was given to the day when over £100 billion was wiped off the value of shares in the city of London?

2) Which is the first animal listed in the Oxford English Dictionary?

3) In which country was England cricket captain Nasser Hussain born?

4) What are the flat treeless plains of Argentina called?

5) Which basic condiment of South East Asia is called shoyu in Japan and jiang youg in China?

6) From what expression does the word "goodbye" derive?

7) Name the only country in the United Nations whose name begins with "O".

8) Which character from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, shares his name with a piece of sporting equipment?

9) Which car company has a prancing horse on a yellow shield

as its emblem?

10) Which town or city in Kent has the prefix "Royal"?

11) What does a monophobe fear?

12) Name three types of cars that don't pay road tax.

13) What is the most popular colour of wedding dress worldwide?

14) In which year was the first email sent?

15) If Prince William became King, what number William would he be?

16) In clothing care symbols, what

does a plain circle signify?

17) In the lubricant and rust-prevention spray WD40, what does WD stand for?

18) Which drink was named by its inventor after the rejection of the first six names that were offered?

19) When there are two full moons in the same month, what is the second called?

20) Which American store chain is named after a character in *Moby Dick*?

21) 'Shirley', 'Harbinger' and 'Moneymaker' are all varieties of which plant?

22) What is the proper term for the art of bell-ringing?

23) How many teaspoons make a tablespoon?

24) What first left Gare de l'Est in Paris on October 4th, 1883?

25) Whose birthday is celebrated throughout the world on 25th January?

26) Who is the only tennis player still playing who has played Roger Federer and never lost to him?

Send your answers to quiz@varsity.co.uk to win a pair of cinema tickets

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Navigating your way around Cambridge can seem like stumbling across an etiquette minefield. Nowadays, one can't do anything without making a faux pas. That's where *Varsity* is here to help. With our handy three part guide, you'll never forget how to behave again. This week: academic affairs.

At Lectures & Classes

- If arriving late, the correct etiquette is to stride in looking nonplussed, take a seat in row six and then look pissed off at the lecturer five minutes later because you haven't got a handout.
- Men: the best crotch position when ladies are nearby is the John-Wayne-legs-wide-open stance. Ideally, you should aim to take up at least 1.5m on either side of you.
- In classes, if you have the choice between using an everyday term and an antiquated expression no one else knows, go old every time. It will improve the rest of the group's vocabulary, which is always something to strive for.
- Dissections don't need to be inelegant. Don't disregard the entrails. Instead form them into a heart shape and present them to the lecturer as an early Valentine's gift.

At the Library

- If you find yourself at the entrance to the University Library and someone manages to block the rotating entry system for five seconds, please note that the accepted practice is to sigh loudly and look at your watch. This not only uses up your precious wasted time but also reinforces the social hierarchy.
- Don't ruin library books by marking them with those hideous fluorescent highlighters one can buy in W. H. Smith's. Instead we recommend using lemon juice to mark the required section so that you can use candlelight to reveal it later. This is so much more refined.

At Supervisions

- If propositioned by a DoS, it's only polite to accept. They are after all the sole reason you got in. Grad. students, on the other hand, can and should be rejected without a second thought.
- Write all essays in super-swish French Script Mt font. In fact, write everything in French Script Mt.
- If a supervision partner is not from your college, it is polite to roll your eyes or snigger only at every other moronic comment they make.
- If your supervision partner makes a point that you would like to speak on, you should always acknowledge his/her contribution. Something along the lines of, "To clarify on the point that Carol so badly tried to explain..." should suffice. Sertation deadline. They'll be touched that you made the effort.



WINE VIRGINS

Package and Luxury

Benidorm Blazer Soldarado, Spain, 2004, £2.99

This dry muscat is a real package holiday deal, very Eldorado. Muscat grapes are usually used to make sweet wine so it is no surprise this tastes of sugared apples and grapes, honey and lots of lemon zest. It's lively and punchy and the price alone sells it.

The Virgins thought this was a perfect wine for getting you in the mood for going out. And frankly it's about the cheapest decent bottle around. Serve it very chilled.

South African Safari The Cloof Cellar Blend, South Africa, 2004, £10.49

From just north of Cape Town this red has an unmistakable South Africa taste; grainy, earthy, dense and full bodied. This wine is a cut above the norm though with a strong taste of raspberries and plummy fruits adding a more juicy edge.

The Wine Virgins were knocked out for the rest of the day by this big, juicy, fruity, dense wine which has been getting rave reviews from all the top wino's. If you want to splash out on an impressive bottle you won't be disappointed by this cellar blend.



Pub of the Week

The Kingston Arms

Where is it? On a side street off Mill Road, just before the railway bridge.

What is it? Traditional pub, great food, lots of real ale. Don't even attempt to order a lager because they don't sell it. But with ten ales on tap, and a heady selection of cider, who cares? This is a pub for being sociable: the heavy oak tables are crowded with locals and the staff will chat to anyone who comes in. It can get a little crowded, but it all contributes to the lively atmosphere.

Why? The food is the best pub grub we've had in Cambridge: restaurant food in a pub atmosphere with copious real ale makes for a great evening out. The range is good, from a fab guinea fowl to the infamous "sausage of the week". Also, if you're a computer geek, there's internet access for free.

Why not? The food's a bit more pricey than normal pub grub (main courses are about £8.50-£13), so steer clear if you're on a tight budget.

How much is it? Pint of ale (£2.30), Spirit & mixer (£2.10), Wine (£2.60/£3.45), Cassol's Cider (£2.90)

THE RESTAURANT COLUMN



Martha and Mathilda
City Centre Cafes

This week we have an adventure for you, so don your biker jackets as we embark on the Cambridge Café City-Centre Cycle-tour (C.C.C.C.C.).

First stop: the UL Tea Room. This precocious little academic feeding station is a haven. Three meals, high-tea and elevenses are all available (and by the time you leave, traditional), and prices very reasonable; usually a main meal is around £2, with drinks at 70p-£1.20.

Back in town now, and the first stop is King's Parade. The Agora, a Turkish restaurant recently converted from the rather darker, greasier Copper Kettle, boasts a new menu offering both Turkish and British cuisine – particularly good are the baklava desserts and scrambled eggs on toast. Both are excellent washed down with steaming black coffee.

» The Rainbow Café is a joy to eat at, with a modestly priced range of foods that throw together interesting and tasty combinations

Café Nero on King's Parade serves warm (though not particularly hot) soup and panini. If however, you're still craving Starbucks, there are two in the centre, offering sweet-toothed coffees (£2-£3), alongside a good range of plain teas and coffees.

Whistling on in ever-increasing circles, it's worth mentioning the Rainbow Café and Tattie's in the same breath – each serving teas, coffees and cakes. Tattie's also does a huge range of baked potatoes which come generously proportioned for their price (£3-4.75). The Rainbow Café is a joy to eat at, with a modestly priced range of gluten-free and vegetarian/vegan foods that throw together genuinely interesting and tasty combinations (£4-£7).

Indigo and Trockel (Pembroke Street) are positioned parallel in our westward trajectory towards the Fitzwilliam Museum. Tiny Indigo serves heart-warming drinks and bagels for an average price of £4, while Trockel's is a little known family-run café that does a good soup n' sandwich deal.

Last on the tour we visit the Arts Picturehouse. Relaxed, with gorgeous crepes, big sofas, good music, and the best prices in Cambridge (for once the price of tea is somewhere sensible at £1 per pot). Savino's on Emmanuel St. is the jewel in the crown, an Italian café and takeaway with crusty panini full of authentic ingredients, delicious homemade pastries, coffee and opening hours that can't be beaten (drinks £1.50-£3, eats £1.20 - £4).

Fashion



RIP WHAT YOU SEW

Benj Ohad-Seidler
On Favouring the Forties

At an enjoyably conservative dinner party last Friday, a friend lamented how, with every decade of the twentieth century getting a sartorial comeback every now and then, the 40s have had an unusually sporadic presence on the fashion carousel. One could argue that the 80s are just the 40s on speed, a kaleidoscopic-fun-house-mirror view of the war-torn decade. But who wants to be reminded of rations, air raids and the repressive reserve of the post-war society? Miuccia Prada, apparently.

In a tepidly received Spring 2007 collection, the innovative designer showed turbaned models in jewel-coloured satin ultra-mini-tunic dresses left open in the back like surgical gowns, as well as long tea dresses with extraordinarily severe shoulders, all of which have little to do with what anyone else is offering for next season. And, much like a Cambridge student hesitates to debate that obnoxiously haughty supervision partner, the fashion press has been sceptical to rule out Prada's show as being extraneous to the message of the season (although one less fashion-orientated daily dared to question, "Who the devil will wear Prada?") Those tight dresses in such strong plum and wine shades just don't mesh in a season washed in beige and sacked in baggy volumes.

On the strength of well over a decade as the forerunner in fashion, Prada has earned the right to be judged in a category all her own; one into which all others will follow just as she picks up her ostrich skin bowling bag (or nylon backpack, depending on the season) and heads for the exit. Prada is talking about the thing that has been on everyone's minds for many seasons now: the war and its need for a revolution. Prada was more literal in her references than others, who went for either libertine new-romantic-rococo escapism (such as Louis Vuitton) or heavy-handed-metallic futurism (like Lanvin). Beige was often the colour; that safe, generic tone will have designers with less bottle reap benefits from its mundane qualities on the shop floor. Just like so many of our political views, beige allows us to say nothing and avoid confrontation under a veil of breezy indifference.

Prada's bold statement enveloped society in wartime clothes, riddled with wounds (the hospital gown reference) and heavyhearted (the unlikely use of leather and satin for a summer collection). That said, vibrant colours related a hint of hope, that "thing," as Dickinson put it, "with feather that perches in the soul, and sings the tune without the words, and never stops at all."

Perhaps Prada, like everyone else, did not realise that we need something utterly un-referential to confront the enemy of apathy. Prada deserves kudos for addressing the lost sense of conviction of that decade when even though the bomb blasts were blaring, the frail sound of hope sung through.

English Rose

In the grey fashion climate of the moment, where clean lines and masculine tailoring dominate the rails, florals, tea-dresses and delicate cardigans have ironically become unconventional. Looking pretty and feminine is the way to stand out this bleak mid-autumn



Bea wears:
Cream lace dress £150, Chloé at Dixie's stall, Market Square.
Wool/Angora mix drape £49.95, Kew
Red woollen beret £12, Topshop
Brown tights £4.99 for 3 pairs, Asda
Shoes stylist's own

Photographed by Andy Sims on Senate Passage

Styled by Saskia Payne and Carol Peacock





THREE OF THE BEST... COCKTAILS

For those of you who prefer sipping on a Cuba Libre over a Smirnoff Ice, here's the essential guide to muddling, shaking, stirring and straining some classic concoctions:

Margarita

A sharp and satisfying classic



There are countless versions of how the Margarita was invented, but the one most commonly believed is the story of Pancho Morales, a bartender from Juarez in Mexico. When asked by a customer to make a Magnolia, Pancho, who couldn't remember the ingredients, shook up something new. The lady, whose name was Margarita, loved it.

Method: Shake one shot of tequila, half a shot of triple sec and a shot of lemon with ice, and then strain into a chilled glass.
Twist: For a Frozen Fruit Margarita blend all the ingredients with strawberries, mango or melon.

Mojito

A bitter, refreshing cocktail

In the 1920s, during the US prohibition, Americans popped over to Cuba to drink and brought with them the Mint Julep - a cocktail made with bourbon, mint, lime and sugar. Cuban bartenders adapted this recipe and the Mojito was born. You can order a Mojito almost anywhere in the world, but the best place to drink one has to be in Havana's Bodeguita del Medio, the bar accredited with its invention.

Method: Muddle (mash up with a rolling pin) some fresh mint, lime wedges and soft brown sugar in the base of a glass. Add crushed ice and pour in a good helping of dark rum - try Havana Club Añejo Especial. Stir it up and top with soda.

Twist: For those with expensive taste substitute soda with champagne.



Manhattan

Short but sweet bourbon tippie



The Manhattan is believed to have been made up for Churchill's American mother, Lady Randolph in New York's Manhattan Club in 1874. The Manhattan is complex to make, but very moreish and, best of all, can be adapted to suit every palate.

Method: Shake up two shots of bourbon and a dash of Angostura with Martini Extra Dry for a Dry Manhattan, Martini Rosso for a Perfect Manhattan or Martini Rosso and syrup from maraschino cherries if you like it sweet.
Twist: If you prefer brandy to bourbon, shake up ingredients for a Sweet Manhattan with a double of Remy Martin.

For the best cocktails in Cambridge visit *ta bouche* on Market Passage. 25% student discount and happy hour weeknights 7-9pm.

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Careers Service Careers Evening



Working in Arts & Heritage

Thursday 2 November, 6.30 – 8.30pm

Mill Lane Lecture Rooms

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Sebastiano Barassi – Curator of Collections, Kettle's Yard, Cambridge

John Bickley – Development Director, Britten Sinfonia

Sarah-Jane Harknett – Outreach and Publicity Officer, CU Museum of Arch & Anth

Dr Liz Hide – Museums Development Officer, University of Cambridge

Kerry Radden – Theatre production and marketing, arts consultancy (own business)

Sarah Talmage – Learning and Interpretation Officer, Ickworth House (National Trust)

Lars Tharp – Arts consultant, exhibition curator, ceramics expert, author, broadcaster



Short talks, Mill Lane Lecture Rooms, 6.30-7.45pm followed by discussion, drinks & snacks at the Careers Service next door

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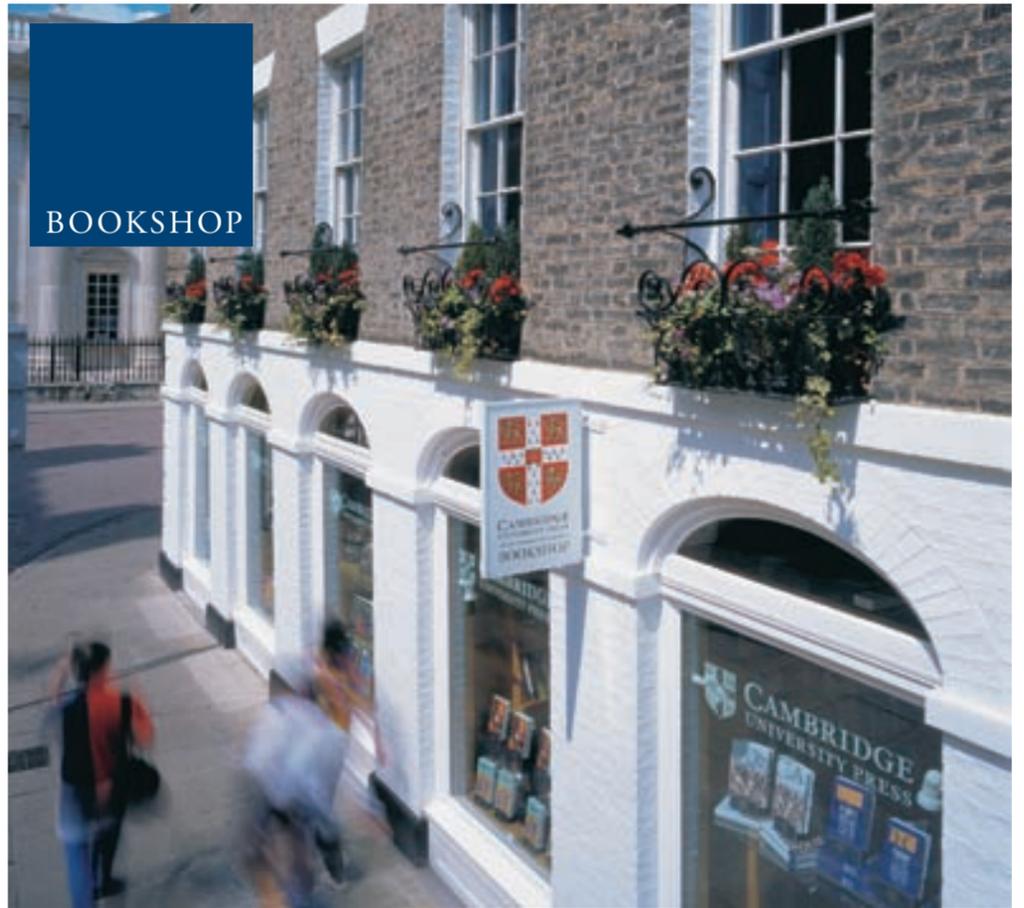
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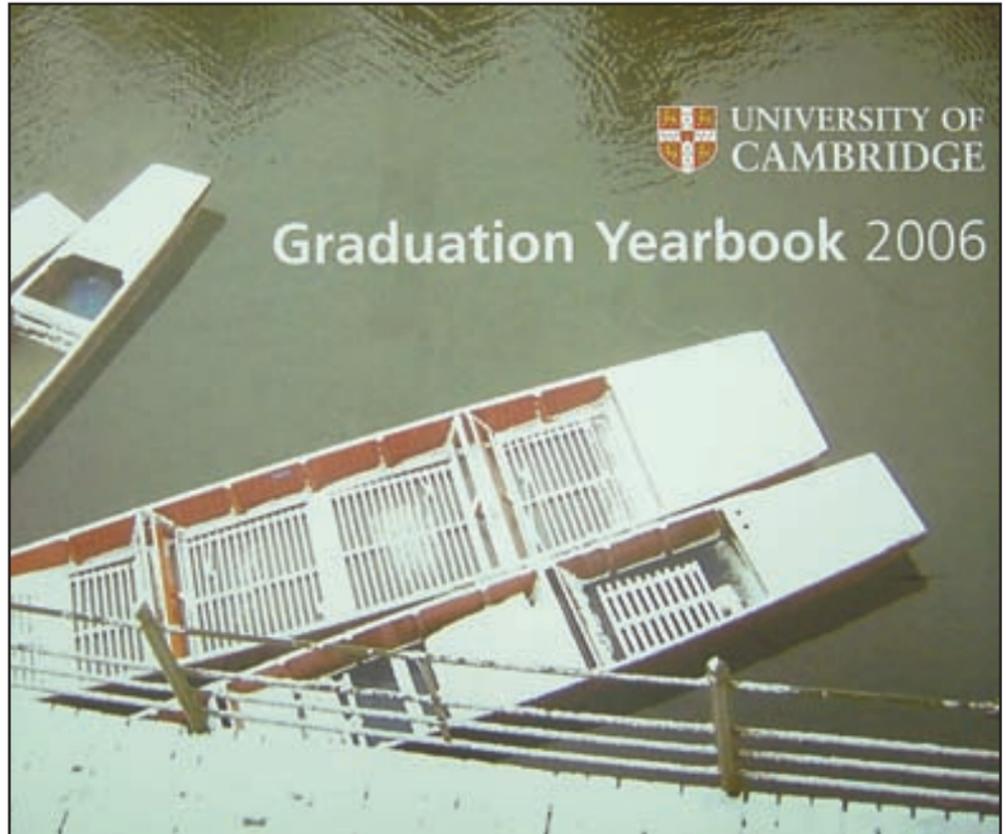
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Rucking all over the world

»Women's rugby Blues off to a flyer as they start the season with two solid victories

ELAINE SHIRT

| | |
|--------------|----|
| Cambridge | 12 |
| Peterborough | 5 |

This year's women's rugby squad could not have wished for a better start to the season. An exciting pre-season training, which included a session with the London Wasps, was followed by two convincing wins at home in the RFU league, including a 12-5 victory over highly-fancied Peterborough.

The squad's first match against Southwold, a 52-5 rout, demonstrated the superior standard of the Cambridge side. The Blues dominated throughout and the speed of the Cambridge players was a real advantage against a larger and slower opposition. Many of the Light Blues' tries were the result of a kick and chase, to which Southwold were unable to respond quickly enough.

Other positive moments included some great handling from the backs and breakaway tries from Anne Murray and Fran Blackwell. The tries kept coming with incredible ease and some fantastic teamwork resulted in tries by Emily Riehl, Keo Shaw, Alice Sargent and Hari Gay, with Riehl also successfully kicking six of eight possible conversions. The final score reflected a relatively easy first victory for this year's Blues.

Last Sunday the Blues took on Peterborough, a more challenging opposition, in some particularly adverse weather conditions. But even without the obvious advantages in terms of speed that Cambridge had enjoyed against Southwold, the Blues once again proved to be the superior side. Playing against one of the strongest teams in the division, it seems likely that Cambridge's victory will be one of the few losses inflicted on Peterborough this season.

The game began slowly for Cambridge, a weakness that the Blues must try to address, and this led to an early try for Peterborough.



In a tough game against Peterborough the women's Light Blues held on for an impressive 12-5 win

Undeterred, Cambridge came back with their first try being scored by Murray, who took a pass from the inside centre and surged through two defenders to dive straight under the posts. Riehl then successfully converted.

Peterborough were targeting Cambridge's weak areas and looked threatening throughout, but the pack pulled together to help keep

Peterborough at bay. The match could easily have gone either way before scrum half Riehl scored the Blues' second try, a result of great team work from the backs.

The Blues were kept on their toes until the very end, holding Peterborough back from the try line right up to the last minute, and the Blues' forwards were kept busy in the scrums following frequent knock-

ons from both teams. Some fantastic defence prevented any further tries and Cambridge hung on for the win.

Despite these early victories there is still much to work on if a Varsity win is to be secured this year. The clearest weakness emerging from the first two matches has been in rucking. Cambridge's lack of physical strength is also a potential problem, particularly for some of the harder

BUSA matches this season.

But there is much for the Blues to be excited about in the upcoming months. With two wins already secured, many experienced players inherited from last year's squads, some impressive new recruits from the United States and a large intake of freshers boasting lots of talent, the Cambridge women's rugby squad looks extremely promising.

Swimmers edged to second in relays gala

»Competition goes to the wire but Cambridge's efforts are just not enough to take the win

EMMA GAME

Cambridge's swimmers put in a good performance in the annual swimming relays gala, just missing out on a team victory but scoring numerous individual wins. Cambridge entered two teams, each a mix of first and second team swimmers. Against strong opposition from the University of Hertfordshire, Otter and Nottingham University, both sides performed well. There were many good signs for this year's captains, with some promising early-season swims from the Cambridge side.

Outstanding performances were seen in the individual events from Tom Rose, who won the 100m I.M., Brett McLean, who swam to first place in the 100m Breaststroke and Teresa

Thurston who won the 100m Butterfly. Kat Hedley and Ho-On To both swam brilliantly in the 100m Breaststroke, and both were unlucky to miss out on first place. Freshers Will Wall and Heather Moore both swam a very demanding series of events and put in a consistent set of excellent swims throughout.

The closest relay of the night was the ladies' 4 x 50m Backstroke, which saw two rapid swims from Natalie Moores and Cat Dobson. Cambridge fought hard till the end of the 200m but were unlucky to be just touched out by Hertfordshire.

The Cambridge men fared better and dominated the relays, winning both the 4 x 50m Butterfly and the 4 x 50m Breaststroke relays. Particularly encouraging was the margin of victory in the latter event, with Cambridge

coming first by over half a length.

In the end the result came down to



The swimmers just lost out

the last race of the night, the mixed 8x50m freestyle relay. Teresa

Thurston and Viktor Stein pulled out outstanding performances and brought the Cambridge A team into second place, behind Otter; but, with Hertfordshire finishing in third place, this was not enough to secure victory overall.

In the face of Oxford's pool facility, a strong fresher intake is increasingly important. The freshers did themselves justice with powerful performances, and should allow Cambridge to retain the depth it has seen in previous years.

The captains were encouraged by such a strong showing, with the Hertfordshire team winning from Cambridge A by only 1 point. Men's Captain Graeme Spence commented, 'The competition today was really tough. Although it was disappointing not to have won, we showed promising

early season form as well as strength in depth. The squad has a good mix of potential and experience, and with hard work we have an excellent chance to make this year a successful one.'

Certainly after this performance the Light Blues can approach the BUSA Short Course National Championships feeling confident. From there, they should be well placed to achieve this season's goal of eight successive wins at Varsity in February.

Final Points Totals

Hertfordshire - 86
Cambridge A - 85
London Otter - 78
Cambridge B - 60
Nottingham A - 57
Nottingham B - 21

Not just a load of old balls

» Testicular cancer diagnosis for footballer highlights the forgotten killer

**SOPHIE JAMAL &
JOAN IYOLA**

Last week, Leyton Orient defender Adam Tann underwent an operation after being diagnosed with testicular cancer. His is not an isolated case in football - the Millwall striker Neill Harris was struck down with the disease five years ago. Tour de France legend Lance Armstrong is another fit young male to have been affected.

These players were only 24 and 23 respectively, ages that many might consider 'too young' to be at risk. But, surprisingly, this is the peak age for testicular cancer, with most cases occurring in men between 23-45.

Here in Cambridge a huge amount of work goes into providing information about sexual health and other diseases, so why is it that men know more about breast cancer than they do about the dangers of a lump in their own prostate? As CUSU Welfare Officer Sam Rose said, 'There are so many causes that it is hard to give them all equal emphasis.'

The sportsmen of Cambridge are often obsessed by fitness and their physique, yet what is perhaps the biggest threat to their well-being goes almost completely unnoticed.

More than two-thirds of the men who are most susceptible to testicular cancer are totally ignorant to the disease, despite the fact that it is likely to become the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the UK by 2018.

Let us start with the facts: In 2000 (the last set of available figures) there were 2,000 new cases of testicular cancer



Leyton Orient's Adam Tann

diagnosed in the UK. But unlike other cancers, testicular cancer does not get more common as you get older, and there are very few cases in men over the age of 75; it is most common in white Caucasian males, and babies born with undescended testicles are known to be 5 to 10 times more likely to contract testicular cancer later in life. Research has found that the dis-

ease tends to run in families, so if you have a brother with testicular cancer, you are between 6-10 times more likely to be affected. If your father had it, you are 3 or 4 times more likely to suffer it than normal.

Sports clubs provide one medium through which the at-risk group can be informed. That is why the Hawks' Club is running a charity dinner next term to raise money. Hawks' Club President Tom Edwards told Varsity: 'A great number of men typically display a relatively nonchalant attitude towards their health, and the Hawks' Club would like to redress this by promoting awareness and raising much needed funds.'

The good news is that survival rates are relatively high, and in 2004, only 74 men died of this cancer in the UK. But, as with any disease, an early prognosis greatly increases the chances of survival. The current treatments are very effective, meaning that if the tumour is diagnosed quickly, a complete cure is achieved in nearly 95% of the cases. Harris managed to come back from his ordeal to return to playing football, and the signs look promising for Tann because he was diagnosed with the disease so early on.

Even though this disease is the most curable type of cancer, men are dying unnecessarily purely because they are too embarrassed to check their testicles, let alone talk about them. So, how does one check oneself?

We asked a cross-section of sportsmen in Cambridge, and these are the sorts of replies they came up with:

'Feel your balls for a lump'
'You're supposed to play with your balls and see if there's a lump'
'Feel your balls and if one is bigger you're fucked.'
'Have you seen the Rachel Stevens' advert?'

It is both sad and worrying that so many men know little about a simple process that could help to save their life. Surely a greater emphasis should be placed on testicular cancer checks. Why is it that every Fresher knows all about STDs and sexual health but little mention is ever made of how to catch a potentially deadly disease? Cambridge is full of healthy young men, and more should be done to help them stay that way.

How it's really done

- Men should check themselves for lumps in their testicles regularly, every few months.
- Tests are best after a hot bath or shower, as these help to relax the muscles and makes the process easier.
- Use both hands and gently roll each testicle between thumb and forefinger.
- If a lump is found on one testicle, check the other to see if the same lump is present.
- If there are similar lumps on both, then it is almost certainly a normal part of the testicles.
- If the lump is only on one testicle, you should consult your doctor.

Jesus athletes do the double to clean up at Cuppers

In an eventful weekend Jesus won both the men's and women's competitions in Athletics Cuppers. However, it was Phyllis Agbo of Trinity who stole the show with an incredible performance in the women's 200m hurdles.

In the men's competition a dedicated set of performances by Jesus gave them their first Michaelmas Cuppers win since 1988. In recent years the title has been closely fought by St. Catz and Trinity, but this year a depleted Trinity team was never in the running for first place. The Jesus men managed to take a quick lead by winning both the first and second string steeplechase races, and they held on to first place overall for the rest of the day.

Catz were still strong, though, and they were always just behind Jesus in the standings. At the end of day one the result was very much in the balance, especially after Catz's Captain Humphrey Waddington won the 200m Hurdles. The next day he followed up his victory by also coming first in the 110m Hurdles and the Javelin. But Jesus fought back and the competition was decided in the 4 x 100m Relay, with a solid second place from Jesus giving them the overall win.

The best individual performance in the men's competition was by Jet Theriac of Homerton, who man-



Catz's men just lost out

aged to win the three events he entered - Shotput, Discus Throw and Hammer Throw - achieving Blues distances in all of them.

In the women's competition Jesus won their third Cuppers victory in a row, with little meaningful competition coming from the other colleges. The sheer strength and depth of the Jesus team was simply too great, and the end result was never in doubt.

But the easiest victory came from

Phyllis Agbo, who set a new competition record as she won the 200m Hurdles, beating the record she herself had set last year by almost half a second. Incredibly, her time was faster than most of those posted in the men's race.

Bilen Ahmet

Keeping it real: Cambridge's other tennis club



Cambridge is one of the few places in Britain with fully-functioning Real Tennis courts

MICHAEL DO

**BURAT SALGIN &
CHARLOTTE BARKER**

Forget Wimbledon, Real Tennis is the only game for those who enjoy their tennis fast, teeming with suspense, furious yet subtle and with an amazingly wide spectrum of skilful play. Britain, along with Australia, not only leads the world at Real Tennis, but the UK also boasts the World Champions

of the game for both sexes. The men's champion, Rob Fahey, often plays here in Cambridge.

Tennis began in medieval Europe as a game played in streets bordered by arcades, sloping roofs and fishing nets. It migrated indoors as a pastime for monks before it caught on as a game for princes and became Real - that is 'Royal' - tennis. Lawn tennis developed hundreds of years later, ironically as a primitive variant, with the

invention of the hollow rubber ball that bounces on grass.

Until recently Real Tennis was a well-kept secret, played by just a few hundred people around the world on perhaps a dozen courts. But over the past fifteen years it has rapidly increased in popularity and attained something of a cult status. Scores of celebrities and sportsmen have taken it up. Even Roger Federer, who tried the sport last year during a glitzy pro-

motional day, was an immediate convert.

A growing number of ambitious young players are joining the professional ranks, drawing not only more converts to the game but also increasingly generous salaries and prize

'Until recently Real Tennis was a well-kept secret'

money. In Cambridge we have two courts, both situated on Grange Road opposite Robinson College, which host both National League and Premier League matches on a regular basis.

Once you try Real Tennis it is irresistible. You can deploy speed and power, or can combine subtlety with tactical skill. You can exploit the ingenious system of scoring and handicaps which ensures that players of very different standards can enjoy an evenly matched game. As more people are discovering the sport on a daily basis, the construction of new courts is trying to keep up with demand. In the meantime, while Cambridge has two of only 27 courts in Britain, with the opportunity on your doorstep, now is most definitely the time to try Real Tennis.



CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Women's Ice Hockey



CLARE WATKINSON

How did you start ice hockey?

By growing up with three brothers. I played football for ten years, went on to rugby when I got to university, and then saw my first ice hockey match in Sweden. That was it, I was done for. Not only could you tumble around on ice like a lunatic skittle, but you were allowed to send everyone else tumbling with you.

Where's the ice around here?

Sadly our nearest ice rink is in Peterborough, but we provide a club coach to take all three teams on a Sunday evening. It's always good fun on the journeys there and back.

How do you get involved?

You just need enthusiasm, perseverance, and a good sense of humour. We welcome everyone who's up for giving it a go, from seasoned players to total beginners.

Is women's ice hockey as violent as the men's game?

Women's ice hockey is officially non-checking. Taking a run up to slam someone full-throttle into the boards with your stick is not allowed, so outbreaks of WWF wrestling in the women's game are somewhat rare!

Who do you play against?

We currently have weekly matches against other local and university teams. These are great fun, and get pretty competitive. Of course, all our games are in preparation for the Varsity match against Oxford, which last year drew a crowd of over 1000 spectators.

Ed Cumming

Footballers held in BUSA clash

»Blues settle for a draw after Bedford withstand the pressure

PADDY CROFT

| | |
|------------------|----------|
| Cambridge | 1 |
| Bedford | 1 |

After the disappointment of relegation last year, and a mixed pre-season, the Blues were keen to start the new year with a win in their first BUSA match. But, facing a physical Bedford side, they were forced to settle for a draw despite a flurry of chances in the second half. While Cambridge might be disappointed with the result, the way they played will give them confidence for later games.

Bedford's fiery spirit led to several heavy tackles and angry exchanges in the opening ten minutes of the match. But the teams soon managed to settle down and play some good, attractive football. After 15 minutes it was Bedford that broke the deadlock, when a 25-yard shot caught Blues' keeper James Dean off his line and flew in off the crossbar.

The Blues were not to be behind for long, as a combination of Bedford complacency and Cambridge spirit allowed the Blues to score a quick equaliser. A corner from captain Alex Coleman found Brendan Threlfall sloppily marked at the near post and he managed to turn the ball home.

Minutes later Coleman again showed his class as his 25 yard free-kick was just tipped over the crossbar. But Bedford was still in contention and the Blues received a let-off when a goal-bound header was just deflected over the bar.

Despite long periods of Cambridge dominance, the score line could have told a different story had it not been for Cambridge goalkeeper James Dean, who pulled off several fantastic saves. Especially important were a set of close-range reaction blocks late on in each half. Dean managed to spread himself well on both occasions, keeping the Blues in the match.



SOPHIE PICKFORD

Cambridge's Alex Mugan tries to hold off a Bedford challenge

The second half saw Cambridge step up a gear. Coleman was forced to go off injured but the new central midfield partnership of Dave Mills and Mike Dankis proved effective. Mills especially showed several good touches in a crowded midfield and seemed to be involved in every dangerous Cambridge move.

It was Threlfall, however, who was causing Bedford's defenders the most problems, and he almost won a penalty when he went down whilst rounding the keeper. But, despite protestations from the Cambridge bench, the refer-

ee waved play on. In Cambridge's best spell of the match, Dankis then came within a whisker of emphatically finishing off a stunning Blues' move, his running volley just flying over the bar.

This proved to be Cambridge's last proper chance, although Threlfall had a header go just wide near the end. Bedford had clearly settled for the point and seemed content to waste time, even going into a celebratory huddle after the final whistle.

Cambridge's head coach, Alex Mugan, conceded that 1-1 was a fair result, but claimed that Cambridge

"controlled the game for large amounts of time." He also lamented that his side had "failed to convert things as we should have done." Mugan, however, refused to be downbeat and remained confident for the season's prospects, arguing that both the Blues and the Falcons, Cambridge's 2nd XI, had grown stronger since last year.

The Blues may not have got the result they wanted against Bedford, but their first performance in the BUSA league bodes well for the rest of the season.

The Week In Weather

| | | | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | | | | | | |
| FRI | SAT | SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THUR |

Hitori

Shade in the squares so that no number occurs more than once per row or column. Shaded squares may not be horizontally or vertically adjacent. Unshaded squares must form a single continuous area.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 5 |
| 1 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 2 |
| 2 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| 4 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 2 |
| 2 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| 5 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 2 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 5 |

Sudoku

The object is to insert the numbers in the boxes to satisfy only one condition: each row, column and 3x3 box must contain the digits 1 through 9 exactly once.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 4 | | | | | |
| 3 | 1 | | 6 | | 7 | | 9 | 4 |
| 7 | | 4 | | 2 | | 6 | | 8 |
| 6 | | | 5 | 8 | 9 | | | 7 |
| | 2 | | | | | | 5 | |
| 4 | | | 1 | 7 | 2 | | | 6 |
| 8 | | 9 | | 1 | | 7 | | 3 |
| 5 | 6 | | 7 | | 8 | | 4 | 2 |
| | | | 6 | | | | | |

Kakuro

Fill the grid so that each run of squares adds up to the total in the box above or to the left. Use only numbers 1-9, and never use a number more than once per run (a number may reoccur in the same row in a separate run).

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | 11 | 9 | | | 17 | 6 | | | |
| | | | | 3 | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | 10 | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | 19 | | | | |
| | | | | | | 13 | 6 | | |
| | | | 13 | | | | | | |
| | | 7 | | | | 7 | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 11 | | | | 4 | | | |



COMPETITION

Win a pair of tickets to the Arts Picturehouse. Tickets available to use Mon to Thursday at any point in the Michaelmas term.



Re-arrange the letters by rotating the discs to create six separate six-letter words leading in to the centre. Email your answer to: competitions@varsity.co.uk

