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VARSITY

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ARTS & FEATURES

FEATURES

New year's resolutions two weeks on

»PAGE 12



MUSIC

Dubstep: Entering the underground

»PAGE 19



Hutchinson cleared of sexual assault

»Trinity Hall fellow to sue Cambridge daily for "libellous" coverage

ELLIOT ROSS
News Editor

A Cambridge academic cleared last month of sexual assault plans to sue the *Cambridge Evening News* for what he called "three clear cases of libel". He may bring a further charge of harassment.

Dr Peter Hutchinson, Deputy Head of the Department of German and Fellow of Trinity Hall, was found not guilty by a jury at Norwich Crown Court on December 8 2006 after a previous trial in Cambridge had to be adjourned for legal reasons.

Hutchinson has spoken out against "inaccurate and unbalanced" press coverage of the case, and said his barrister, who has advised him to take legal action against two national newspapers, considered the reporting of the first trial "among the most scurrilous he had experienced in over thirty years at the Bar". The *CEN* were "determined to shame me in the local community", he told *Varsity*. "My aim is to prevent the newspaper from treating anyone else in this way, with their intrusion of privacy, harassment, ridiculously one-sided view of the case, and clearly libellous statements", he said.

At the time of the trials, the *CEN* carried headlines such as "Dirty don wanted a quick feel, jury told" and "German lecturer: 'I do pat bottoms'".

But *CEN* Editor Murray Morse dismissed suggestions of a vendetta as "rubbish", defending the newspaper's coverage as "totally fair and accurate". "I don't know who has advised Hutchinson to pursue a legal action against the newspaper" he said, adding "whoever it is should check their facts first". He is "totally confident" of mounting a successful defence.

Morse went on to say that the *CEN* had offered Hutchinson the chance to give his full story after his acquittal. He claimed that

Hutchinson "declined to speak to us but instead sold his story to a tabloid Sunday newspaper, whose reporter was at his house on the evening of the not guilty verdict".

Hutchinson described the reaction of his students, three of whom returned from their year abroad to act as character witnesses, as "absolutely amazing", also praising his "wonderful" colleagues in the University. One of Hutchinson's students, third year linguist Callum Hind, was critical of "unfair" reportage in the local press. He said that all eight linguists in his year at Trinity Hall visited Hutchinson as soon as the story broke to let him know that they were "very much behind him". Later in the term the same group took Hutchinson and his wife out for dinner and gave him a luxury hamper.

The accusations were brought by a young policewoman, a former student of Hutchinson, who had visited him in his college rooms in October 2005. She claimed to have been assaulted by Hutchinson as she examined a mouse mat. She told the court "I felt his hand cup my buttock. He didn't say anything, he sort of let out a chuckly-type groan and pervy noises." She said that Hutchinson then tried to kiss her twice, attempts that she resisted, latterly using a police training manoeuvre which involved pressing her arm against his throat.

Hutchinson has always admitted physical contact with the woman. But he argued, "that touching was not primarily sexual, and I had no reason whatsoever to believe that she would object".

The meeting between the two was preceded by an exchange of emails. Prosecution lawyer Chris Morgan told the court that Hutchinson wrote of his tendency to "go a bit weak at the knees with blondes with a certain colour of eye who are just wonderful people as well". Morgan argued that a separate email asking her to "Give your... cat a stroke



Dr Peter Hutchinson: found not guilty last month DYLAN SPENCER-DAVIDSON

from me" contained sexual innuendo. Hutchinson pointed out that the nature of email correspondence excluded facial expression and tone of voice, but conceded "the banter and flirtation - on both sides - went a bit too far".

Hutchinson expressed relief that no moves had been taken to consider his suspension. Dr Nick Bampos, Senior Tutor at Trinity Hall, said "our first priority was to offer the

quality of teaching that the Medieval and Modern Language students deserve," praising Hutchinson's "outstanding reputation". Asked whether he considered Hutchinson to have been in breach of any code of practice, Bampos stressed the college's adherence to the University's 'Dignity at Work' policy, but said that as the complaint was made from outside the college, it was for the court system to deal with.

Comment: A well-executed plan | Sport: Rugby triumph | Puzzles: Rotations are back!

In Brief

Scott's last letters on show

Captain Robert Scott's final letters to his wife, written on his ill-fated expedition to the South Pole in 1912, have been displayed for the first time. The letters were given to the University's Scott Polar Research Institute by Scott's daughter-in-law, Lady Philippa Scott. Director of the Institute, Prof. Julian Dowdeswell, said they are "invaluable in enabling us to continue our historical role as an international centre for the study of the Polar Regions". **Jessica King**

New look for Fisher Square

Fisher Square, adjacent to the Soul Tree nightclub, will undergo a £350,000 renovation. Cambridge City Council has commissioned British sculptor Peter Randall-Page to transform the area. Mr Randall-Page's work, inspired by patterns in nature, has been exhibited in the British Museum and the Tate Gallery. The centrepiece will be a sculpture carved from red granite. Other planned innovations include a curve of steps and new-banded paving. **Chrissy Collins**

Breakthrough in nuclear research

Cambridge scientists have developed a way to potentially store high-level nuclear waste for thousands of years. By forming a crystal from a combination of radioactive material with more stable synthetic materials, the chance of leakages can be reduced. Research leader Dr Ian Farnan said it could "make billions of pounds worth of savings and improve overall safety". **Cat Moss**

Academics bust chip and pin

»Payments Association maintains that cardholders' details are safe

AMY HOGGART

Members of the University of Cambridge Security Group have discovered a new way of doctoring chip and pin machines to steal customer data. The team opened up a chip and pin terminal purchased on eBay and replaced its internal hardware with their own, gaining complete control of the machine without displaying any evidence of external damage. Personal account details and PINs could then be copied and used to create fake cards.

Steven Murdoch and Saar Drimer, researchers at the group, which specialises in testing the security of elec-

"To demonstrate their complete control of the machine, they wired it up to play Tetris"

tronic hardware, were responsible for the project. To demonstrate their complete control of the machine, they wired it up to play Tetris, posting a video of the feat on the YouTube website.

With its internal mechanics completely altered, the terminal could easily be swapped with one in-store without any visible difference. Murdoch explained, "Since the new electronics were designed by us, we could write software which made the terminal behave just like a normal

chip and pin terminal, but collecting card details and PINs entered".

Worryingly, he claimed that the experiment would be easy to recreate: "Only moderate technical skill in electronics is needed and it took around a month for us to build and test the equipment. We estimate that the equipment needed to perform this attack would cost less than £250, and is easily available from online electronics shops." He added, "Everything we used is general purpose hardware with many legitimate uses, so buying it should not raise suspicion. After this stage, building any subsequent fake terminals would be much cheaper and faster, probably taking a few days to a week."

But the importance of the discovery was yesterday undermined by Sandra Quinn, Director of Corporate Communications at APACS, the UK payments association. She told *Varsity* that they "have discovered that the terminal the Cambridge Security Group used isn't in fact a chip and pin terminal and has none of the tamper-responsive switches that the current terminals have". She added that "the terminal manufacturer is writing a letter of complaint to Cambridge". As well as arguing that "what is possible in lab conditions is unlikely to be successful in the real world", she detailed a variety of safety features designed to prevent such fraud.

But the Security Group believes that theirs is not the only method of committing chip and pin fraud. Ross Anderson, another member of the group, said "There are many, many ways in which chip and pin transactions can be attacked". Murdoch added that many of these would be "easier" to achieve, citing the Shell chip and pin fraud last May when magnetic information was copied from cards used in chip and pin transactions, and one mil-

lion pounds was fraudulently siphoned from customer accounts.

Open to such attacks, questions have been asked as to why the machines were introduced and marketed as a safer alternative to the signing method. Murdoch acknowledges that the terminals do incorporate anti-tampering protection, but that "when triggered they only prevent the terminal processing real transactions". He explained that "this feature exists to protect the bank, not the customer".

While previous signature-based transactions laid the responsibility on the bank to prove that the customer authorised payments, chip and pin transactions allow banks to assume that the customer is liable, unless they can prove otherwise.

Murdoch pointed out one negative effect of the move to chip and pin in "the increasing number of complaints about banks claiming to victims of fraud that since a PIN was used either the customer was negligent

in protecting their PIN, or they were attempting to defraud the bank by making false claims".

But it would be difficult to move back to signature cards as banks are apparently reluctant to reissue them. When asked how he personally pays for goods, Murdoch said that he uses cash whenever possible, even though this "results in different risks". He added a recommendation that credit cards should be used in preference to debit cards as the legal protection is better.



Steven Murdoch, part of the team which carried out the research

Hood defeated by rebel dons

Jamie Munk examines the drive for Oxbridge reform

One could have forgiven Dr John Hood for not pulling his party popper with his usual enthusiasm this New Year's Eve. After two years rigorously battling to push through his controversial plans to reform the university's governance, the Oxford vice-chancellor was finally forced to admit defeat on December 19.

In a postal ballot of members of Congregation, Oxford's 'parliament of dons', over 60 per cent voted against the reforms. The major bone of contention for the rebels was that plans to increase the number of external members of the university's governing council would fundamentally undermine the academic freedom and the historic tradition of the university as an independent community of scholars.

But the decision will do little to abate calls for university reform, and many are already predicting significant political repercussions. In the last few years the government has been leaning increasingly on both Oxford and Cambridge to reform their governance. And since the passing of new charity legislation last year, both institutions now face additional pressure from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to bring

their unique systems of self-governance in line with those of other universities.

Few in Cambridge will be lamenting the news from 'the other place'. Had the reforms gone through, Cambridge would have been left on its own to face up to government calls to bring more

"Few in Cambridge will be lamenting the news from the other place"

external members onto its Council. But with the rebel success, the University Council is more likely to be able to stand firm in declaring its resolve to continue governing itself internally.

The Council has already declared that it sees no need for major structural changes, and many feel that Oxford and Cambridge should now work together to ensure that an 800-

year heritage of academic democracy be maintained, and respected by HEFCE as a valid way of running their affairs.

The coming months should be highly revealing. Hood is being called to Parliament early this year to give evidence to the Education and Skills Select Committee's review of higher education, and it is known that Gordon Brown, among others, has concerns over Oxford and Cambridge's ability to govern themselves effectively.

The debate will hinge on whether the universities can prove their own competence, particularly on the question of financial management. In Cambridge, the Council is now in the process of drawing up a green paper proposing limited reforms to achieve such an end. And almost before the postal result had come through in Oxford, all sides were talking of the need for rapprochement so that the university can find the right way to reform.

It is becoming increasingly clear that while divisions remain on the kind of reform needed, there is a broad consensus within both universities that any change should be on their own terms rather than those of the government.

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Drink driver sentenced

»Girton student jailed after high speed crash kills close friend

TOM PARRY-JONES
News Editor

A Cambridge student was sentenced to six-and-a-half years in prison after pleading guilty to causing death by dangerous driving in November 2005.

Ivan Mazour, 22, was driving his Mitsubishi Evolution VIII at 80mph through a 30mph area of Central London when he lost control, hitting a lamp post and an oncoming BMW saloon. Police analysis showed that he was "three times over the drink drive limit", having drunk the equivalent of thirteen whiskies, and that there was "a quantity of cannabis in his system".

His front seat passenger, 21 year-old Charlie Green, was taken to University College Hospital where he was pronounced dead. Green's fiancée, Dookie Groves, was also in the car returning home from a night out in the West End. Groves, also 21, told the court that she had lost her "soulmate", and that she had begged Mazour to slow down when he began driving "crazy fast". Her pleas were ignored and the car spun across the central reservation of the Piccadilly underpass into oncoming traffic. The driver and five passengers in the BMW were injured, as was Ms Groves.

Mazour, at the time of the incident a third year Maths student at



Wreckage abandoned on the Piccadilly underpass after the accident

METROPOLITAN POLICE

Girton, is the son of the president of the Russian oil company RAO Rosneftgazstroj, also called Ivan Mazour. Educated at Eton, he achieved six A-levels at grade 'A', before taking up his place at Cambridge in 2003. Described by a fellow student in his year as "quite a quiet guy", Mazour had a penchant for expensive cars, owning a BMW M5 as well as the Mitsubishi Evolution VIII that was involved in the crash.

Prior to the incident Mazour expressed concern on an internet forum for the passengers in a fellow forum member's wrecked car, a sentiment acknowledged by the judge. Anthony Pitts, sentencing, said "of course you did not intend to kill or even harm Charlie Green that night - indeed he was your friend". But he

maintained that the offence carried the "most serious culpability" due to "excess alcohol ... and greatly excessive speed". Mazour himself also addressed the court, saying "I am so sorry for all the pain and grief and tragedy I have caused to Charlie's family, his fiancée, his friends, to all those injured and their families". He has been disqualified from driving for eight years.

Green had been a student at the London College of Fashion, and was described by the judge as a "remarkable young man". In court his mother spoke of her grief. "What can prepare you for the shock of sudden death? No second chance, no fighting for recovery, just death." She said that Marisha Green attempted suicide following the trauma of her brother's death.

She concluded by speaking of her "memories of the joy he brought us". A website has been set up by Charlie Green's friends to remember his life through photos and "thoughts and feelings".

The incident had passed mostly unnoticed by the Girton student body. Ashley Aarons, JCR President at the time of the crash told *Varsity* that he "hadn't been told about it" by the college. Current JCR President Simon Burdus said that while there was "nothing made of it" by the college authorities, Charlie Green has been mentioned in special remembrance services in the Chapel. Andrew Jefferies, Senior Tutor at the college, refused to comment on the matter, saying it would not be "appropriate".



Victim, Charlie Green MET POLICE

Vice-Chancellor denies Harvard move

»Newspaper points to Alison Richard as likely candidate for Harvard presidency

LIZZIE MITCHELL

A Harvard student newspaper has suggested that Cambridge Vice-Chancellor Alison Richard may leave the University to take up the presidency of Harvard University, a move which would entail Richard abandoning her current post three years before the end of her contract.

The *Harvard Crimson* has published a shortlist of 30 candidates for the presidency, which has been under temporary stewardship since the last incumbent, Lawrence Summers, resigned shortly after hypothesising that a lack of female mathematicians and scientists in the higher levels of academia could be due to innate differences between men and women. With a decision imminent, sources near to the presidential selection committee have suggested Richard's name as one of four which are under most serious consideration for the post; the *Crimson* is pointing to her

as a front-runner.

Richard, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge since 2003, is the only serious candidate currently employed by an institution outside the USA. Should she leave Cambridge for Massachusetts, she would become

"Harvard is ready for a female president"

Harvard's first female president and the first for 370 years not to have a Harvard degree.

President of the *Crimson*, William Ciro Marra, has told *Varsity* that "Harvard is definitely ready for a female president," but added that "there has been no major notable pub-

lic expression of support for [Richard]" at Harvard.

Cambridge professor Gillian Evans has expressed uncertainty over Richard's suitability for the presidency, saying that "Harvard has had a taste of blood", while calling Richard a "low profile Vice-Chancellor" who has "kept Cambridge out of the headlines quite effectively".

Harvard anthropologist Professor David R. Pilbeam, who taught Richard at Cambridge, praised "a wonderful person, academic, teacher, administrator, who would be an equally wonderful Harvard President. I fear, however, that she may feel that she already has the best academic job in the world."

In a statement issued by her office in the wake of recent speculation, Richard affirmed "her deep and unequivocal commitment to the University of Cambridge and to completing the full term of her appointment, which ends in 2010", a moderated version of last month's statement

which claimed that Richard "does not consider herself a candidate for the presidency of Harvard".

Of the other candidates listed as serious contenders for the post, all except one have so far refrained from comment, and the *Crimson* reports that the selection committee is paying no attention to the candidates' public statements in its decision-making process.

It is expected that the new appointment will be announced in early February. Were Richard to accept any offer, it is likely that she would take office on 1 July 2007, the date when academic appointments at Harvard usually take effect.



Ballare

**Plain one, purl one?
Not here, sunshine**

Plain and purling is not often seen as a particularly hazardous pastime, but one politically-active knitter was told otherwise while out on the town at CUSU's weekly Kinki club-night. Jacob Bard-Rosenberg, more widely known for his radical ramblings than his crocheting skills, was sitting in the club working his magic on a new beanie for a friend, when his artistic reverie was interrupted by the arrival of the Ballare bouncers. Our hat-weaving hero was told that the tools of his trade constituted a health and safety hazard for other clubbers, and had them confiscated for the remainder of the evening, in spite of protests that there weren't any "no knitting" signs warning of the prohibition.

Downing

**Windy wilds of the
college paddock**

As Cambridge was ravaged by gale-force winds last week, at least the students of Downing were benefiting from the sage advice of their domestic bursar. 'Wing-commander' Dick Taplin warned his college cadets in an email to "take care when moving around". He hadn't earned his stripes for nothing: the former flying ace immediately spotted the dangers of tile-shedding roofs and flailing branches. Rookies, look to the skies.

Madingley Rise

**Wheeling it out for
your eyes only**

The University is warning its young English roses to avert their eyes this week following the return of a menacing threat to the streets of our fair town. A delinquent young man riding a bike has been spotted near the Old Observatory on Madingley Rise exhibiting more of himself than is desirable to passing ladies. In the past, exhibitioners were an important part of the life of the University, but college authorities are keen to stress that the seeming return of this gentleman, last seen a year ago, is a wholly different matter.

Selwyn

**Unexpected snowball
hits a little hard**

One Snowball reveller got more than he bargained for after misunderstanding the concept of the event's one-way system. After a few tentative paces, his error was brought to his attention by a resounding thump in the face from a student security guard. Speculation continues as to whether this particular entertainment will be moved to the main stage for next year's ball.

Return of the water vole

»Ratty comes back to Cambridge after twenty year absence



A vole tests out the water temperature

TERRY LONGLEY

TOM MORIATY

Cambridge's scenic backs area is joining the fight against the extinction of one of Britain's most endangered species.

Water vole burrows have been spotted along a ditch between Clare and King's colleges following drainage work carried out last spring. Wildlife experts hope that environmental improvements made to the area will help to safeguard the future prospects of the Cam's water vole population, whose numbers have declined rapidly over the last forty years.

From a population of around eight million in 1960, water vole numbers had plummeted to 2.3 million by 1990 and 345,000 by 1998. Current esti-

mates rest at just 220,000, a disastrous demographic decline of 95 per cent in the last 20 years alone. While voles were once a common feature of

"I vividly remember one crawling up my punt pole"

Britain's riverside landscapes, the sighting of one has become something of a rare treat for fans of the furry creatures.

A former research fellow of Jesus

College recalled with a sense of nostalgia the heady days of the early 1970s. "Voles were legion; I vividly remember one of the furry fellows crawling up my punt pole."

But now, with the new location and sightings of voles in the nearby Garret Hostel Lane there is hope that the old burrows will soon be repopulated and that the rodents will be a familiar sight in Cambridge once more.

A spokesman for the University said "This particular ditch was found to be a good habitat for these shy creatures. It is a sunny, quiet, ideally sloping bank, with no sign of cats, mink or foxes". The conservation project is planned for Summer 2007, once funding has been obtained.

The creatures are often mistaken for rats, and indeed in Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* Ratty is in fact a water vole, known for his kind and friendly nature. Unfortunately, since that book was written, American Mink have been introduced into the country and they have proven to be far worse enemies than the Weasels and Stoats which troubled Mr Toad, Badger, Moley and Ratty. Their predations have ravaged the riverside population, while management of waterways and drainage systems has also destroyed much of the natural habitat for the voles in recent years.

Ruth Hawksley from the Wildlife Trust said, "Often ditches are managed by drainage engineers who want everything to look "tidy", but the same flood defence can be achieved through more "wildlife friendly" management".

If the conservation work is carried out and the Backs become a suitable habitat for water voles, look out for them sunbathing and floating down the river on pieces of wood – two of the creatures' favourite pastimes.

Brothel ring crackdown fails to impress councillors

KATY LEE

Two Cambridge residents sentenced for managing a chain of brothels in the Romsey area have walked free from court. By the time a verdict was passed on December 21, Andrew Reader and Stephen Pilsworth had already spent enough time in police custody to have served out their sentences.

A major operation to crack the

"I would have been gutted to see these people walk"

brothel ring began in June 2004 after Reader was discovered at Stansted Airport with £3,700 in his luggage. Undercover police officers posed as "punters", visiting the houses on Coleridge Road, Sedgwick Street and Thoday Street to question the sex workers. Raids were consequently carried out on the establishments in January 2006, culminating in the arrests of Reader and Pilsworth. Five maids, who undertook secretarial work for the brothels, were also arrested and consequently sentenced. Reader was sentenced to three concurrent 18-month sentences and Pilsworth to three nine-month sentences.

Advertisements for the brothels, running under the names of "Elite" and "Elegance", had been placed in the *Cambridge Evening News*. John Farmer, the prosecutor, said it would have been "obvious to an idiot" that sex services were being offered to

visitors. Mr Farmer did emphasise however that there was no suggestion "that the women were underage or coerced".

No official records of turnover have been found but the brothel chain is estimated to have brought in a total of over £500,000 over a period of twenty months, with Reader personally receiving approximately £2,000 each month.

There has been local protestation at the leniency of the sentences applied in this case and at the laws surrounding prostitution in general.

Cambridgeshire County Councillor Geoffrey Heathcock has called for reform of sentencing laws, telling *Varsity* that "a lot of money changed hands for these individuals, the police spent a significant amount of time working on this case and had I been a police officer I would have been gutted to see these people walk!"

County Cllr Alice Douglas and City Cllr Catherine Smart also highlighted the need for a change in the law, claiming that "current laws often force prostitutes into a criminal sub-culture". Cllr Douglas cited the recent murders of five prostitutes in Ipswich and suggested that "regulation of brothels, as long as there is neither trafficking nor exploitation involved, may be a way to better protect sex workers from abuse. Regulation would also help protect local communities from any related nuisance or disturbance."

The local sex industry is thriving according to a 2004 investigation by researchers from BBC Radio Cambridgeshire, who found a total of 70 opportunities to pay for sex in the county. One former brothel manager commented that "from the centre of Cambridge it would take ten minutes to find somewhere, and if you could get a cab it would be two minutes".

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Daniel Bolger found in River Cam

»Police dredge river between Magdalene and Jesus Lock in search for missing student

ALICE WHITWHAM

At 3.15 pm on Wednesday 6 December, the body of former Cambridge student Daniel Bolger was discovered by rowers at Jesus Green Lock on the River Cam.

Having attended a formal dinner at Magdalene College, Daniel was last seen in the early hours of 26 November. He was missing for 13 days before the body was found and Spartan Rescue teams dredged the river bed between Jesus Green and Magdalene. The search began when it became apparent that Daniel's bicycle had been abandoned in Sidney Street.

On Friday 8 December, Daniel's parents travelled from their home

"the college has been shocked by the loss of Daniel"

in Newcastle to identify the body. The post-mortem examination revealed that the cause of death was a heart attack caused by falling into freezing water. Led by Detective Inspector Chris Mead, police investigating Daniel's disappearance do not regard his death as suspicious. Bolger's funeral took place in North Shields on Friday 15 December and he was buried in Preston Cemetery, Walton Avenue.

During his time at Christ's College, Daniel had worked at the University Library and was considering starting a Masters Degree in

Philosophy next year. Professor Frank Kelly, Master of Christ's and Daniel's supervisor in his first year, told *Varsity* "The College has been shocked by the loss of Daniel. He was much loved by his many friends amongst the mathematicians, the choir, the theatre and throughout the College."

UL Librarian Peter Fox added, "Daniel was a popular, well-respected and valued member of staff and we were deeply shocked and saddened to hear of his death. He was intelligent, serious, committed, and made a difference to the atmosphere of the Manuscripts Room when he was in it."

Daniel was also a member of Christ's College Choir and participated in shows with the Gilbert and Sullivan Society, Clare Actors and the Amateur Dramatic Club. His dramatic credits include *The Winter's Tale*, *Travesties* and *Wetmarsh* College at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Bolger's final performance was in *Princess Ida* in Cornwall last September. Sarah Knight, a member of the orchestra, said "Dan was always a joy to watch on stage".

Close friend Helena Culliney added her praises: "Dan was always there, yes, ready to help, but also ready to share a joke or give you a hug". She told *Varsity* "After the sadness, I always feel uplifted by the memory - like there is something to celebrate... in a way, Dan is more alive than ever".

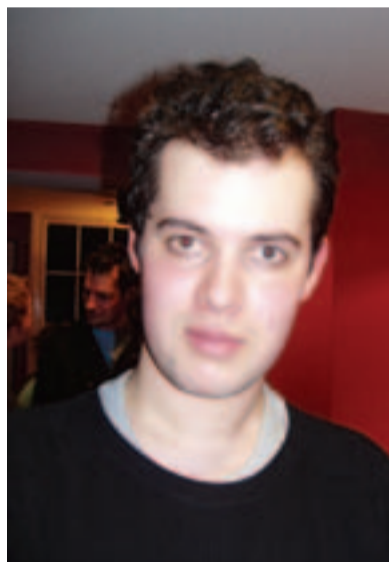
When contacted by *Varsity* Daniel's parents declined to comment, but they invite all of his friends to his memorial, to be held at Christ's College Chapel on 27 January at 3.00 pm.

*Additional reporting by
Jonny Kanagasooriam*



The River Cam being dredged in early December in the search for Daniel's body

CEN



Daniel Bolger

MEGAN PROSSER

Daniel Bolger: fondly remembered

"I will always remember my friend Bolger and it will be as he always was: one of those extraordinary things that, without too much explanation, just make the world a better place" **Ed Curry**

"He was opinionated but gracious, real but inspiringly positive, ever the initiator of giggles (with him, not at him!) and gave the most fantastic life-affirming hugs." **Belinda Sherlock**

"Dan was a great friend to me, extremely warm hearted and supportive. Any words seem inadequate." **Fiona MacKay**

"Dan was one of the most open, affectionate and above all genuine people I have ever met". **Dave Walton**

"Dan brought kindness and loyalty to his relationships with everyone he knew... his beautiful personality will be sorely missed in Cambridge and in our lives forever." **Megan Prosser**

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Cross Campus

Northumbria

A novel New Year's diet regime

The future is looking decidedly orange for one student, after vowing to eat nothing but carrots for thirty days. Hayley Davison settled on the venture after an argument with her house-mates over "carotenemia", where skin turns orange. By day 13 she described a "yellow tinge" to her hands. She said "I hope to turn as orange as David Dickinson at least; either that or gain superhuman eyesight."

Imperial

A vacation that's out of this world

A student at Imperial College London hopes to be the first student space tourist in 2010. Michael Halls-Moore hopes to improve "public awareness of space exploration in general", and has claimed in an interview with The Londonist that he would use the flight "as a means to promote environmentally friendly transport", by offsetting the carbon dioxide released by the flight. He hopes to finance the project by selling stars over the internet.

Aberdeen

Scots students have consciences examined

Students at Robert Gordon University (RGU) were distressed to discover that answers had been inadvertently attached to the paper for their business examination. The students alerted invigilators to the error and the exam has been rescheduled.

Trident plans spark protest

»Cambridge students arrested for blockading nuclear submarine base

LUCY MCKEON

Two Cambridge students were arrested earlier this month for forming a blockade outside a Scottish nuclear base.

Liz Dodd and Sam Goff were detained overnight for breach of the peace and resisting arrest following a six hour obstruction of the entrance to the Faslane submarine base on the River Clyde on Sunday 7 January. They were among a total of sixteen students and seventeen academics arrested that day from universities including Oxford, Sussex and Edinburgh.

"detained overnight for breach of the peace"

The students had congregated at Faslane in response to Tony Blair's plans to upgrade Britain's nuclear weapons arsenal. Dodd described the protest itself as a "great show of solidarity" in which a series of academics gave an open-air seminar on the road entitled "Academia vs. Weapons of Mass Destruction".

On the day of the demonstration students attached themselves to fences and gates with a series of padlocks and chains. The Strathclyde police force had underestimated the turnout of protestors and it was not until the fifth hour of the demonstration that enough officers were mobilised to begin making arrests.



Protesters gathering outside the Faslane submarine base on the River Clyde

DAN VOCKINS

Goff, a linguist from Robinson College, recounted the day of the protest. "The MoD Special Cutting Police were called to saw through the chains and drainpipes we had used to lock ourselves to each other. Then we went limp whilst being arrested, therefore requiring 4 policemen per protester to carry us to the waiting police vans."

Goff spent 13 hours in a police cell in Baird St, "apparently the 'knife death capital of Europe'". He told *Varsity* that "I've had more comfortable nights, but it's a small price to pay for such an important cause". He and Liz are still waiting to hear from the Procurator Fiscal in Glasgow to find out whether the charges have been dropped.

£20bn cost of renewing Trident weapons system

Clyde Naval Base was unmoved: "they were exercising a democratic right - we have no problem with that". A spokesperson explained that they were just doing their job for the

government and were "not in a position to comment as to whether they agree or disagree" with the arrests.

The protest was organised by an Oxford activist group in conjunction with Faslane 365, an organisation that has been attempting to stage a year-long continuous blockade at the nuclear base since October 2006.

It lasted for approximately 365 minutes, according to Dodd, a "big achievement" for the organisation. "There's something incredibly ironic about being arrested for breach of the peace for blockading a nuclear base", she added. "It's costing the government billions to renew Trident, which would give them enough nuclear power to destroy the earth four times".

Christmas with Squirt

LOU MALLAM

Shunning the tacky crackers and sodden sprouts, a Cambridge student opted for a Christmas submerged with Squirt, a three metre wide Giant Pacific Octopus.

Danni Assemakis wants to discover whether octopi learn by touch or sight as part of her Marine Biology and Animal Behaviour degree at Anglia Ruskin University. Squirt was first confronted with a smooth black ball and rewarded with a succulent prawn whenever he placed the ball near his mouth. He took the black ball challenge every hour, on the hour, for four days before a textured white ball was called in and no further prawns were proffered. His final stark choice was between black and white disks along with smooth and textured transparent balls.

Assemakis reckoned that "Squirt has learnt through both sensory and visual pathways" but may have to persist in her sub-aquatic endeavours as "it will take a while longer to draw final conclusions". She told *Varsity* she found it interesting that "he often spent up to three times longer handling the smooth objects so it is possible that a sense of touch is predominant".

Squirt's manifold talents do not end here, it seems. In the summer of

2006, Cornwall College student Paul Martin created the innovative "Octobox", a perspex safe house filled with the ever-favoured prawns. Undeterred, the massive mollusc swiftly mastered both the screw and latch mechanisms and gobbled down the crustaceous feast within. His multiple limbs should come in handy for his next task, attempting to understand a basic lock and key system, an undertaking which Blue Reef manager David Waines warned may require "just a little more time".

These extraordinary feats can only support scientists insisting that the Giant Pacific is the most

intelligent member of the cephalopod family, an assertion likely to disappoint Common Atlantic Octopus enthusiasts. The Giant Pacific's inquisitive nature has led to a number of high-profile break-outs and on occasion octopi have been found mercilessly pillaging neighbouring fish displays.

Waines said he was aware that Australian octopi had behaved in this way and cited one persistent offender who legged it before baffling aquarium employees by swiftly returning to his tank early in the morning. Fortunately for nearby cuttlefish, there should be no such skulduggery going on in Newquay.



Squirt, the talented Giant Pacific Octopus

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King's fortunes wax and wane

»Candlesticks sold off last year by King's College to be re-auctioned at five times original price

JO TRIGG

A pair of "monumental and magnificent" brass candle standards from King's College chapel are being sold at London auctioneers Bonhams this month with a price estimate of between £40,000 and £50,000; more than four times the amount King's received for them when they were originally sold in 2005.

In Autumn 2005 the 10ft high candlesticks were sold at Cambridgeshire auction house Willingham Auctions, but their provenance was not revealed in the sale catalogue. Neither King's nor the designer Gilbert Scott were mentioned. A spokesperson for Willingham Auctions said that "the vendor wished to remain anonymous".

Gavin Stamp, architectural historian and author of *King's College Chapel: Architectural History*,

believes that this sale was "kept deliberately secret", and expressed his concern in an email to Acting Provost of King's Tess Adkins. He told *Varsity* that he "received no reply" from the "smug and arrogant" college.

But King's have strongly denied withholding any information. A spokesperson claimed that there was "no secrecy about it" adding that the College "would have had to describe their provenance, because of the chance that they could be stolen". But Stamp believes that withholding information about the candlesticks resulted in them selling for "peanuts" and that "Bonhams have a much better idea of their worth".

The 303cm-high candlesticks were commissioned for the Chapel in 1870, and designed in the early Renaissance style by architect George Gilbert Scott the Younger. The cylindrical tapers bear the college crest, which was granted by Henry VIII, in silver and enamel, and support six candle sconces.

They will be sold at Bonhams as part of "The Gentleman's Library" sale on January 29, and are described in a press release as the sale's "highlight". But King's has told *Varsity* that the greater valuation given by Bonhams is the result of their design being wrongly attributed to the famous Gothic architect E. W. Pugin. A college spokesperson explained that they had contacted the auctioneers to correct this but said that "Bonhams changed the description but not the price". When asked whether they had contacted the auctioneers again, he claimed that this

was not the College's responsibility.

But Robert Bleasdale, the Bonhams specialist responsible for the candle standards, was adamant that "At no time were we contacted by King's and advised by them as to the origins of the candle standards". He told *Varsity* "I can categorically state that the only contact between ourselves and King's was a courtesy telephone call from me to the Provost's office... our information regarding the design source was already in the public arena and no information concerning the manufacture, provenance or any other related matter was given to me by King's."

Bleasdale agreed with Stamp about the suspicious nature of the sale in 2005. He argued that "it seems strange that Kings did not reveal this information if they were indeed aware of, or wished to achieve, the maximum price for them". King's claims that £9,000 was the correct value, based on "two or three estimates", but when Bonhams found the original design source at the Royal Institute of British Architects and confirmed that they were designed by Gilbert Scott Junior, they increased the guide price from £30,000-£40,000 to £40,000-£50,000. Bleasdale was surprised by King's decision to sell artefacts of such provenance, asking why the college would agree to a sale "if Kings were aware the standards were by George Gilbert Scott junior and specifically designed for the chapel".

Stamp was similarly concerned. He told *Varsity*, "everyone who has heard about this expresses disgust at



King's Chapel, former home of the brass candlesticks

DEBBIE SCANLAN

King's behaviour, which is as stupid as it is shabby". While Adkins informed him that the candlesticks had been sold because they were "surplus to the College's needs", Stamp dismissed this as "no explanation" and claimed that "the College is, as it were, "in denial" about the great crime committed in the 1960s".

The "crime" to which Stamp refers is the reconfiguration of the East End of the Chapel in the 1960s by Sir Martyn Beckett, which involved removing panelling and raising the floor to make space for Peter Paul

Rubens' *Adoration of the Magi*. The candle standards had to be moved into storage, where they remained until the sale. But Stamp argued that the transformation "by that old buffoon and vandal Sir Martyn Beckett" was "an aesthetic disaster". He concluded that the candlesticks had to be removed because "they would have shown up the mediocrity of Beckett's work", and attributed the subsequent actions of King's to the fact that "the College is ashamed of its behaviour". "What a dreadful college King's remains", he added.



BONHAMS

King's crest on the candlestick

Botanic Garden: the burning bush

The University Botanic Garden will be setting fire to part of a new display to demonstrate the importance of bushfires in foreign climes. The exhibit, entitled "Continents Apart", is now open to the public. It showcases the diverse wild floras of Australia and South Africa, many of which are threatened with extinction.

Rob Brett, glasshouse supervisor at the garden, explained that "the displays are lit with a blow torch periodically" because certain flowering plants rely on the heat of fire to crack open seed pods. This method of dispersion also ensures a nutritious bed of ash for seedlings to develop in. Garden Superintendent, Tim Upson describes the aim of the project on the Botanic Garden website as "to explore how the dynamic interactions of climate change, geology and living things, over the course of millions of years, have resulted in some of the most diverse and exciting plant communities on earth."

The exhibit promises to transport the visitor to the Cape of South Africa or the Australian outback; eucalyptus plants infuse aromatic essential oils into the atmosphere, and warm-coloured stones emulate the "sun-baked landscapes" to which the featured flora are native.

Live web cam footage of the "Continents Apart" display can be viewed at www.botanic.cam.ac.uk.

Parisa Razaz



CAMBRIDGE PRESS OFFICE

Carbon Monoxide Scare

NIKKI BURTON

Two carbon monoxide leaks at Hughes Hall left 80 students without hot water for five days.

The alarm was raised on October 26 when a fourth year medic's wife, living in Fenner's Building, complained of feeling unwell and was referred to Addenbrookes Hospital by her doctor with suspected carbon monoxide (CO) in the bloodstream. A test confirmed this but the woman was not admitted.

An immediate investigation of the boiler room was carried out by the College Maintenance team, and two nearby apartments were evacuated. Blaming a faulty valve inside the boiler, the college requested the installation of CO detectors in the evacuated areas.

Three weeks later an alarm was triggered when increased levels of CO were detected in the Boiler Room again. No one was affected but the boil-

ers were isolated for five days.

Bursar Neil Taylor told *Varsity* that the occupants were "kept informed... and given progress reports". He added that residents had access to hot water in nearby accommodation blocks, admitting that as this "would cause inconvenience" £20 compensation was given to each student.

A disgruntled postgraduate said the approach of senior staff was "not good enough; they could not be bothered to deal with the students affected, so they shunned responsibility by leaving communication to office juniors." He complained that the problem was not fixed immediately: "The college's solution was to install detectors, rather than fix the problem".

But Taylor reported much positive feedback. One student purportedly contacted him saying "Thank-you for sorting this out as swiftly as possible and for keeping us all up-to-date with progress." No CO emissions have since been detected.

Varsity Asks

What's your New Year's Resolution, then?

- Save the water vole.
- Appear on Celebrity Big Brother.
- Take up hangliding.
- Become President of Harvard.



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Oxbridge Essays offers support for struggling students

»New scholarship scheme for postgrads rubbished by University

TOM WOOLFORD

Oxbridge Essays has this week launched a scheme for potential post-graduate students, in which they receive a contribution towards their course fees in return for completing essays for the firm. Starting next year there will be three scholarships, worth up to £5000 and about forty sponsorships of £2000 available to the most able Oxbridge students applying for post-graduate study.

But both Oxford and Cambridge University have condemned the company and its new scheme. A

“both Oxford and Cambridge have condemned the company and its new scheme”

spokesperson at Cambridge said: “We would strongly disapprove of students writing essays for other people. Not only is it cheating, or complicit with cheating, but it goes against the entire purpose of a university education, which is to develop one’s own ideas and skills, not buy them in from elsewhere.”

Oxford University expressed similar concerns and added that Oxford students “must not use the University’s IT systems or network for activities involving private profit or commercial purposes.”

In contrast, some Oxbridge students have welcomed the scheme as a new way of financing courses. Edel Byrne, a former graduate student of Cambridge, admitted when applying for her course that she was “worried about the cost of postgrad study”, and described the scheme as an “interesting project and perfectly manageable”. Other students currently looking in to post-graduate courses have expressed interest. Jack Gillett, an undergraduate applying for a PhD, said: “Dependent on details it sounds like a tempting offer; a day or so of work for full funding, against a grand a year for supervisions.”

Students who receive the financial support will be contracted to complete a set amount of work as repayment. For a standard 2000-word essay, completed in six days to a 2:1 standard, Oxbridge Essays pays its contractors £95, so a £2000 sponsorship would involve writing the equivalent of over 18 standard Cambridge undergraduate supervision essays.

If the scheme is successful, its director John Foster thinks it could become “a major pool of funding that Oxbridge students might in future turn to in the face of sparse govern-



The Oxbridge Essays recruitment team at work

JOE GOSDEN

ment and private funding - especially in the humanities”. But, even the maximum financial support offered by the scheme is not a sufficient replacement for government or private funding.

The typical Masters student at Cambridge must show evidence that they can raise £13,500 for fees and living expenses. Without full government funding, neither the £2,000 sponsorships nor scholarship, which fully covers fees, would meet University requirements.

Cambridge University has criticised the new scheme for the extra strain it will put on postgraduate students. “Cambridge students, in any case, have very heavy work-

loads and writing essays for other people would inevitably put their own progress at risk.”

But Foster insists that sponsored students “can comfortably study and work casually [for Oxbridge Essays] one or two days a week”.

It is unclear how the contracts offered to postgraduates through this scheme will stand within University regulations. Full-time postgraduates studying at Cambridge are in some colleges prohibited from taking on paid work, with the exception of supervisions arranged by the University, and the work required by Oxbridge Essays could be considered a breach of these rules.

Jesus student dies in hospital

LIZZIE MITCHELL

Louise Wallace, a student at Jesus College, died on 23 November following her transferal from Addenbrooke’s Hospital to the heart and lung transplant unit at Papworth Hospital.

Louise was first admitted to Addenbrooke’s with a kidney complaint. It was at Papworth that her cystic fibrosis condition deteriorated.

Iain and Gillian Wallace, Louise’s parents, were with her when she died, as were her brother Craig and long-term boyfriend James Waters.

James, another student at Jesus, described her as “an amazing, beautiful and radiant young woman” with a determination to defend the vulnerable and unwavering bravery in the face of her illness.

“Louise was always aware that she had been born with a disease for which there was no cure and which she could not outlive, a disease which at once helped shape who she was and yet had nothing to do with the true Louise at all,” James said.

A close friend described Louise as an “inspiration” who “put us all to shame with your strength, your determination, and your relentlessly positive attitude”.

Despite her condition, Louise gained international sporting recognition at rounders, captained her school 1st XII netball and competed at a

national level in debating while at the same time flourishing as an SPS student at Jesus College.

Louise’s father, Iain Wallace, described his daughter as “a born fighter who would never let her condition come before a good argument or a feisty tennis match”.

A funeral was held in Perth on 30 November and a memorial service

took place on 1 December in Jesus College Chapel.

In order to raise money for cystic fibrosis research and patient care, James and Louise’s mother Gillian will be walking the 100-mile West Highland Way. For those who wish to pledge money in support of this aim, James can be contacted at jw422@cam.ac.uk.



Louise at the Varsity Hockey Ball

JAMES WATERS

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Dear Sir,

I have some genuine sympathy for Madeleine Teahan and her society's members. Condoms raining from the sky and wall-to-wall posters on safe sex can be bewildering, annoying, or even offensive.

Yet in a compassionate, tolerant, and liberal society we have to take a little offence and put up with those who offend us. I've only ever vandalised one CICCUC poster. Many more times I've been in conversations with people who all found each others' views anathema. Yet we remained mostly civilised,

Dear Varsity,

Having been featured in a recent article, in your latest edition, regarding the piercing of condoms I would like to clarify some vital points.

I do not support the piercing of condoms in any way and neither does the Cambridge Pro-Life Society of which I am President. When referring to people who oppose contraception I mentioned some may be pro-life in explaining their opposition to contraception and its distribution. Meaning some, and I emphasise 'some' pro-lifers are anti-contraception because they are against promiscuity not because they encourage unprotected sex. This does not follow therefore, as implied in Hoggart's article that it is common place for members of our society to pierce or condone piercing condoms, and this is a totally unfair and inaccurate representation of the society and myself.

I ask that this point can be made clear in your next edition of Varsity as inference from the article by Miss Hoggart was a detrimental misrepresentation of what the Pro-Life Society stands for.

Madeleine Teahan
Corpus Christi College

Dear Sir,

As the time comes around for New

and always friends. The difference between this and the 'protest' registered by those who have "tampered" with condoms is infinite.

It is positively sinister and obscene to carry out such an act in the full knowledge of the physical and psychological harm that might be done to another person. In the worst case it is morally tantamount to homicide. That is no exaggeration or melodrama given the (ultimately terminal) effect of AIDS.

Indeed it is not even necessary to commit such an act to spread panic. One need only start a rumour. This may not threaten life but it will cause deep emotional harm to fellow students. Those who are considering such an act should

Year's Resolutions, I have decided to give up on Facebook. No longer shall my days be dedicated to the narcissistic perusal of the profiles of others in a desperate bid to prove to myself that not only do I have better hair, but I have more friends, more wall posts and have been poked more frequently than a whore in a Thai brothel.

From now on, my life will be a Facebook free zone. I don't care that Suzie is eating a sandwich, I don't know if Lucy has added more photos of her vomiting after formal, I am now spending my time pursuing other interests. I have decided to embrace the ideas of Tess Riley and become an Ethics Girl. I shall devote my time to saving the world. I might, however, just have a quick check to see if Tom is still single first, and to see how many more posts Rob has...

Jemima Stoke
Emmanuel College

Dear Sir,

I have been an avid reader of Varsity for many years; throughout my undergraduate career and during the first two of my Chemistry PhD. During this time I have observed the interesting variation in the proportion of News and Sport content in relation to that devoted to Arts and Features.

I have watched with despair as page after page that could be devoted to

reflect on what compassion is and how people deserve to be treated.

Maybe Matthew 14:14 would help.

"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion towards them, and he healed their sick."

David Morgan
Fitzwilliam College

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



student politics, scientific discovery and college sports has been lost. In its place all this is offered seems to be an irrelevant mix of opinion and speculation concerning awful thespians and manically depressed skinny-jeaned indy kids. I call for this to stop! "No more!" you hear the Chemist cry!

Unless a substantial change occurs in the content of your newspaper, a newspaper that I had previously grown to love, then I may be forced to start reading TCS; please do not do this to me.

Maurice Haberdasher
Chemistry Department

Dear Sir,

I failed to appreciate the distinction drawn by Mike Kielty (Varsity, 648) between the cultures of America vs. that of the rest of the world. British students wearing Indian saris over US denim seems to reflect not the decline and fall of empires, but rather the rise and rise of a limp and affected internationalism. New World Orders are built of more substantial stuff than a fashionista whim, and it is not the iPod that we should seek to avoid, nor the hijab or the sari; I'd rather that the "troublesome question" of national identity remains troublesome, and not reduced to a meaningless, broad-brush dichotomy.

Mark Proctor
Selwyn College

VARSLITY

Colleges, Tradition and Pride

The change that comes over college authorities, when placed under the media spotlight, can often be quite remarkable. This week, Trinity Hall Senior Tutor Nick Bampos was more than willing to talk to Varsity about Dr. Hutchinson being cleared and how the college dealt with the issue. Yet before the verdict the college's dealings with the press could have been described as distinctly "prickly" - perhaps not surprising considering the "Dirty Don" headlines printed in the Cambridge Evening News - demonstrating the typical defensive response of any college involved in a newsworthy "incident".

The unwillingness of colleges to release information is a difficulty often faced by Cambridge student journalism. When an incident happens within a college, be it involving a student, member of staff or alumni, the authorities invariably seek to hush the matter up. Unfortunately the same is often the case when it comes to informing students at the college of the incident. Just recently, when Girton student Ivan Manzour was imprisoned, there was national press coverage of the conviction before Senior Tutor Andrew Martin informed the student body of the situation.

One of the most pertinent examples of a college shutting down in this way must be the response of St Edmund's to an alleged sexual assault that happened there in November. There had been no mention of an assault on a member of staff, carried out by a student with a history of violence, in any collegiate or university press release and St Edmund's students had neither been informed of the incident nor the assailant's subsequent disciplining. The first Varsity knew about the assault was when the News Desk received an anonymous phone call late one Thursday evening. When attempts were made to investigate the matter, reporters were passed from department to department and it proved extremely difficult to gain confirmation of even the most basic facts.

Pride often appears to dictate a policy of keeping anything potentially detrimental to a college's reputation firmly under wraps. Even a simple story, involving students being disciplined for drunken misdemeanors, can send a college into shut down. Senior Tutors refuse to comment, Deans suddenly stop answering their phones and Head Porters just disappear. It is as if the college, shamed that the incident could happen, seeks to reassure itself that if it bats down the hatches the media attention will eventually fade. Such was the case when a Jesus second year assaulted a fellow student after an Ent last term. The oft-quoted phrase "the matter is being dealt with internally" has worrying implications, especially in the light of the archaic collegiate disciplinary system that Varsity uncovered in Issue 641. If Cambridgeshire Police can divulge almost full details of a case's incident log over the phone quite happily, it seems utterly bizarre that colleges regularly refuse to even acknowledge whether a case took place.

The close proximity of living quarters, omnipresent traditions and a bizarre lack of contact with the outside world can mean that sometimes colleges appear more akin to mediaeval villages than they do modern day educational institutions. In many ways this insularity can be beneficial. It creates a sense of community and fosters close relationships. That students were prepared to fly back from year-out placements to represent a supervisor in court stands testament to the close bonds that are developed. Some of the allure of a Cambridge education undoubtedly comes from the traditions and alleged mysterious goings-on in the city's secluded cloisters or twisting corridors. When it is a matter of whether a fresher once "pennied" Stephen Hawking or if Trinity actually pay Downing not to finish building their quad, then its effect is acceptable and even somewhat charming. It is unfortunate that the attitude so often infects the way in which colleges often deal with disciplinary matters, the media and the wider world in general.

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Success for Anti-Racist Campaigners

In this week in 1970, Cambridge University Hockey Club released a statement to announce the cancellation of a fixture against the "Proteas", the South African touring side. A motion deploring the match was passed in every college. Every college, that is, apart from Magdalene College, where it was passed 104 to 88...

Over at Graduate Centre, meanwhile, the President declared that hospitality would not be extended to any visiting team selected on racial grounds. City-wide, a crack-down on violent crime was heralded by the creation of new "skinhead patrols" to prevent the rash of attacks that once accompanied the start of a new term.

In other news... While anti-apartheid activists celebrated a success, undergraduates at St John's celebrated a victory of their own. Students would now be able to enter the college at any time up to 6am. Hurrah! The Anchor had clearly spent time reflecting on its advertising policy over the Christmas break, conjuring up the immortal line: "Drop Anchor at the Anchor!"

Ever wondered why the pages look the way they do?

Think you could do it better?

production@varsity.co.uk



The Idler returns, engorged with Christmas plenty and flatulent with the gases of decaying goodwill. Over the festive season I have, paradoxically, idled myself to excess, sitting in front of the television and enjoying the free flow of food. Eventually, like the Christmas day leftovers that are still in the fridge a week later, the rich and delicious has festered into the disgusting. My digestive tract is still attempting to cope with a backlog of sprouts as I roll around helpless, like a plump infant, unable to move.

Admittedly this is an exaggeration, but the difficult return to Cambridge, the long nights and the after effects of Christmas have ended my ambivalent mood. Idling is no passive occupation, it's an active campaign to pro-

These oddballs have made me fear the route of academia

tect our way of life from the agents of busy-ness. I see them hurrying in the streets, thinking in the libraries and despair of the current quality of student living. "I must apply to an Investment Bank" I catch myself thinking in a weak moment.

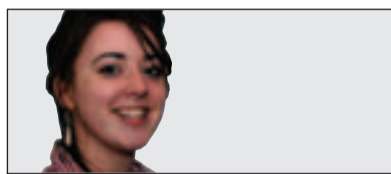
This new wave of feeling puts me in mind of the great Paxman, once an editor of this very publication, who after many years of enjoying a happy, sheltered, existence, woke up to the realisation that just about everyone in Cambridge was a twat. I believe I have woken to the same unhappy realisation. Yet, unlike Paxman, who has launched a career out of making contrary fellows feel uncomfortable, I do not yet feel powerful enough to serve the proper admonishment to those who deserve it. If anyone feels like doing so, I'm happy to hand over a list of names.

This week Academics are bothering me. Some are nice, and clearly watch TV, eat crisps and get laid. Yet, others can only be described as socially maladjusted. My encounters with these oddballs have made me fear the route of academia. I have seen the consequences of book learning; they aren't pretty. There is a balance to be struck between work and play. Unfortunately, many Cantabs have let this balance become unnaturally skewed. Fear of failure and the desperate, cloying desire for self-advancement are the factors that drive them. Leave this mix of humours to settle too long, and one day you'll find that you're 40-years-old, with scraggy hair, and an engorged sense of your own self-importance.

Yes, I generalise I know, and this vision is the more the product of my own fears of what I might become than anything else. But there are some times, when a little snotty-nosed guy at the front of the lecture hall is clearly getting a sad little kick out of the small amount of power he's invested with, that I point the finger of blame at the bullies for neglecting their duties of social normalisation and allowing him to pass through life without being hammered into a less appalling person.

Times they aren't a-changing

The eight week slog that's impossible to give up...



NATALIE WOOLMAN

My best friend from school has just embarked on another 16-week term at University. And she's a medic. That's 16 weeks of 9am lectures, ward rounds, caffeine-induced shakes and dealing with her own laundry bag. It's enough to make an eight-weeks-a-term-but-you-don't-understand-it's-still-bloody-stressful-thank-you English student like myself feel like something of a part-timer.

The horrifying reality is that someday, in the not too distant future, I will be presented with only 28 days of annual leave. What is 28 days when you spread it over the course of 12 months? Certainly not enough time to see half of Eastern Europe, prance around Edinburgh during the Fringe and make several trips to crash on the floors of various friends up and down the country. I have grown so accustomed to month-long wedges of freedom that the very idea of a stolen but idyllic weekend in the Lake District inspires nothing but hoarse laughter.

At Cambridge, we do everything to excess: work to excess, play to excess, drink to excess. For eight weeks we drive ourselves into the ground before we drag our decimated, flu-ey bodies back to Mum's cooking and thoughts of a mindless 9 till 5 for the next month. But, surely we have to question in this split existence whether Cambridge terms are setting us all up for a fall at



the end of it all? Indeed, these eight-week "terms" almost seem emblematic of how far removed our backwater is from reality. Life

'For eight weeks we drive ourselves into the ground before we drag our tired flu-ey bodies back to Mum's cooking and a mindless 9 to 5'

doesn't split into two halves: six months "work" and six months "holiday". The very notion that we can compartmentalise both time and effort into those strict boundaries seems nothing short of ridiculous. Whilst the half-year break evokes a sense of symmetry in the aesthetic mind (my own), in reality the eight-week nuggets fail to promote the balance they suggest. The Cambridge bubble is defined by its very ignorance of balance. We all know those mad jugglers, who deftly throw a Yeats' essay to a supervisor before re-kindling a relationship with their trusty hermes account to organise a political speaker and an organ recital, all before hitting the pub before closing time.

But, are these sickening individuals relying on the brevity of an eight-week term rather than boundless enthusiasm to get them through? Indeed, I wonder

whether the Cambridge system itself can only operate at the level it does because everyone knows that they only have to hold themselves upright for eight weeks.

Yet, despite the unreal element to the Cambridge system, the completely fictitious parcelling of time and effort, Cambridge students claim to have their sights firmly fixed upon the "real world". Clubs and societies are run with professional standards in mind: the ADC, sports teams, orchestras, the very paper I am writing in, aspire to be not far from the "real" versions out there in the big, bad world. They often succeed in being just as stressful. You often hear of people with a 40-hour a week "job" on top of their degree. Extra-curricular activities here are a kind of internship; training and experience that will hopefully earn the perfect career at the end of it all.

Cambridge itself instils a sense of confidence, a whisper of "Somehow you will get it done" floats from the backs, and with more all-nighters than I would care to remember behind me, often you do. So, maybe these blasts of pressure are training us in "time management", or whatever these lifelong learning courses are calling organisation these days. Maybe we are taking baby, eight-week-term-size steps towards the high-pressure jobs we dream about. But surely the total lull of six months every year cannot be aiding our Cantab training. It encourages us to adopt a belief of not "all or nothing" but "all then nothing".

In this respect, maybe I should be envying those endless 16-week terms; they will probably prepare my friend for the rest of her life better than these two-month work and drinkathons. But if it means swapping my five weeks at Easter for her two? Never.

Hidden meanings, disguised reality



JONATHAN BIRCH

The news tells us that Saddam Hussein was executed, not slaughtered, just as, during the first Gulf War, we were told (in that passive, media-trained voice) that there "has been collateral damage." Just as, during the current war, we are told that there "have been civilian casualties". It seems like an odd situation to be in, choosing words not according to their meaning but for their lack of connotations. What are we so afraid of?

Execution. Death penalty. Capital punishment. Every phrase we have for the act is a euphemism. Sometimes we give a term for the method used: hanging, beheading,

electric chair. We avoid the words killing and slaughtering, though they describe the act more precisely. The word has connotations we prefer not to associate with these deaths; because the word risks stirring unwanted emotions.

In Saddam's case, 'slaughtering' is not far off the truth. Elsewhere it describes the efficient, lawful, behind-closed-doors killing of animals; to apply it to this similar event would not demand a redraft of the dictionary. The problem is that we would rather avoid using a term which reduces humans to the equivalent of animals. We think that by banning this linguistically we ban it from happening. The 'Newspeak' of killing hides a harsher truth.

But isn't an execution, unlike a slaughter, just? The truth is in the dates: Saddam Hussein (1937-2006). Scheduled before the New Year for the benefit of Iraq's beleaguered Prime Minister, his death seemed more like a news event than justice.

To see any execution as 'just' requires blinkered logic. Justice is nothing if not a moral ending to a life story. According to justice, crim-

inals aren't killed for their benefit; they're killed for ours, so that when we review their life we find the ending appropriate. But whilst one story may end in justice, the other no less relevant 'stories' which com-

'Justice is nothing if not a moral ending to a life story'

pose a life end with a sudden injustice. Relationships, personal journeys: everything that carries on during a prison sentence, end too. Real lives don't follow the neat plotline of a fable. Yet legal systems across the world apply the logic of Aesop. Why? For the show, for the news event: and the language reflects this.

True modern executioners are clinical: they perform the deed away from the public; they, for example, give a sedative before a lethal injec-

tion. Yet, in doing so, they do not cancel out the essential severity of the act they perform. The "humane" measures they employ would not have been out of place at Auschwitz. Rudolf Hoess, the camp commandant, wrote of Zyklon B: "I was relieved to think that ... the victims would be spared suffering until their last moment came." Yet Nazi victims were degraded, humiliated and terrified. Executions, like their associated language, give a charade of humanity for the benefit of witnesses, but, at the centre of the display, people are treated like animals.

Saddam Hussein played along well with the show. Because he refused to panic, and refused to wear a hood, the event seemed fitting enough to inspire Fox News to put up huge "before and after" pictures on its website. Saddam played the self-righteous tyrant to the end; but it was the audience who gave the game away. By taunting and jeering, they reminded us of what we should have remembered.

Executions are squalid, degrading and unjust. We better change the headlines: Saddam Hussein was

Features & Arts

Friday January 19th 2007 | Issue 649



...and other resolutions

Features

» The Fabian Society conference unpicked

P 15

Arts

» The Varsity team pick their top cultural events for 2007

P 16-17

Spotlight

» Sam Leon introduces us to the secret world of dub-step

P 19

Reviews

» First glance as ETG's *Macbeth* returns to Cambridge

P 20-21

Shattered Resolve

Features

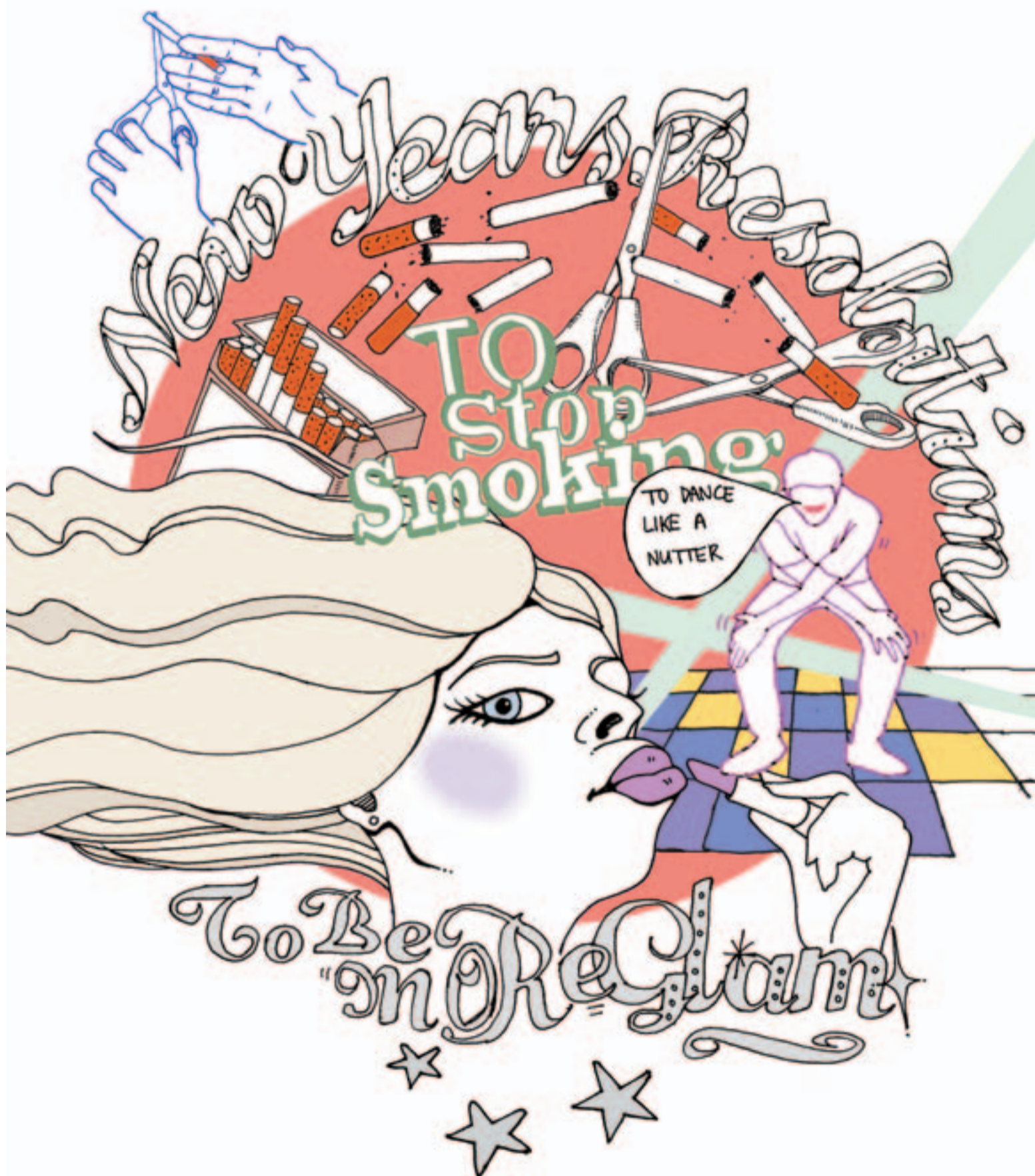


ILLUSTRATION BY TIM DRAKE

With January 1st a fading memory, *Varsity* asks how those New Year's Resolutions are holding up

After a virtuous Hogmanay, Mary Bowers ponders the inevitable failure of post-festive reinvention

On New Year's Eve, in a small WKD-soaked dive in the West Country, I was quietly sitting in the corner while my fellow revellers slurped up, between the four of them, twelve pints of Best, four Southern Comforts and lemonade, three rum and cokes and – I'm guessing by the sneaky looks on their faces as I headed back from the toi-

'I sat on a sticky seat and watched two girls with straws peeking out of their Smirnoff ices, snorting in derision as I noticed one's skirt tucked into her knickers'

lets – several rounds of sambuca shots. I, meanwhile, having resolved not to drink a drop of intoxicating substance before the stroke of midnight, was merrily viewing the proceedings from my smug corner of sobriety. I sat on a sticky seat and watched two girls with straws peeking out of their Smirnoff ices, snorting in happy derision as I noticed one's skirt tucked into her knickers. Happy in my non-alcoholic world, I saw in New Year and actually managed to remember all the words to "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang", played, bizarrely, just before the clock struck midnight and the bagpiper (of course! How Cornish!) began his laboured pomp. Oh I was merry, I was happy, I was smug and conceited, I was... sober! My life was changed and I was reformed!

Reformed, that is, until week zero in our little university town, when my fair room mate decided to invite me to the Anchor for a quick pint. Oh, dear reader! I can see its glittering entrance from my room and inside they look so happy, so warm, full of joie de vivre and flushed with the cheer of Norfolk Ale. So, join them I did, only to wake up the next morning head thumping, alarm so bored of bleeping it had given up entirely, having slept through not only all of Women's Hour, but, mysteriously, with half a box of cereal missing and several rather regrettable Facebook wall messages. Yes, I was the same sad, pathetic Mary Bowers I had been in 2006.

The New Year's Resolution supposedly goes back to 153BC, where the Roman God Janus, who could see into the past and also into the future, came to represent the exchanging of tree branches (of course) which (naturally) developed into the making of New Years' Resolutions. So, in my despair, I could at least draw comfort from the fact that I was making my personal contribution to well over two millennia of failure. I have joined that company of bitter and opinionated people who decry New Year's Resolutions as point-

less, inevitably fruitless and part of the detritus of our perfection-obsessed culture. I put drawing pins through pictures of "Dr" Gillian McKeith, refused to watch Lorraine and allowed myself to skip the gym for the rest of the year. After all, if I can't be a healthier, better person, I might as well be fat and evil.

Psychologist Kendra Van Wagner warns, "change is rarely easy and often requires a gradual progression of small steps towards a larger goal", but us perfectionists seeking instant gratification need revelation, and we need it now. Indeed, if we don't like our current selves, we can go to secondlife.com where around 2.5 million people have already created their own virtual alter egos. (Mine is a teetotaller. And has skinny thighs).

The phenomenon of keeping our New Year's Resolutions is vastly less common than breaking them. Shop assistant Sophie, who works at Thornton's in the Grafton Centre, laughs, "you do hear people when they're passing or browsing, saying 'oh, I can't, the diet...'" One would wonder why they were browsing in the first place. "Sales go up in February due to Valentine's day". They do not go down again. Perhaps love does conquer all, including our well-primed resolve. Since this very week holds the highest annual rate of couples filing for divorce, it seems that New Year's Resolutions and romantic love are highly incompatible from more than one angle.

According to pop psychology, New Year's Resolutions are made precisely in order that we can overindulge without guilt, stuffing our faces and lying back in the knowledge that at some unfixed time in the blurry future we will make up for it all. But how are we to become the lean, toned running machines we all promised ourselves would be during the hours of lying on the sofa, watching our new 24 boxed

sets and making sticky progress through the mandatory tin of Quality Streets? Fitness Instructor Chris of the Riverside Health and Fitness Centre on Mill Lane mourned, "you get about twice as the amount signing up in January as any other time. Obviously that then tails off in February... it's that lack of motivation I'm afraid". Can he please give us a motivational tip? "It's will-power really". Oh.

Alan Marlatt, Director of the University of Washington Addictive Behaviour Centre, who has been studying New Year's Resolutions for twenty years or more, concludes his research by suggesting that resolutions are bound to fail if a) they are made at the last minute, therefore b) resolutions are made based on what is bothering us at the time, and c) resolutions are based on absolutes, such as "I will never do X again". Resolutions, it seems, with a bit of room around the waistband are the only ones that seem to work.

'New Year's Resolutions are made precisely in order that we can overindulge without guilt'

So, the answer is not to dispose of and deride New Year's Resolutions, to live as a virtual hottie or even to become the pub Puritan. It is not to obsess: take it a little at a time, don't take them too seriously and don't agonise with guilt when you stumble and fall. Perhaps at the end of the day our New Year's Resolutions are like naughty toddlers: the less attention you pay them, the better you tend to get on. It might be quite fun to watch them grow. I'll drink to that...



ILLUSTRATION BY TIM DRAKE

Apathy Lad

Giving up on giving up

It's that time of year again. The hangover from weeks of gluttonous over-indulgence and alcohol abuse. An entire nation wakes up on the first day of the year with a subwoofer pounding in their heads. Unsurprisingly, this produces a sentiment I am somewhat familiar with: "I never want to drink again". Yet, this original thought spawns others: "I'm going to the gym every day from now on", or "I'm going to stop eating chocolate". To all the fat people out there: if you feel like you are overweight and you are not happy about it, go to the gym and stop eating such rubbish food! To all you smokers: if you don't like the fact that your lungs are coated in tar and your mouth tastes like an ash tray, give up smoking.

Why wait until the depths of winter to make such a resolution, when you barely see the light of day, holidays are a distant dream and the Christmas credit card bill is rearing its ugly head? Seize the moment! Do something wild on a beautiful summers day: turn off the TV, throw away your bulk-purchase packets of Lambert & Butler and get on your bike.

The British winter isn't the only reason New Year's Resolutions fail; their very design means sticking to them is impossible. We know next year we will make another New Year's Resolution, so our

'Do something wild on a beautiful summers day: turn off the TV, throw away your bulk-purchase packets of Lambert & Butler and get on your bike'

current resolution becomes almost meaningless. Those of us who didn't really want to give up the chocolates, or the cigarettes, or the lard, don't bother. The very fact that we have to make resolutions year after year after year proves that we are bad at sticking to them, and that we make them in the full knowledge we won't keep them. It's a way of alleviating our guilt for not doing something we should do.

I'm not trying to be pessimistic. I actually believe in people's willpower. But, no, you don't need Niquitinell, or Slim Fast or Boots' "change one thing", just get off your fat, un-toned ass and do it (and no, Nike are not sponsoring me to write this article)! These products and schemes, and January 1 itself, are undermining the fact that people are capable of doing the things they want to do. So please, don't make a New Year's Resolution. Cut down on your daily serving of guilt, get out there and do it.

Joe Rinaldi Johnson



Join us

Summer Internship Presentation

Date & Time: 25 January 2007, 6.30pm

Venue: First South Room, University Centre, Mill Lane, Cambridge, CB2 1RU

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Nico Phillips uncovers the workings of a Fabian Society conference

“If you want celebrity and glitz, Gordon is not your man” sums up Oona King, after her platform chat with the PM-to-be. The Chancellor keeps his eye on the audience. Meets question with anecdote, rehearsed joke, seriousness. Few cameras flash. Delegates concentrate hard. There’s little Blair buzz. Is this really the next great hope?

Sitting next to me is Amina Ali. She’s black, divorced, living in Tower Hamlets with her two children. We grab a few words before Brown’s big speech. Asked about multiculturalism, she juxtaposes Brick Lane with Asian/Afro-Arab Muslim racism. She complains about the Respect MP who exploits racial tension and doesn’t turn up to his own advice surgeries. Looking round the room at the assembled Fabians, I wonder how typical Amina is. The room shows a surprising diversity in age - the youngest, 14-year-old Josh, asks intelligently about mock elections in his school. The level of engagement is high.

The Fabian Society, a collection of intellectuals, politicians, journalists and members of the public, is the world’s oldest think-tank. Joint with the unions, it founded the Labour Party in 1900. Since then it has underpinned much progressive left-wing debate and policy formation. It’s the only think-tank in the UK to have a public membership, which means anyone can get involved: attend its New Year Conference, contribute at regular seminar debates, engage in the political questions of the day. Recently, its *Life Chances* publication was instrumental in reaffirming the government’s commit-

ment to eradicate child poverty in Britain by 2020. Similar pamphlets are published frequently.

Certainly, Brown is setting out something of his vision. At home, he will secure the age of the “servant state”, with the “people in the driving seat”. And, internationally, “with 80 million children not going to school tomorrow, ‘Education for All’ will make it our business to help developing nations educate the young”, says Brown. And the money? £8.5 billion with the EU and Gates Foundation. After

‘Few cameras flash. Delegates concentrate hard. There’s little Blair buzz. Is this really the next great hope?’

a dry and awkward start, here is the passion that you might expect from the forum that gave rise to Aneurin Bevan’s NHS. The fists clench. Mass production of drugs at affordable prices; health and education in alliance for economic development: Brown’s found his elixir. A, perhaps idealistic, confidence in the “driving power of social conscience”, “the good society movement”, which “makes people want to change the country”, underlies the day.

A rare heckler reminds that this is a think-tank meeting, not a party conference. Ed Balls responds, urging that we “move away from the particular to the

big picture” ideologically. Debate is free and open. Floor questions are constant. And most speakers are eager to continue the discussion after the seminars end. The humbleness and accessibility is reassuring.

And what’s the flavour of the day? “Collectivism”. For Balls, this is the philosophical dividing line. He attacked “David Cameron’s visceral dislike of collectivism”. Blair is acknowledged to have moved the agenda to the social-democratic left. But there is a feeling it will gravitate back, if the case is not re-made for a new “collectivist” progressivism. The five syllable “collectivism” might appeal to the “left intelligentsia”. But with its whiff of Siberian farming, it’s surely a hard sell to the “fluffy bunny” imagination.

Deborah Mattinson of Opinion Leader Research presents essentially the only electoral choice: “Steady as she goes. Or time for change”. And the question hanging over all that: can Brown rouse the heart as well as appeal to the mind? He may offer “trust, experience, integrity” in contrast to David Cameron, the “PR Confection.” But people like confection. And why not?

As a space for ideas, the Fabian Society is remarkable. And though close to the Labour Party, it guards its independence fiercely. Brown and co know that. Even among this audience of supporters, there’s no gloating, no lording it. Like the journalists and academics, these politicians come across as serious, committed professionals. A more “humble”, even servile, politics seems likely. The glitz has gone. A loss? In a way. But if we’re grown

up enough to choose ideas over glamour, the next decade promises much.

www.fabian-society.org.uk
www.srcf.ucam.org/csfs/

FABIAN FACTS

1884 – Founded as a political branch of “The Fellowship of New Life”. The original line-up included Emmeline Pankhurst and H.G. Wells.

1900 – Members of the Fabian Society help to set up the Labour Party, the constitution of which borrowed heavily from the Society’s, written by Bernard Shaw.

1930s – Mahomed Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan, is a passionate devotee and participant in the Society.

1948 – The NHS is launched, based on the 1942 report written by Lord Beveridge, prominent economist, who subscribed to many Fabian beliefs.

2003 – The Fabian Commission on the Future of the Monarchy reported with various suggestions for the modernisation of the monarchy, including the repeal of the anti-Catholic legislative prejudice.

2004 – Society membership stands at 5,810 individuals, of which 1,010 are “Young Fabians”. Recent members have included Tony Blair, Gordon Brown and the late Robin Cook.

Take Your Pick



THE ARTS COLUMN



Imogen Walford
On the Critic as Artist

Behind every great piece of art is – a great piece of art: its criticism. In the flurry over 2007's accelerated artistic moments, spare a thought for the people pinning down these transitory sensations. Finely crafted, incisive, witty: a description of an art form can be a beautiful thing. The film and music review markets are in rude health, with stalls brimming with magazines. But these are mass-marketed, easily obtainable commodities. The real joy lies in a totally unrepeatable event: the forgotten art of theatre criticism.

Often used to inform you how (not) to spend your money, the review should be like describing a brilliant party. And would you do that by listing the cocktail price list? No. You'd talk about the ambience surrounding you. Sod the plot. Ignore what the reviewer thought of the play. I want to know what the event felt like.

'Sod the plot. I want to know what the event felt like'

Take the god of theatre criticism: Ken Tynan. The knowing among you will nod knowingly and think "ah yes, the first man to say 'fuck' on TV". For the less knowing: the book's out in February. The glory of Tynan rests in such delectable images as Gielgud having the "general aspect of a tight, smart, walking umbrella". An English student could provide pages on how Noel Coward manages to be such a spectacularly unreadable, unwatchable bore: in a Tynan sentence his plays are dismissed as "pasting of thin strips of banter onto cardboard". Reviews are now pared down to a few vacuous adjectives, telling you the lead actor gives a "gripping", "strong" or "note-worthy" performance (read: "learnt lines, didn't bump into furniture"). Criticism is the Sick Man of the theatre and the Dead Weight of the newspaper. Even the Guardian has let the advertising bacteria grow over the theatre space. The Golden Days of long articles has given way to fifty word snapshots.

The reviewers don't help themselves. It's easy to spot a theatre critic. They don't even have to pull out the notebook: if they're overweight, middle aged and a bit tired-looking, you've got them. And once in place, there's no shaking them: upstart youngsters (anyone under fifty) just have to endure penury until someone dies. Most go and do something else. And the rest get jaded. So the cycle continues.

This is not the only way theatre criticism suffers. Take the star-system: an insightful response to theatre reduced to a maths test. I say, just ignore the stars. And gorge. Plays may pass away. But what was printed in cold hard ink the next day shall never fade.

1 Rock 'n' roll legends

The Junction kicks off the year with two musical gods playing within a month of each other, starting with Velvet Underground survivor John Cale on January 28th. A few weeks later, Will Oldham is bringing his fabulously bearded baldeering to Cambridge on February 13th, thank the Lord. No doubt showcasing his recent album "The Letting Go", prepare to have your soul stirred. Get your tickets now.

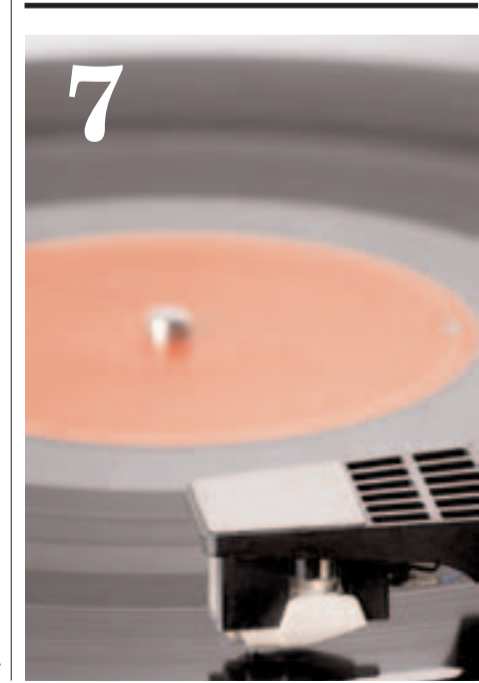
Expect: gruff masters delivering a musical schooling to the industry's skinny-hipped pretenders.

2 Theatre on tour

Not to be missed is *Presumption* by Third Angel at the Junction on February 20th at 8pm. The drama explores the relationship of Tom and Mary, a stagnating couple who find themselves talking less but wanting more. It promises to be a night of intimate theatre, having been described by the Guardian as "crossing boundaries and redefining the nature of

theatrical experience." Over at the Arts Theatre, be sure to catch *The Seafarer* before Conor MacPherson takes it to the National. It runs from February 20th-24th starting at 7.45pm, featuring gambling for souls, rum drinking, shanties and suchlike.

Bring along: a few more shekles than you're used to shelling out at the Corpus Playroom, buying you the chance to see scintillating professional theatre.



Left: lose your loan on Deerhoof

3 On screen

Pick of this year is *Babel*, from *21 Grams* director Alejandro Gonzalez-Inarritu. Featuring Cate Blanchett, the sizzling-hot Gael Garcia Bernal and Brad Pitt on career-best form, it combines three stories to investigate the barriers formed by language and the problem of communication in a foreign realm. If feature-lengths aren't your thing, hit Futureshorts at the Arts Picturehouse on January 26th at 11pm.

More where that came from: Bernal also stars in Michel Gondry's trippy *Science of Sleep*, released in February.

4 Kettle's Yard 50th birthday

It's the 50th anniversary of legendary Cambridge Kettle's Yard, and to celebrate the always-worth-it house/gallery is putting on a series of exciting exhibitions and events. Kicking it all off is "WE the moderns", a two-month exhibition of the sculptural experiments of Henri Gaudier-Brzeska. Drawing on its own extensive Gaudier collection, and other pieces from galleries around

Europe, Kettle's Yard promises to begin a year long arty party with class.

Go here for: a cultured and beautifully-surrounded antidote to essay trauma and too much television.

5 New writing at the ADC

It's refreshing to find new writing grabbing a Mainshow slot at a major Cambridge venue: from February 13th-17th, Tom Sharpe's *Hang on Mr Bugson* hits the ADC stage at 7.45pm. Having written prolifically and successfully for the Footlights, Sharpe turns his hand to a play which will be "funny, sure, but not just funny." A week later *Staggered Spaces* by Nadia Kamil and Luke Roberts features as an ADC lateshow. A stealth hit on the Edinburgh Fringe, it evolved from a relationship between the writer/actors which is part theatrical, part real. After Roberts' brilliantly excruciating family portrait *1,2,3,4, (5)* last term, this is definitely one to watch. Catch it from February 21st-24th at 11pm.

Look out for: moments of awkward humour and the chance to see Cambridge comics branching out.

6 Cinecam 2007

There is just over a month to get involved in Cinecam's flagship festival and Cambridge's version of Cannes. Deadline for submission is February 23rd, so get your thinking caps on. Besides the prestigious panel of judges deciding who claims the grand prize (last year a three week stint at Brighton Film School), rolling out the fag and wine-stained student red carpet will be Josh Newman talking screenwriting, some old pros from the film business come to discuss "working in film", and a mystery Italian director, game for a bit of Q&A. Up yours, Oscar.

The clever folk at Cinecam have also got their hands on a load of Super 8 cameras and are giving students the opportunity to work with this beautiful, grainy old format. For those who have had enough of the digital revolution and want to get back to the ol skool, registration takes place at the Cinecam squash, on Wednesday January 24th, in the CRASSH reception room which is at 17 Mill Lane.

Go along: be part of what looks to be a highly productive year for film in Cambridge.

7 On Record

There's so much to choose from next time you go into Fopp. Instead of buying the Klaxons album later this month, spend a tenner on Deerhoof. The ninth album of haphazard, sweet-sounding experimentation from the San Francisco band comes out on January 23rd. Another tip for 2007 is The Sounds; they've been around for a while, swiftly gaining a reputation with their annoyingly catchy songs. Thankfully, their edge of obscurity lets you indulge in pop without letting go of all pretension.

Tune in: on the radio waves, change your dial to Radio 6 for a series of themed shows from Bob Dylan.



Right: Get to grips with one of these at the Super 8 Film Experience

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WEINBERG
PARTNERS

Tuesday 23rd January 2007
6:30pm - 8.30pm

Location - Mong Hall, Sidney Sussex College

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Sam Leon sheds some light on a new genre making people stamp their feet - the edgy and increasingly popular world of dubstep



MIXTAPE

new Dubstep date 19/1/07

1. Skream - "Midnight Request Line" (Tempa)
Seminal dubstep track. The techno-influenced arpeggios of this number characterise Skream's style and helped to give him the cross-over appeal which sets him apart from most other dubstep producers.
2. Loefah - "Mud" (DMZ)
Bassweight in new chestplate! Meditative in its minimalism, this tune is simpler than most bass-heavy material to have emerged from the scene.
3. Pinch - "Qaxwali" (Planet H)
Hollow ethnic soundscapes layered over a skitteringly subtle beat - the finest example of dubstep's contrasting capacity for brooding beauty.
4. Cole - "Tofurnd" (Whik)
Obliterating dancefloors at the moment with its psychedelic bass-lines and resolutely given a well-deserved release by the kind people at Tempa records.
5. Distance - "Lynlops" (Planet H)
The soft of dubstep spawned by a producer who likes metal bands such as Korn as his primary influence. Dark and characterful.
6. Kromestar - "Kalawonji" (Deep Medi Music)
One of the biggest tunes of recent months, Kromestar shows here that the best rhythms in the scene are not, as is often claimed, just produced by a series of club artists.
7. Loefah + Digital Mystikz - "Hoover Sheds" (DMZ)
A paradisiacal setting track from the early part of the expanding DMZ-label catalogue. Download this as copies of the vinyl have been known to change hands for over £100 on Ebay. Horrific.
8. Fat Freddy's Drop - "Cay's Cay" (Digital Mystikz Mix)
(Love)
Indicative of the future direction of the scene, an inspiring remix of this New Zealand reggae outfit reveals the under-explored potential of dubstep rhythms being laid with vocals.

Music to make you Stagger

Take note: dubstep is "music to make you stagger". At least that's the message Croydon's golden-boy Skream seems to be driving home in the sleeve notes to his new LP, *Skream!*. But though listening to dubstep might leave you reeling, the genre itself has never been more steady on its feet. The immensely popular club night FWD at London's Plastic People went from being monthly to every Friday over the summer, whilst Brixton's DMZ has had to move to a bigger home to accommodate demand from an ever-increasing fan base.

For those who don't know, dubstep is the descendent of that much-maligned phenomenon of the late 90s, 2-step garage. Much darker and more experimental than garage itself, it is characterised by monster basslines, quirky minimal soundscapes and restrained whips. At once dark and playful, it varies between emphasis on hyper double-time and a wonderfully spacious half-time. The sheer originality of the sound and the willingness within the scene to keep innovating sets it apart as a genre from many of its more conservative contemporaries in dance music, which seem tired by comparison.

Drum 'n' bass is a case in point. The scene, with its massively fucked legion of professional gurners, invariably men, seems unable to capture that first e-feeling that electrified it when the ecstasy was good and the music was still cutting edge. Pendulum's influence has moulded much of drum 'n' bass in to a rather predictable mush of melodic sing along style bass-lines, which, fun as they might be, lack all the impact and

intrigue of dubstep's alternative take on bass-culture. Not wishing to go as far as to say drum 'n' bass is dead, I might just say it deserves a holiday. The owners of London super-club Fabric agree with me, and, like a boss gently advising an overworked and underperforming employee to "take some time off", have once a month started dropping drum 'n' bass from the menu. A brave call for the club

'It will be a while before Ballare's DJ starts rolling out the latest Loefah 12"s but dubstep hasn't passed Cambridge by completely'

often credited as bringing the scene back to life after the rather ungracious decline of garage.

Those who do abandon their favourite drum 'n' bass haunt in favour of new sources of bass-weight are in for a unique experience. As producer Kode 9 remarked about dubstep clubbing "It's like doing a rave 20,000 leagues underwater". The club is dark (no lights is the rule), packed and pulsating with wall-to-wall energy that rises and falls as each new track is introduced and the bass slowly cranked up until the tune finally drops in an earth shattering climax of ominous sub-bass sounds and snappy breaks. The sounds them-

selves are almost always exclusive to the particular DJ playing them and this makes for an atmosphere of keen anticipation as dubsteppers wait to vent their pent-up enthusiasm for tracks they can only get a dose of once a week.

Despite this, however, the chances for a mainstream reception of dubstep are slim. Whereas drum 'n' bass has frequently flirted with the mainstream (Shy FX's "Shake Your Body" appearing in the UK charts) the public appeal of dubstep is limited by its inability to translate onto the average bedroom stereo. The music, being so much about the sub-low frequencies, fails to deliver proper impact when any system short of a sub-woofer is put to work. Not to mention the fact that so many of the big tunes, such as Digital Mystikz's epic take on classic reggae number "Marijuana", don't pass sample clearance and get no public pressing whatsoever.

For now it looks like dubstep will remain just an intriguing source of bass-weight, creativity and dance floor mayhem for the more adventurous who are tired of the Pendulum drum 'n' bass formula. It will be a while before Ballare's DJ start rolling out the latest Loefah 12"s, but there are rumbles here and there that dubstep hasn't passed Cambridge completely by. King's, Emmanuel and Clare have all featured nights involving some element of dubstep, and although none of these have been exactly packed to the rafters, maybe that's not such a bad thing. The underground has always enjoyed being exactly that - half the fun is feeling like you're in on a big secret.

THE BOOK CLUB

If you're reading this column, you probably quite like books. Perhaps you never leave the house without one under your arm. Perhaps you are unable to defecate in the absence of reading material. Perhaps the act of tearing up a copy of your favourite book would be an almost unbearable task.

But Hanta has no choice. It's his job. He makes a living by pulping books for the Communist government of Czechoslovakia. His boss sees him as a simple, drunken idiot, but Hanta's career has made him remarkably well-read. Each day he saves a book from the hydraulic press, smuggling it home, until his house is swelling with novels, holy writ, works of politics and philosophy. Each night he sleeps in fear, terrified that the bookshelves he has hastily constructed over his bed will fall and crush him to death. He imbibes as much literature as he does beer. He

'Perhaps you are unable to defecate in the absence of reading material. Perhaps the act of tearing up a copy of your favourite book would be an almost unbearable task.'

can quote anything from Kant to the Talmud. Jesus and Lao-Tzu emerge from the pages of forbidden scriptures to become two contrasting figures of wisdom.

Hanta's story, *Too Loud a Solitude*, is a self-portrait by the Czech author, Bohumil Hrabal, who also spent many years compacting books in a lonely cellar. This short novel is a dark, hilarious tale about the pleasures of reading, punctuated by Hanta's tragicomic reminiscences. How he has to clean up the remains of his dead uncle from a railway signal box. His brief love affair with a beautiful gypsy girl whose name he never knew. His ever-present anxiety about losing his job to the industrial-sized trash compactor outside of town.

Too Loud a Solitude is a rare treat: a story about a man who is just as obsessed with books as the fanatical reader. Take it with you the next time you need a number two.

Andy Wimbush



Coming soon
Varsity examines the impact of foreign language film making on the Hollywood mainstream and asks the question: "Can *Apocalypto* bag the Oscar for Best Picture?"



Apocalypto

Dir: Mel Gibson

★★★★

What makes a good trip to the cinema? The bombastic thrill and spectacle of the epic, with its extraordinary sensual feasts, or the warm satisfaction of the compelling drama, with its intimate and complex human relationships and characters? You have to ask yourself this question before deciding whether to see Mel Gibson's latest, because whilst it gloriously succeeds in creating epic cinema, the plot and characterisation leave a lot to be desired.

The best tactic for viewing, I think, is to



switch off your brain and let your eyes and ears indulge in the beautiful settings and the nauseatingly extreme (but grotesquely satisfying) violence on show. Once we get past the un-engaging opening half hour or so, we're treated to stunning jungle views, a vast and throbbing Mayan city, hearts being ripped out of chests and decapitations in front of huge baying crowds. Here a face mauled by a panther, there an exhilarating extended chase sequence through rivers and jungles, with breathtaking camerawork (look out for the astonishing shot which swoops out from a river to reveal a huge waterfall), leading to a rain-splattered final showdown. The action is relentless and gruesome, but coupled with the thumping score it's exciting and gripping at an instinctive level, and is vastly unlike so many of the bland films around today.

And if you can't keep your brain switched off for two and a half hours, you might want keep yourself occupied by wondering just how much of a nutter Mel Gibson is, given that the films he directs (*Braveheart*, *The Passion of the Christ*) seem to be so comprehensively vicious. Or consider the accusations of vast historical inaccuracies. Or the charge levelled by The Guardian's film critic that *Apocalypto* resembles a Leni Riefenstahl film and – given Mel's recent drunken anti-Semitic rant and the accusations of anti-Semitism when his previous film was released – the possible significance of a scene involving a huge pit of naked corpses. Or you might simply ask what profound thing, if anything, the film is about?

It's quite possible Mel Gibson really is just off his trolley and I doubt if he'd have any particularly enlightening comments for us regarding *Apocalypto*, but if you can switch your brain off for long enough, you'll be rewarded with a vivid cinematic experience. And to be fair to Mel, it probably takes a madman to create a film this crazily compelling.

Tom Hannan

The Last King of Scotland

Dir: Kevin Macdonald

★★★★

Kevin Macdonald's film follows Nicholas Garrigan (James McAvoy), a fictional Scottish doctor who finds himself in the service of the terrifying Idi Amin, played by the utterly compelling Forest Whitaker. Built like a bear and with unpredictable mood changes, swinging from affable charm to brutal anger, Whitaker dominates every scene with a brilliant blend of bullying humour and horror. It is a performance that grabs the role by the throat and has been quite rightly tipped for Oscar glory.

Garrigan, straight out of medical school, offers his services to a mission in 1970s rural Uganda. He abuses his status as an educated white man, dabbling in the exotic attractions of a country he cannot understand. Garrigan isn't there out of altruism; rather he desires to escape the limited horizons his parents have set for him as a Highland GP. It comes as no surprise when he abandons

his work at the mission for the bright lights of Kampala and the job of personal physician to Amin. There he shows himself both cocky and naïve: living the high life in a heady swirl of parties, fast

'Whitaker dominates every scene with a brilliant blend of bullying humour and horror. It is a performance quite rightly tipped for an Oscar.'

cars and women, enjoying the prestige that his close friendship with the President gives, all the time remaining oblivious to Amin's ceaseless murdering. His popular moniker, "the white mon-

key", invites comparisons with other literary White Devils like Iago in *Othello*, cleverly re-inventing the type in post-colonial Africa

Garrigan's support for Amin finally collapses, not when he realises what a monster the man is, but only after he has put his own life at risk in an ill-advised and rather unbelievable affair with one of Amin's wives. Garrigan does not try to redeem himself for his earlier foolish actions. He makes no personal sacrifice, but simply tries to escape to save his own skin. It can be a little hard to care if he does.

Last King is a very good film. Macdonald captures the high-octane instability of the period with sharp, quick-zoom camerawork and a great soundtrack packed with afro-funk, while Whitaker's fantastic performance shows just how seductive a charismatic dictator can be.

Rudolf Elliott Lockhart

Make This Your Own Cooper Temple Clause

★★

Wokingham's finest export, since bull-baiting was banned in 1821, have finally got round to releasing a follow-up to 2003's flawed but surprisingly rewarding "Kick Up The Fire and Let the Flames Break Loose". It's been three years in the making, so, despite the loss of bassist Didz Hammond to NME spaff-receptacle Dirty Pretty Things, one could be forgiven for expecting a minor revolution in their sound. "Kick Up The Fire" was, after all, an impressive development on the widescreen testosterone frenzy of their debut, retaining their trademark bristling aggression while taking comprehensive lessons from Radiohead's successful dabbings with electronica and IDM.

"Make This Your Own", however, is about as radical as the Rolling Stones playing a private gig for a Russian tycoon. It seems that rather than encouraging a more thoroughgoing integration of their Krautrock/post-hardcore and electronica influences, time spent away from the new-rave churn and the demands of frenetically Myspacing fans demanding more "riffage" has resulted in the smoothing of edges and the refining of comfort-

able formula.

The distressing results can be seen mostretch-inducingly on "What Have You Gone and Done", with its chugging overdriven

'About as radical as the Rolling Stones playing a private gig for a Russian tycoon.'

guitars, a structure more conventional than your local Conservative club, and suffocatingly trite lyrics ("What have you gone and done/You had the chance to prove us wrong" will suffice). There are, however, better moments - the opening punch of "Homo Sapiens" and "Head" - the latter's industrial stomp mixed with synth-pop sensibility bringing to mind A Flock of Seagulls and Simple Minds. Similarly good is the melancholic acoustic lament of "Take Comfort", displaying an altogether different and more fragile side of the band.

But regrettably more common is the painful mediocrity of tracks like "Waiting



Game", a.k.a "steroid-pumped Brian Molko humping U2 in one of their favourite aircraft-hangar-acoustic dens". Irritatingly though, this is not a terrible album. The mix of glimmers of tear-soaked-fringe sensitivity with their trademark misanthropy isn't a problem. Rather it is the watering down of this trademark juxtaposition with alienatingly smooth production and a "mature" epic sensibility that makes this

depressingly one-dimensional compared with its predecessor. Their once-thrilling migraine rush has been replaced with the musical equivalent of a competent truffle. The injunction to "make this your own" ought only to appeal to twentysomething River Island khaki wearing ex-Toploader fans desperately trying to reconstruct their masculinity.

Was Yaqoob

Macbeth ADC

★★★★

ETG's production of *Macbeth* seems to have lost none of the momentum from its European tour. A stark set and close lighting created an atmosphere which allowed a confident and polished realisation of this powerful portrayal of a man's submission to fate and destiny.

From the initial spectacle of writhing witches to Macbeth's death cry, Proske ensured that the play's dramatic potential was fully realised. Her imaginative direction included such deviations as having Macbeth surrounded by stomping zombies in a scene whose potency was only undermined by its slight resemblance to the video to



"Thriller". However, whilst the witches rendered endless giggling and orgasmic pleasure in their manipulative activities, the exclusion of Malcolm's final speech, whilst leaving the ending of the play brutal and unrepentant, also left it lacking a complete resolution.

At times Lady Macbeth seemed a deranged deviant more suited to "Desperate Housewives" than the severe silhouette she could easily have been, but she created a palpable sense of fallibility, and even introduced some unforeseen (possibly unintentional) comedy to the role, especially in the feast scene when she seemed more concerned

with her role as a demonic Martha Stewart than in concealing her husband's guilt.

Macbeth, masterfully portrayed by Max Bennett, commanded a strong physical presence, whether in abusing his subordinates or being plunged into a cauldron by the Weird Sisters. In a moment of light relief, the Porter, played with gusto by the outstanding Thomas Yarrow, speaks of "the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire". In the depths of tormented soliloquies however, one sometimes wished that Macbeth had chosen a less sober (and shorter) journey to Hell.

Orlando Reade

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This term we are expanding our reviews team. We need to see, listen and try everything in Cambridge and we need you.

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The Sweet Escape Gwen Stefani

★★

You could have predicted the demise of "The Sweet Escape" before it hit the shelves. It's the same old story: artist releases a rushed second album off the back of a hit debut, expecting the same success, only to realise after lukewarm reviews that the record-buying public aren't quite stupid enough to swallow the rehashed off-cuts of initial success.

The lack of inspiration manifests itself in an album which is insubstantial, schizophrenic, and plagiarises so

heavily from hits of the recent past it's surprising its creators haven't yet been served with summons. Opening track "Wind It Up" is a case in point, beginning with Sound of Music yodelling before proceeding to rip off "My Humps" with mind-boggling insouciance. Yet Stefani still has enough charisma to instil it with some of the sugary eccentricity that made L.A.M.B a hit. It's just a shame she's not really trying.

Valerie Bell

Kingdom of Doom The Good, The Bad and The Queen

★★★★

Ever woken up knowing that you dreamt but not really sure what about? That's how I feel after listening to this. Damon Albarn, "afrobeat pioneer" Tony Allen, Paul Simon and Simon Tong seem to have recorded their individual parts in separate rooms and thrown them together. Songs stop, start and veer like someone impatiently changing radio stations. For the most part this works: the influences are diverse enough to be interesting but sufficiently inte-

grated to avoid banality. Echoes of reggae, electronica, folk, punk, psychedelia and pop swirl into 43 minutes of unsettling, melancholic music. The track from which the band takes its name, which recalls Roxy Music's "Ladytron", "A Day in the Life" and "Tomorrow" from "Bugsy Malone", provides a fitting end to an album that's not easy but considerably more interesting than the Kaiser Chiefs.

Rhiannon Easterbrook

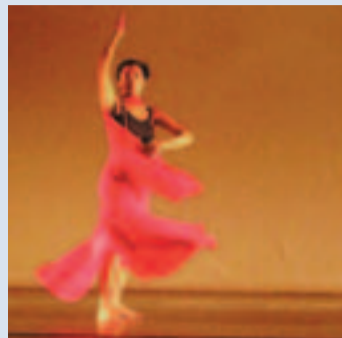
PICK OF THE WEEK

FILM

The Mirror
Arts Picturehouse
Thu 25 Jan, 17.00
A rare opportunity to see Tarkovsky's most personal and artistically innovative work without heading into a rubbish London arts cinema full of secret perverts hoping to bump into Eva Green. An intimate study of ordinary Russian life filtered through a rich blend of surrealist poetry and imagery, it's a memory film (reminiscent of Resnais) and also an autobiographical film. Worth braving the sexy scorn of the handsome Picturehouse staff judging you.

All films showing at Arts Picturehouse unless stated otherwise. Also not all films being shown are listed.

THEATRE

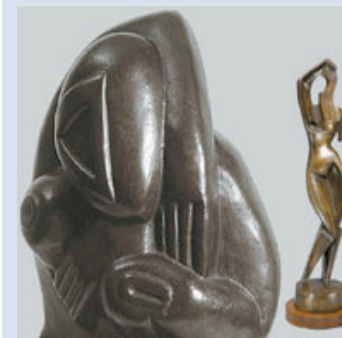


Elemental
ADC, Tue 23 Jan - Sat 27 Jan
Brand new contemporary dance. Flamenco, hip-hop, embarrassed student audience. Worth seeing, even if it sounds like training for proto-bourgeois

MUSIC

Pulse
The Theatre, Peterhouse, £4
Sat 20th January
'Desperate satire, sensuous whimsy and bitter irony'. Pulse are a collective expanding the medium of cabaret, providing an opportunity for composers to engage directly in contemporary social issues. An archaeology of cabaret song from French cafes to pre-war Germany, post-war America and contemporary Britain, Pulse will mainly be sniping at you, your rubbish life, and your rubbish friends, if you bring them. It'll be better than looking into the mirror, full of self-loathing. Armchair philosophy

OTHER



Henri-Gaudier Brezka Kettle's Yard, Sat 20 Jan - 18 Mar. Exhibition of the sculptures of the French. Futurist. An opportunity to cozy up to modernism and feel alienated.

GOING OUT

Drop Beats Not Bombs
Kambar, 21.00-02.00 £3
Breaks, electro, dubstep, minimal techno, funky breaks, reggae and afrobeat. Featuring international DJ I2I, the internationally renowned cider, Barnstormer, and that universal objet d'art, vomit. Fundraiser organised by Cambridge Students Against the Arms Trade (CSAAT). Though energy from your stupid flailing limbs will not directly convince colleges to divest shares in arms going to dubious regimes, the forthcoming CSAAT mass demonstration (Feb 10) will.

FR 19

Black Book 17.30, 20.30
Brazil 23.10
The Last King of Scotland 12.45, 15.30, 16.10, 20.45
Pan's Labyrinth 12.15, 23.30
Starter for Ten 23.20
Infamous 16.20, 18.40, 21.00

Macbeth ADC, 19.45
Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui ADC, 23.00

The Winter Kings + Rizzo + The Sirens The Loft, 20.00, £4
The Shivers The Portland, 20.00, free
Kyla Bowen-la Grange The Boathouse, 21.00, £3

Richard Egarr plays Bach West Road Concert Hall, £14
Richard Egarr plays Bach's Goldberg Variations and gives a pre-concert talk at 6.30. Amphetamines in advance?

Shut Up And Dance Union, 21.00-01.00, £3
Marvel: Superhero Cheese Queens, 21.00-00.45, £4. Civilisations have fallen for less than this

SAT 20

Pan's Labyrinth 12.15, 23.30
Brazil 23.10
Black Book 17.30, 20.30
Infamous 16.20, 18.40, 21.00
The Last King of Scotland 12.45, 15.30, 16.10, 20.45

Macbeth ADC, 19.45
SOLD OUT
Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui ADC, 23.00

Pulse Theatre, Peterhouse, £4
Chacon Junction Shed, 19.00, £8
Claire Martin Cambridge Arts Theatre, 19.45, £10 labelled the 'best British jazz singer for a generation' - quaff your frappes

CU Chamber Choir King's Chapel, £5 Described as one of 'the most sublime and best-loved choral works composed'. So, singin' n' shit
Tickets at Corn Exchange Office

BIGs 6th Birthday Bash The Junction, 22.00-04.00, £10. I have no idea
Nick Bridges Fez, 22.00-03.00, £8

SUN 21

Black Book 13.00, 18.00, 21.00
The Last King of Scotland 12.45, 15.30, 16.10, 20.45
The Departed (Johns) 19.00, 22.00
Borat (Christ's) 20.00, 22.30

Peripheral Vision
Judith E. Wilson Drama Studio (English Faculty) 21.00

John Martyn The Corn Exchange, 19.30, £24.50
Scottish song-writing genius, apparently. At this price, you could buy more than 25 loaves of bread and watch them slowly rot instead

Rembrandt & Saskia Fitzwilliam Museum - Collection of the great painter's prints, primarily focusing on his wife. But doesn't the Fitz make your eyes roll back into your head? A little

The Sunday Service Club Twenty-Two, 22.00-01.00, £3
God is decidedly not in favour of this service

MON 22

Little Ms. Sunshine (Catz) 20.00
Black Book 13.00, 18.00, 21.00
Infamous 18.40, 21.00
The Last King of Scotland 12.45, 15.30, 16.10, 20.45
Pan's Labyrinth 18.00, 21.00

Peripheral Vision
Judith E. Wilson Drama Studio (English Faculty) 21.00

Imogen Heap, The Junction, 19.00
SOLD OUT
fuck knows why though. nah nah she's alright

Matthew Schellhorn West Road Concert Hall, 20.00, £6
Piano pieces included by Schumann and Thurlow, with a pre-concert talk by Thurlow at 7.15. La Strada before yah

Fat Poppadaddys Fez, 21.00 - 03.00, £4
Pleasingly generic, like a liberal democrat beatboxing

TUE 23

Black Book 13.00, 16.00, 21.00
Infamous 16.20, 18.50, 21.10
The Last King of Scotland 16.00, 18.30
Ikiru 21.15

Elemental ADC, 19.45
Improvise That! ADC, 23.00
Henri Oguike Dance Company Cambridge Arts Theatre, 19.45, £10

Pub, misery. You can hum Arab Strap to yourself and feel authentic
www.arabstrap.co.uk

An Introduction to Understanding Film Arts Picturehouse, every Tuesday, 18.00-20.00 Learn about film, boast, beret, pull, words

Precious* LBGt Night Club 22, 22.00-02.00, £3
Ebonics Fez, 22.00-03.30, £2
Kinki, Ballare, 21.00-02.00, £3. The post-modern apocalypse now

WED 24

Black Book 15.00, 18.00, 21.00
Infamous 16.20, 18.50, 21.10
Mean Streets 19.00
Lucky Number Slevin (Caius) 20.30, 20.45

Elemental ADC, 19.45
New Magic Show ADC, 23.00
Henri Oguike Dance Company Cambridge Arts Theatre, 19.45, £10

The Cougars The Soul Tree, 20.00, £5.50
The Shills + The New World + The Tupolev Ghost The Loft, 20.00, £3

The Gaudier Ensemble Kettle's Yard, 19.45, £10.
The internationally renowned Gaudier Ensemble, playing Debussy, Stravinsky, Milhaud, Kurtag. Highly recommended.

Drop Beats Not Bombs Kamar, 21.00 £3
save them for your friends
Rumboogie is killing Cambridge 21.00-02.00, £3

THU 25

Black Book 13.00, 18.00, 21.00
Infamous 16.20, 18.40, 21.00
The Last King of Scotland 12.00, 14.30, 19.00, 21.30
The Mirror 17.00
Pan's Labyrinth 15.50
La Haine (Christ's) 20.00, 22.30

Elemental ADC, 19.45
The New Magic Show ADC, 23.00

Hundred Reasons The Junction, 19.00, £10
a combined age of about two hundred years, and the sort of brash emo/post-hardcore mess that sounds even older

Urbanite Club Twenty-Two, 21.00-02.30, £3
Dancing in the living room As there's nothing better to do. Pathos, free

GOING OUT



Fingathing + Shut Up And Dance! @ The Soultree
Tue 23 Jan (and every Tue)
21.00-03.00, £4
OFFERS:
Free food in the downstairs bar for early arrivals
Shots of tequila £1 before 12

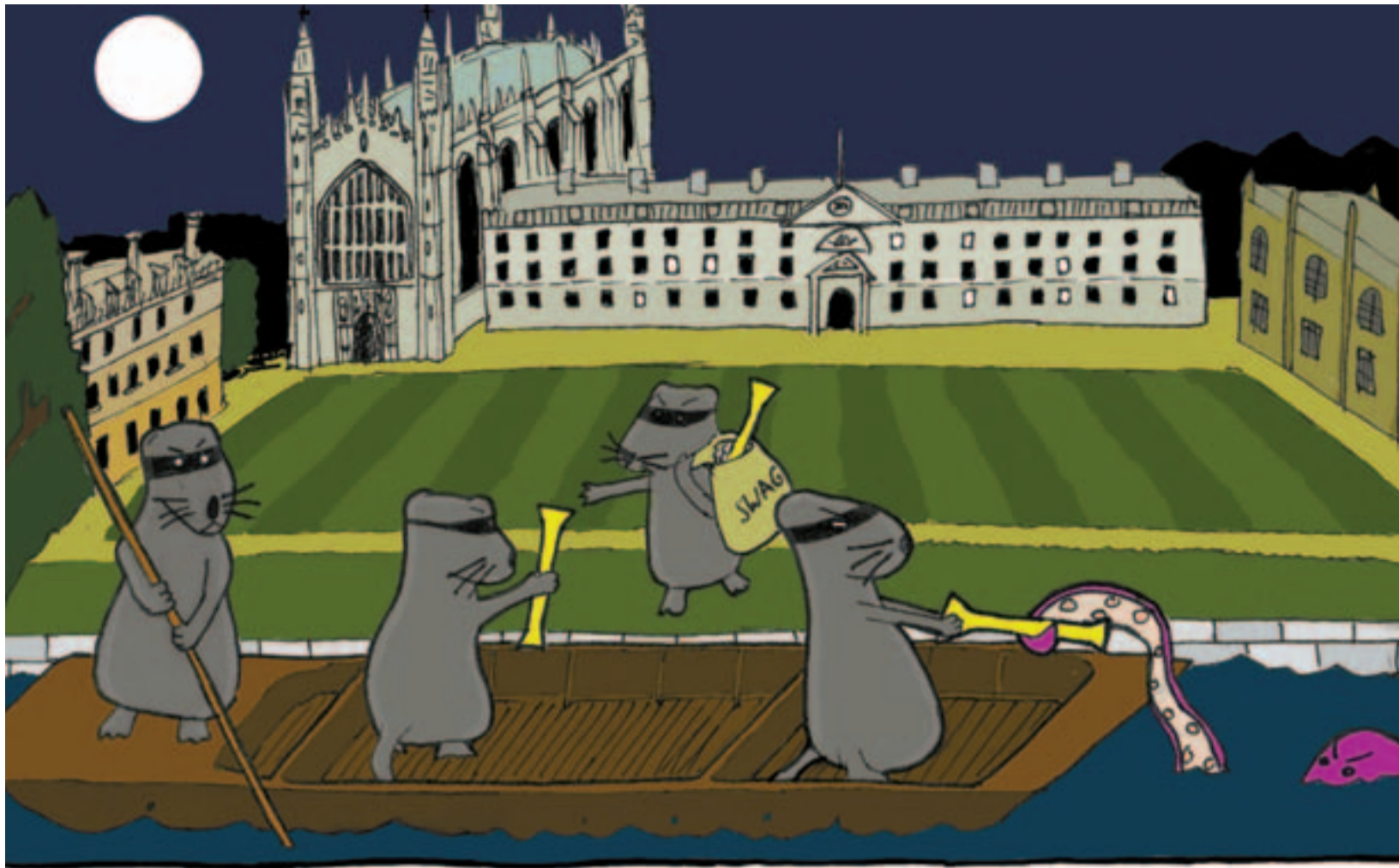
Shut up and Dance! is moving to a larger venue. Though the lobotomised charm of the Soultree (home to Urbanite, one of Cambridge's most regular human rights abuses) seems a world away from the grimy charm of the

Union, Shut Up And Dance! will be making the venue its own - providing huge acts every Tuesday. This week, Fingathing (er a.k.a Peter Parker) will be providing some heavy funk and hip-hop, shaking the floor, giving people migraine, killing small animals, etc etc. Beers. Come early to pick up cheap drinks and support student DJ nights that don't involve listening to 'Build me up Buttercup' on repeat while a hundred bastards writhe and your mate pisses on the floor.

BOOK NOW
Bonnie 'Prince' Billy
The Junction
Tue 13 Feb 19.00, £17.50

The elusive but supremely talented alt. country artist graces our shit town with his sparse, literate alt. folk





After factoring in the punt hire, it would have been cheaper to have just bought them from King's

The college system: why the centre cannot hold



LOWRI JENKINS

Just to make everyone jealous as we begin the bleakest and most depressing term of the year, I'm going to start with a little story from my wonderful winter adventure to Mexico. After inadvertently blurting out a Spanish apology to my companion on the plane, I ended up becoming embroiled in a two hour conversation, whose ideas were perhaps a little high above my rudimentary levels of Spanish. We spent a long time talking about Mexico, about how crazy and contradictory it was, about how busy and messy its cities were; I in a glowing tone, he in a deprecatory one. After twigging that I seemed to like Mexico City's dizzy mix of pyramids, office blocks and street dogs, he turned to me and asked, 'But don't you think it's a bit – disorganised?'

I thought about it for a bit (ok, I thought about it for a second then spent a minute working out how to say it in Spanish) then replied that it's not that city has no organisation, but that it has several organisations

competing at once. Like its culture and history, the country is a palimpsest of influences and movements, all now jostling for space in the same arena. It even goes as far as the system of government: after dubious election results in 2006, the city finds itself governed by the defeated (but supposedly rightful) president, and the country by the ('corrupt') victor.

The more I thought about this hugely fragmented, clamouring nature of society and culture in the country, the more it reminded me of something closer to home. To a certain extent, in a very different context, Cambridge too is a bustling arena full of competing organisations.

Academia provides the best example. To what do we owe priority: faculty or college? DoS or new supervisor? Classes with other colleges or supervisions with your closest friends? I remember being told before I came here: check your emails at least ten times a day; it's the only way you'll stay on top of things. The maxim has proved strangely true. It certainly feels that each week, perhaps each supervision, engenders a new set of diplomatic negotiations between separate and colliding individuals. None of the multifarious supervisors and lecturers, teachers and graduates seem aware of what the other is doing; and it's often left up to a snowed-under DoS, or the powers of Hermes and several lazy students, to pick out the necessities. Part of this is no doubt due to the supervision system which we have in Cambridge and I wouldn't change it for the world; but tweaking it wouldn't hurt.

The college system itself may lie at the heart of this situation. The closeness and insularity, as well as community it encourages, is perhaps part of the reason why I always have difficulty deciding where Cambridge University starts and my own college ends. To me, and I'm sure to a lot of others, my college is my university. We are a tiny town full of rival collectives and competing college stereotypes (who can forget such classic battlecries as 'I'd rather be at Oxford than at

'It is no wonder that institutions like CUSU struggle to find a unified voice: there isn't one'

John's?'). It is no wonder that institutions like CUSU struggle to find a unified Cambridge voice: there isn't one. Most positions for the latest CUSU election barely pulled in 2000 voters; yet we have nearly 20,000 students here.

Cambridge life is refracted through singular, individual eyes at every step of the way, so the forms it takes are constantly proliferating. There is no unifying centre. We don't even have a Student Union building to call our own. (And I'm sure most people can recall with a wry smile the confusion at receiving the summer before matriculation

that pack inviting you to pay £85 to join The Union. "What sort of a fucking union is that!?" I remember thinking indignantly...)

The Cambridge system works immediately undermines any new attempt at a consistent and wholly applicable manner of organisation. As with academics, and with your choice of extra-curricular pursuits, the emphasis is forever on the individual. Cambridge is a competitive place, even out of the classroom; social circles whirl around social circles, with their own set of mini celebrities, in-jokes and traditions. Each individual in the university, then, must slot themselves in and out of these similarly individual groups, until they too become a kind of Cambridge palimpsest: a layer of History of Art here, a smattering of Hockey Blue there.

I'm not saying that we should turn Cambridge into some kind of regularised socialist regime. To a great extent the college system, and its rather Mexican way of doing things is part of its charm; it's also part of what makes it an inspiring place to study. However, it is also perhaps emblematic of the university's resistance to change in a world which, since the institution's medieval inception, has altered immensely. While post-graduate studies and research make advances, it often feels as if the undergraduate, and extra-curricular arena, is still operating separate from Cambridge University completely. And, much like the looming threat of US commercialism over Mexico, as times keep changing and we don't, the eccentricity and individuality we value may get gobbled up.



TESS RILEY

There are some in this world who love to be in the limelight, the talk of the town, the lady in red. If you love theatre and think that 'drop the debt' is something to do with your overdraft card after the January sales shopping spree then I am probably talking about you too.

Then there are those who maintain a lower profile, who keep on with keeping on and, well, just get on with it. Environmentalists usually fall into this latter category. As far as I'm aware, Swampy never made it onto Vogue's front-cover. Indeed, it's probably a good thing he never became too famous; he probably had an ethical objection to snorting coke unless it had been reared up a pig's bum or something. Kate and Doherty would doubtless turn their noses up at this, rather than getting this up their noses, but considering loo seats and snorting have a habit of going together like birds of a feather, it's surprising how choosey these celebs can be.

The fame thing: over recent years, environmental issues have become increasingly hot topics, both in the literal climate change sense and the metaphorical "you're so hot I could melt my glacier on you" sense. George Monbiot, 43 years old and a political activist-academic, is my pin-up boy. His sexiest garment is likely to be the thermal underwear he wears to reduce central heating use – need I say more?

While big name celebrities, such as Branson and Chris Martin, are seen to be getting in on the eco-action, a good proportion of Cambridge students are failing to be recognised for their green activities if the V100 nominations are anything to go by.

My final column is about celebrating Cambridge students who are getting on with getting on. Great things are happening in pokey rooms that smell like wee all over Cambridge, with StopAids, CAAT, Plane Stupid, Greenpeace, Sudan Divestment... And so on until the organic cows come home.

My major (I am sure vital) contribution to saving the planet last term was achieved, apparently, through trying to persuade people they should have more sex because it's environmentally friendly.

I only discovered I was doing this when a good friend, John, filled me in on the workings of my sub-conscious: "Tess, I think this column is good for you. It's providing a space for you to explore your sexuality and be green simultaneously."

He was drunk. I hope. Particularly since I thought exploring your sexuality was what you did when trying to decide whether you were gay (which I'm not), rather than anything to do with the environment?

More to the point, getting on with it – saving the world – does include getting it on. Ethics Girl's final piece of advice for the coming year is this: in next year's V100 I want to see more people nominated because they are environmentally friendly or having a lot of sex. Get it on and get on with it.

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A Slice of the Action

» George Grist goes all the way to Naples to find his perfect pizza

To eat great food is a pleasure, but to enjoy great food in its original surroundings made to the highest possible standards is outstanding. If you're looking for outstanding pizza, forget Domino's and Pizza Hut – what's more, forget Pizza Express and all those other pretenders: to taste the very best pizzas in the world, head straight to the heartland of Italy's social and cultural underbelly, Naples. Eschewing Rome's (inferior) thin and crispy base, the thick, wood-fired Neapolitan pizzas are typically and most authentically made with San Marzano tomatoes from the fertile farmland south of Vesuvius and Mozzarella di Bufala made from the milk of the regional water buffaloes. To be

for over 130 years. Even now it largely escapes the attention of the tourists who head straight for the Circumvesuviana railway on their way to Pompeii, Sorrento and the Amalfi Coast, but those who brave the cluttered streets and kamikaze moped-drivers are richly rewarded. The heady smell of yeast, hot dough and smoke from the ovens filters out into the street, which, come dinner-time is inevitably lined with a queue of noisy, impatient Neapolitans, putting the world to rights in the way that only Italians can. When you go in, don't even think about ordering an extra-cheesy Meat Feast; the Neapolitans aren't too keen on polluting their pizzas with too many toppings, subscribing to the

As for size, if you've got this far already, it'd be churlish not to order extra large

age-old adage "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." You've got two choices of pizza: Mozzarella (the classic), and Marinara, with its tomato and garlic base, so named because the ingredients kept well during the long sea voyages. As for size, if you've got this far already, it'd be churlish not to order extra large. To wash it all down, there's no ladi-dah wine list or any of that rubbish: it's Peroni beer, Coke, water or nothing at all. So grab a seat at one of the communal tables, throw your order at a passing waiter and hope it sticks. Three minutes later, the colossal pizza arrives, sizzling hot from the scorching oven. It's just slightly charred round the edges, and the molten golden brown cheese bubbles and pops in the middle. The blood red tomatoes and the few sprigs of fresh basil make up the three colours of the Italian flag, "la bandiera". And on top of this explosion of colour, the taste is absolutely out of this world. As the knife and fork drop on the empty plate, you know that you might just have had the best meal of your life.

Da Michele
Via C. Sersale 1/3, Naples, Italy



recognised as a "vera pizza napoletana", the cooking must be carried out to an almost absurdly extensive list of specifications (especially in light of the cavalier attitudes which the Italians seem to show towards their cooking), including separate final temperatures for the dough, oil, tomatoes and mozzarella. When in Naples, take your pick from the myriad "pizzerie" on show – you'll get a fabulous meal wherever you go. But if you really want to experience Neapolitan pizza as it's meant to be, head for Da Michele. It's a distinctly unimpressive building, in the heart of the slightly shabby, seedy old town, and it's been serving a mostly local clientele



Above: the Amalfi Coast, the birthplace of the pizza and Da Michele. The place that does it best

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FLUORESCENT FLASHFORWARD

» Ignore the sober trends lying on the sales racks and make a resolution to tackle the unknown: neon brights for girls and big bags for boys. New year, new look.



Laura M wears dress, £25 at Dorothy Perkins. Vest (just seen), £15 at Oasis. Anna wears leggings, £18 at American Apparel. Jumper, £45 at Rellik. Shoes, £350 at Prada. Laura F wears dress, £30 at www.asos.com. Ali wears leggings, £25 at American Apparel. Dress, £25 at www.asos.com. Vest (just seen), £10 at Pimkie. Ellie wears dress, £25 at Dorothy Perkins. Photographed by Debbie Scanlan at Newnham College. Styled by Rosanna Falconer and Olivia Johnson.



Left: Extra bright, extra energy

IN THE BAG?

» Boys, do you groan when your girlfriend obsesses over the latest “it” bag? Watch out, you might be next... *Varsity* fashion investigates the rise of the man bag

FOR

The man bag. It's not the briefcase your father carries to work. It's not the holdall in which you haul around your sports kit. And it's certainly not the rucksack reminiscent of schooldays and camping holidays. The man bag shares the practicality of the aforementioned, but has that additional aesthetic advantage. In leather or canvas, with a clasp or buckle, it is capable of conveying all male gubbins as well as those books to be returned to the library, acting as a perfect combination of style and function. Boys, do away with the outdated preconceptions that a bag is solely a woman's accessory. Simple yet effective, the man bag is square, tough and masculine. Call it a “macho satchel” instead.

European males have been sporting the manbag for aeons whilst retaining their swaggering masculinity and, at last, the British reluctance to accept the trend is diminishing. High-end fashion is driving from the top, with Mulberry producing the sumptuous Alfie bag, the very name evoking the alpha male rather than the effeminate whimsy. So, ditch the self consciousness, master that bag-wielding attitude and charge around Cambridge feeling slick and sophisticated, casting a withering glance at those boys still hauling their possessions around in their bulging pockets.

Olivia Johnson

AGAINST

The satchel, the briefcase, the rucksack... you're either a schoolboy, a dodgy dealer or a foreign exchange student. You just can't win with the man bag.

The Michelin-man style bulging pockets caused by fitting a boy's life into his trousers may have brought many a Cambridge male to consider an alternative method. But the man bag, with all its effeminate connotations, is not the remedy. Hanging scruffily from your shoulder or getting caught in your bike wheels whilst trying to cruise along King's Parade: it can't help but ruin your cool.

The sartorial error is even spreading to the continent – my sighting last week of a Parisian gent sporting Yves Saint Laurent's super-size Muse bag proved the phenomenon is reaching the It-bag snobbery of the fairer sex. Be afraid, be very afraid.

But boys, how much do you really need to carry with you? Wallet, iPod and mobile are surely the limit? It is a girl's prerogative to lug around three shades of lip gloss, two copies of *Vogue* and at least one change of heels but boys should be more restrained. You'll cause us all to fret over just what exactly your bag contains... geeky tomes, illegal substances, a change of heels? Either way it's excess baggage.

Rosanna Falconer

TRADITIONALIST BAGS HIMSELF A WINNER

» Harry Hewlett empties his pockets, adopts his most macho stance and hits the town with a man bag

I have to confess that, despite the best efforts of my sisters, there are quite a few things about girls that I don't really get.

Why do they never order pudding at a restaurant but always end up eating all of mine? Why does eating two half biscuits mean less calories than eating one

‘You can take everything you could possibly want with you no wonder girls' rooms are so tidy.’

whole one? And most of all, why do they always lug bags around with them? Seems very silly when the other half of the population can make do with pockets.

Fortunately having spent a day with a very manly, if studded, man-bag I am beginning to understand why they insist on it. This bag proved to be brilliant. You can take everything you could

possibly want with you – books, newspapers, pens, jumpers – no wonder girls' rooms are so tidy. I also found that having a man-bag has the added advantage that you can wear it, unlike a backpack, without people thinking (or perhaps more honestly for me, realising) you are a bit of a nerd.

The only problem now is that I should probably go and buy one. Shopping for bags, hmm... I really am becoming a girl.



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12.50 (Not Sat/Sun) 16.10 19.30 Fri/Sat

Late 22.50

MISS POTTER (PG) (1h55) (NFT) Daily

13.30 16.00 18.50 21.00

HAPPY FEET (U) (2h10) Daily Sat/Sun

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14.50

APOCALYPTO (18) (2h40) Fri/Sat Late

23.20

FLUSHED AWAY (U) (1h45) Sat/Sun

Only 10.05

PERFUME (15) (2h50) Fri/Sat Late

23.15

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Different shades of Blue

»Varsity examines what it takes

SIMON ALLEN

The Blues committee is to have a review of all half-blue sports in the near future. However, according to their members, this is no cause for alarm for minority sportsmen as they are more concerned about letting sports into the half-blue fold rather than weeding them out. With sports such as Gaelic Football, Triathlon and Marathon Running vying for half-blue status, it is felt that there has to be a consolidation and rationalization to find out exactly the sporting level of the current blue and half-blue sports, in order to properly assess the newcomers' bids.

But this is an incredibly difficult thing to do. How do you assess a sport's worth? Is it perhaps the number of student participants, or maybe their student support? Rugby and rowing immediately come to mind when I think of the huge crowds at the Boat Race and Twickenham Varsity match. Perhaps it's how well a sport does at BUSA (British University Sporting Association)? This can have nothing to do with how many students participate or support the sport: not that many people know about Cambridge's Eton Fives team's success over the last few years, not least that they are National University Champions. A similar case could be put for Cambridge's Real Tennis. Their team includes David Woodman

one of the best amateur players in the world and they consistently top the national tables. It seems the size of a sport does not matter either. Maybe a sport should be valued by how much time is committed to it: the Cambridge Men's Ice hockey team spend 14 hours a week training, travelling and playing matches whilst the Fives team invest up to 20 hours a week playing their sport, quite substantial time commitment.



Real Tennis: a half Blue sport?

Furthermore, there are certain sports that deserve to be supported by the Blues Committee regardless of their participation, support or success. Cambridge is a university steeped in history and tradition and so are its sports. The boat race has been going since 1829, the Rugby Varsity match since 1872. They are some of the best known examples of traditional Cambridge sports but many of the

minor sports have an equal heritage like the Real Tennis Club opened in 1877, the Ice Hockey Club was founded in 1885 and the Polo Team started in 1873. With such heritage it would be a travesty if either sport was ever to be neglected by the university, and the fact that these minor sports retain their sporting prowess further strengthens their case for continued full university support.

So, it would seem that the level of skill, commitment, participation and heritage define a blue or half-blue sport's worth. How do the newcomers compare to this? My initial reaction is to encourage as many sports as possible and giving them a blue status would no doubt do that, but there is obviously a limit. A university blue or half blue retains significant prestige largely because they are so difficult to earn and in part because of their history; new sports have to overcome this. Extending the blue sports too far would certainly diminish their status. Saying this also does not deny minority sportsmen all recognition considering that anyone can be granted a discretionary blue. According to Tim Murray on the Blues Committee "If you are good enough at any sport, literally any sport, you can get a discretionary blue from the Committee." If the newcomers can match the level set by the current blue sports then they should earn recognition, but we must remember that the existing level remains fairly formidable.

Gamblers Unanimous



Welcome back to Gamblers Unanimous. We hope you all punted responsibly over the festive period. Although global warming may have ruined the white Christmas market, the highlights included the Boxing Day footy bonanza and the traditional bookies New Year's specials (lump on Wills and Kate to wed in 2007 at 3-1).

Varsity rugby was another profitable experience, with a comfortable Cambridge victory paying for our drinks long into the night. Aside from that, our tipping in this paper last term left us twenty-five quid in arrears, so it is now our job to get you back in the black, and us back on speaking term with the big cheeses at betfair.com

Poker has been prominent in the news this week. The High Court ruling that it is a game as much about luck as skill, threatens our favourite card club in London. We fundamentally disagree with the decision, but were able to turn our attention to the online game where Joe scored big late last Sunday. Competing against a field of 2,500 entrants, he managed to turn his \$24 qualifying ticket into a healthy \$380 profit.

The 'bank job' this week we follow Ricky 'The Hit Man' Hatton to Vegas for the IBF world title against Juan Urango. The latter is no slouch, remaining undefeated and will surely push Hatton all

the way. We therefore take Hatton to win on points at the mouth-watering price of 9/5 (2.8 on Betfair). £14 should do the trick.

For the 'long shot', we are staking £3 to win on Oneway in the Victor Chandler Chase, which takes place at 1.45pm on Saturday at the newly refurbished Ascot. Oneway finished second to the excellent Voy Por Usteded at Kempton last time out, and will have to shoulder top weight, but at odds of 8/1 (9 on Betfair), it cannot be ignored.

The 'porters' tip' goes to the NFL playoffs where Peyton Manning and the Colts host the New England Patriots. With home field advantage and the best quarter-back in the NFL, we think the Indianapolis Colts will win by a margin of 7-12 points which is available on Betfair at 3/1 (4.1). Our final £3 of the week goes on that.

Running total: -£25.50

The Bank Job
Hatton to win on points.
Stake: £14

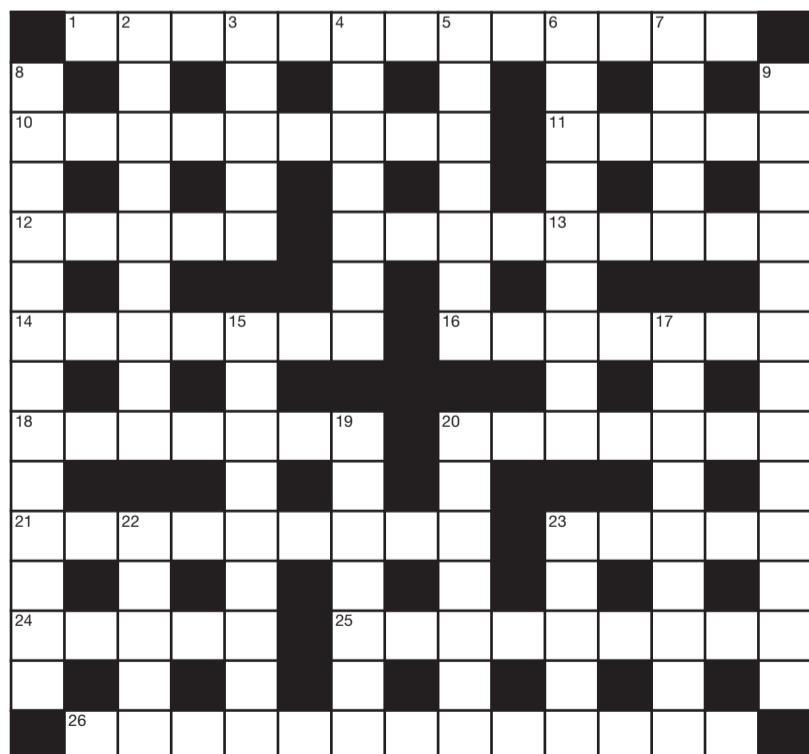
The Long Shot
Oneway in the Victor Chandler
Stake: £3

The Porters' Tip
Colts win by 7-12 points
Stake: £3

Games and puzzles



Varsity crossword no. 460



ACROSS

- 1. It's tedious to make Eastern string in tune (13)
- 10. What the dark side think of the light? (9)
- 11. Command for headless, confused Leftie (5)

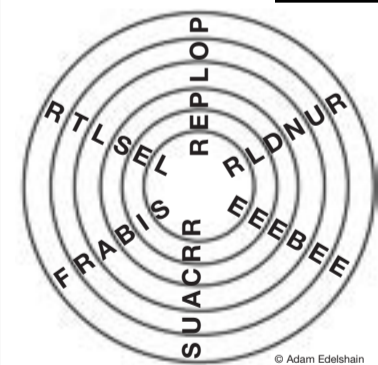
DOWN

- 12. Hatred sparked when i'm mixed with duo (5)
- 13. Replace article with interest compounded (9)
- 14. Was last partner Edward? (7)
- 16. Gull in meadow, confused and unending (7)
- 18. Compensation regarding robe (7)
- 20. Corrosive accountant is cut out (7)
- 21. Donkey faced Queen; old king grabbed it for the pot! (9)
- 23. Main supply-line for a golden army? (5)
- 24. Nell looks back to the east to see her (5)
- 25. Fools trot foolishly at pouffe (9)
- 26. Second rites in French displayed obscurity (13)
- 2. Void I fed one into to be invalidated (9)
- 3. He prophesied Human destruction (5)
- 4. Came in as reed net failed (7)
- 5. Receding waters swept Debbie away with Tim's head (7)
- 6. Bride's possessions philosopher put on tabletop (9)
- 7. Sounds like she's a low point (5)
- 8. Mad to no longer be a rolling stone (13)
- 9. Unique place in blearier surroundings (13)
- 15. Run to the East - simplifies to that (9)
- 17. Well known that common sense with nothing added subdues lively riot (9)
- 19. Ate quickly whilst mocked (7)
- 20. Smoke of revolutionary origin (7)
- 22. Make voles do puzzle (5)
- 23. Sounds like our lad's fire-raising (5)

rotations

COMPETITION

Win a pair of tickets to the Arts Picturehouse
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



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

accenture

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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).

		3		17			19	3	4
11						13			
	8					9			
						24			
								6	
									8
	6							6	
15								5	

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.

5	1	7	3	7	4	7
1	2	4	6	3	3	5
7	5	3	1	2	2	6
1	7	3	4	6	5	3
3	5	6	5	1	7	4
2	4	2	7	2	6	3
6	5	2	5	7	1	4

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Men's Boxing



Ed Andrews

How did it feel to win your first Varsity Rugby Match in front of the Twickenham crowd?

The whole experience was undoubtedly the highlight of my sporting career and I felt extremely privileged to be a part of it - not only because of the occasion, but due also to the fact that I was playing with a lot of very good friends. To win was obviously fantastic, having worked all year for it I can't imagine what it would have felt like to lose.

Last year you won a Boxing Blue and this year captained the Light Blue Squad. When can we next see Oxford and Cambridge in competition?

This year is the 100th Varsity Boxing Match, and is being held at the spiritual home of British Amateur Boxing, York Hall, in Bethnal Green, East London. It will take place on Thursday 8th March, with tickets on sale shortly.

How easy is it to combine playing two sports at such a high level?

It's obviously demanding in terms of training, but I think that it is not too difficult to fit it in around academia and still be successful, as long as you manage your time well.

What are the Light Blues' boxing chances at this year's Varsity?

The team is not only shaping up very well, with a number of returning 'Blues' and new, experienced boxers coming in, but everyone is extremely determined to avenge the defeat of 2006. Hopefully the Bowring Bowl will be returning to Cambridge at the end of it.

Two universities, one trip, any snow?

»As 1400 students hit the slopes, Cambridge lose out in the Varsity races

PERSEPHONE BRIDGMAN-BAKER

The Varsity Trip, the official Ski and Snowboard Trip of Oxford and Cambridge Universities, is one of the largest UK student ski trips. Each year eight brave, multi-tasking, admin efficient compulsives make up the committee that takes over 1400 students to Les Deux Alpes, France. The trip preparation takes a year's worth of work, although the trip only costs £289.

The first week proved ideal for race training due to the lack of snow lower on the mountain. Glacier runs were open and in top condition, with sunburnt noses returning from the slopes by the end of day two. At this stage, snow conditions for the main week were looking touchy, but a snowfall before the 'Best of Both' 10-dayers arrived that sealed the success of the resort. More snow before the arrival of the main weekers tipped Deux Alpes as the only European resort with good conditions and open runs. The Committee's snow dances had clearly paid off.

The main week can be one of first lifts up and last lifts down, long leisurely lunches, or just a blur. But for many, the focus of the week is the Varsity Races, where the prime skiers from both universities pit themselves against each other in a culmination of the preceding week's training. Time trials help the race captains select their teams, with Pembroke's Rachel Nordby standing out as the fastest woman and ahead of the majority of the male racers.

The races this year were hotly contested particularly in the women's events, with only less than half a second dividing the 1st teams after the first day. Oxford's men had the advantage of highly experienced racers, whilst Lomax Ward and Evan Scouros performed for Cambridge in the Slalom and Giant Slalom respectively. The final result of both the men's and women's swayed in Oxford's favour, but strong Cambridge sides skied hard and prominent efforts should be noted. In other competitions, Maria Opanova scored highly to win first place in the Women's Big Air, with Paul Esparon jumping well in the Combi competi-



Boarders and Skiers alike enjoyed great conditions in the Alps

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tion, won by Lomax Ward.

For the less serious racers, the Adidas Cuppers Event was the perfect showground for college ski talent. With Downing claiming the Cambridge Top Spot, their team was kitted out in Adidas ski goggles as

rewards for their achievement. The afternoon was tremendously supported, and ended with vin chaud and a BBQ down in resort with the Airbag providing much entertainment and practice for the Big Air Competition. Similar partying continued

throughout the week, with bar crawls, themed nights and pub quizzes to ensure students were kept amused off the slopes. The wounded traipsing through the Varsity Office varied from broken wrists ("I fell off the pole in that club") to torn ligaments ("my knee popped out but I carried on skiing anyway"), and there ought to have been some frostbite after the number of complaints about naked skiing during the notorious Valley Rally. The top prize of the iPod Nano for this event was well - if jealously - received, and the day was finished off with the Gatecrasher event, held dramatically at Opera.

Hangovers and melting snow meant that stash-sporting bodies filled most of the bars and restaurants Deux Alpes had to offer, before that dreaded coach ride home.



MIKE DOWNING

Blues rugby team victorious in tight and hard fought game



John Blaikie takes home the spoils

SOPHIE PICKFORD

CONTINUED FROM BACK PAGE

for Oxford, had a pretty flawless but uninspiring game, but for most of the time seemed to be one step ahead of his backline. Countless times, basic handling errors ensured promising Dark Blue attacks came to nothing. In addition, the Cambridge back line and back row, lead by an outstanding display from Joe Ansbro, defended every line as though it were the try line.

It was Ansbro who ignited the build up to Cambridge's second try in the last fifteen minutes. Receiving the ball on the burst he broke round Roff on the inside and made a great break up the wing. Oxford shifted onto the back foot and, sensing victory, Cambridge moved in for the kill. On the thirty-fifth minute, Blake, switching from inside to outside half, kicked for touch from a penalty. The Light Blue pack won the lineout well and set up a maul. Oxford gave away another penalty on the five metre line and Cambridge elected to take the scrum. Using the solid base that the

front row had provided all match, the Light Blues called a number eight pick up. Oxford defended well, but good quick recycling saw the ball stay

"sensing victory Cambridge moved in for the kill."

in the pack as Captain John Blaikie barged over the line on the seventy-ninth minute to take Cambridge a converted try ahead.

The score remained 15-6 in Cambridge's favour sealing a solid triumph for the Light Blues in the 125th Varsity match. Outstanding defence and a strong workmanlike display from the tight five, secured a substantial victory over an error strewn Dark Blue side that never really managed to find the tempo to compete.

Player Ratings

- 1 Richard Schwikkard 6/10
- 2 Joe Clark.....8/10
- 3 Jon Dawson.....8/10
- 4 John Blaikie8/10
- 5 Mike Harfoot6/10
- 6 Nathan Johnson7/10
- 7 Dave O'Brien.....7/10
- 8 Ed Andrews.....7/10
- 9 Ross Blake8/10
- 10 Jonny Ufton6/10
- 11 Dan Stewart6/10
- 12 Steffan Thomas7/10
- 13 Joe Ansbro9/10
- 14 David Tibbot.....7/10
- 15 Hamish Murray6/10

Hare and hounds romp home

»Cambridge run Oxford into ground in light Blue storm



Cambridge started strongly from the off, with both teams going on to dominate their competition

PHIL SCARD

OWAIN BRISTOW & LEIKA GOONERATNE

This year Cambridge played host to both the II-IVs and I's cross-country Varsity Matches, at Wandlebury Country Park and Wimbledon Common respectively. Cambridge came away victorious in both.

In the II-IV's races, Cambridge won overall despite a slow start. The home university lost the women's IIs and only Tricia Peters - last year's first Cambridge woman at the Blues' race - broke into the top 5. The women's IIIs levelled the ground though with some strong running from freshers Liz Howse and Sabrina Verjee who gained the top two positions. A pack of nine Cambridge runners claiming every place between 10th and 18th position, easily clinching the 173-136 victory.

With the scores tied at one win each, it was now the men's turn to prove themselves. In the men's II race Ulrich Paquet displayed some experienced running and, along with

CUH&H Hon. Secretary Lee Harper and fresher John Redshaw, led the II team to a Cambridge victory.

In the men's IIIs race, Ali Connell, usually safer on track, risked re-injuring himself on the cross-country course to be the first runner home for Cambridge, followed by Andy Bell.

Despite the inspiring force of Chris Morris as IV's captain and an extremely close final score of 543-547, a solitary Oxford runner gave them the edge. The first three places had Cambridge's name on them. Ed Dickins hung back in the first couple of laps reserving his energy to overtake the leaders only at the very end and win the race. After taking much of the head wind, Alex Gaastra and Charlie Pitt-Ford had to settle with second and third places respectively.

With a final score of 3-2 to Cambridge, the scene was set for an exciting Blues match the following week, on Saturday December 2 at Wimbledon Common. Captain Claire Day, along with Men's Captain Will George, lead two of the most powerful and promising teams of recent years

into the 116th Varsity Match.

The Ladies 4 mile event began with the customary steady start, until Cambridge athletes Day and Polly Keen took up the running, whilst the rest of the field bunched tightly behind them. Keen, making her

"the only fresher to win a Blues race in the last decade"

debut, finished strongly in 24:59 with a five second margin, to be the only fresher to win a Blues race in the last decade.

The battle raged hard in the wake of the first two down the home straight, with only twelve seconds separating positions three to nine. Day dug deep to regain her third place, within touching distance of the funnel, from Varsity 5000m second-

placer Charlotte Forbes. Harriet Owles closed the team in sixth place, sweeping past several tiring Dark Blues, meaning all four winning team members were awarded full Blues.

Taking strength from the inspiring sight just witnessed, Cambridge's men went into their 7.5 miler with confidence, determined to finish the job that had been started the previous week at Wandlebury.

Paolo Natali and Will George hungrily took the front, attacking Oxonian Jon Blackledge, last year's winner, who was suffering from an early-season injury. Natali's ferocious surge at halfway eventually gave victory by thirty seconds in 38:39 and is the first Cambridge man to win since 1998. George hung onto second, up three places on last year, whilst ex-Harvard runner James Kelly returned home in 5th for Cambridge. The excellent packing of Owain Bristow, Matt Armstrong and Matt Grant resulted in 8th, 9th and 10th, sealing the team victory for the first time since 2003 and Blues receipts thanks to true team work.

The Varsity Vase

Cup competitions are always exciting, particularly because sometimes, just sometimes, the underdog causes an upset. Every now and again Wrexham beats Arsenal and everyone says, "aren't the cup competitions great". Yet the difference between an exciting cup competition and a great one is huge. Cups are defined by their finals and not because the big boys are humbled every now and again.

The best cup finals in recent years have been Liverpool v West Ham in 2006, maybe Arsenal v Liverpool

2001, and possibly the 2005 final when Manchester United dominated but Arsenal nicked it on penalties. On cup final day, neutrals want to see two teams in a tight contest with the better team on the day taking the trophy home. Knowing the winner before the final has kicked off can ruin the day.

In 2004, Millwall made it to the final, and while there was a media frenzy and a big build up, they weren't good enough to deliver a competitive cup final. The anticlimax was inevitable and immensely frustrating.

Therefore you will excuse me if I

express a little worry about the Varsity Vase this year. My two favourites thus far, St Catz III and ARU III, are both in the top half of the draw and I'm not sure anyone in the bottom half can really put up a strong enough fight to make a good final. St John's and Fitz both forgot to enter the competition and now Queen's have beaten Churchill, who had a chance of challenging ARU. Caius and Jesus could make it interesting if they play extremely well, but I'm more than a little concerned.

The last 16 are now 8, and as I'd

hoped, the big boys are still there. ARU beat Caius IV 13-1, while St Catz scraped past Trinity Hall 5-4. Churchill are out but their league form is so poor that their Division 5 status is under threat.

The remaining results from the last 16 are as follows:

Girton v Bye, Pembroke 6-0 Clare, Queen's 4-3 Churchill, Homerton 3-1 Trinity, Downing 2-5 Jesus, Caius III 7-2 Christs



Sports Round Up

Results

Men's Rugby
Blues vs. Oxford
University Won 15-6.

Cross Country
Cambridge Hare &
Hounds vs. Oxford
University Won.

Ice Hockey
Men's Blues vs. Zuos
School Lost 5-7.

Women's Hockey
Blues vs. Cambridge City
Lost 1-2.

Upcoming Fixtures

Rugby
Men's Blues vs. Durham
University
20th January,
Grange Road.

Hockey
Men's Blues
vs. Chelmsford II
20th January

Ice Hockey
Men's Blues vs.
Birmingham University
20th January (Away)
vs. Southampton 26th
January (Home).

Men's Football
Blues vs. Aston University,
23rd January (Away).

Women's Lacrosse
Blues vs. Loughborough
University, 24th January
(Away).

SPORT

Cross Country
Cambridge Dominate
Page 31

Half Blues
What does it
take? Page 29

Blaikie seals gritty victory for Blues in war of attrition

»Strong forwards display secures bragging rights for Cambridge

TOM MARRIOTT
Chief Sports Editor

Cambridge	15
Oxford	6

It was not pretty, it was not easy, but in the black and blue world of the Varsity Match it was more than enough. As had been expected, this year's game was a tightly fought, tense encounter. Whilst Cambridge took the lead early and held it throughout, Oxford gave little quarter, denying Cambridge the opportunity to play the kind of rugby that had allowed last year's entertaining second half rout. This was always going to be a tighter, more attritional match.

The last minute withdrawal of David Akinluyi from the team sheet, on the recommendation of the Joint Blues Committee, perhaps sealed the nature of the game. This followed Dark Blue complaints concerning specific trivialities in his residency criteria. The loss of Akinluyi certainly helped to lessen the Light Blues attacking edge out wide, but if Oxford had hoped that the loss of one player would facilitate the team's collapse they were sorely mistaken. Cambridge responded shrewdly, keeping the game in the tight, letting the forwards make the gains, and using the back line sparingly but intelligently.

The kick off was preceded by the traditional curtain raiser of the U.21's Varsity Match. A more mouth-watering appetiser could not have been asked for. Cambridge went into the final minute of normal time trailing, only to score a try on the 80th minute taking the score line to 12-11 in their favour. Oxford then countered impressively in what little injury time remained, working their way into a kickable position before taking a drop goal attempt.

Farcically, the attempt rebounded off the cross bar and back into play; Cambridge attempted to clear to touch but failed. Oxford seized the opportunity and were lucky enough to win a penalty in front of the posts. In the 84th minute of play the Dark Blue U.21s converted their penalty to win 14-12.

With the stage well and truly set, the teams emerged shortly before 2.00pm to a rapturous reception from the waiting crowd of over 41,000. Winning the toss, Oxford started the game inauspiciously with a long mis-directed kick into touch. Cambridge won the ensuing line out well. After failing to clear initially, the Light Blues made good use of a penalty to pin Oxford back into their own half. A



In the lead up to the final Light Blue try Cambridge's inspirational number 13, Joe Ansbro, makes a break down the wing

SOPHIE PICKFORD

brief period of end to end kicking followed as the two teams nervously searched for an attacking rhythm.

The nerves came to a head as tempers flared for the first time on the eight minute mark. A scrap following some ill advised use of the elbow in the maul ended in Cambridge No. 8, Ed Andrews, and Oxford lock, Dylan Alexander, being sent to the Sin Bin for ten minutes. Fortunately, this loss seemed to focus the Light Blues, whilst leaving the Dark Blues panicking. A period of sustained Cambridge pressure followed; smart lines, pace and good kicking out of hand kept the pressure firmly in the Oxford half.

The pressure paid off as Cambridge won a penalty within kicking distance on the eleventh minute. In an unchar-

Varsity Skiing

Cambridge and Oxford do battle on the slopes and in the bars Page 30

acteristic and unlucky turn Jonny Ufton struck the ball badly, barely clearing the ground with the attempt. The Dark Blues failed to clear and five minutes later Ufton had another opportunity. A more difficult kick, he struck it sweeter but unfortunately sent it just wide.

However, he more than made up for it minutes later when he sent a superb kick out of hand into touch on Oxford's five metre line. Cambridge piled on the pressure at the line out forcing basic errors as the Dark Blues tried to clear their lines. Cambridge were awarded a scrum on the five. Oxford, desperate to avoid a try, broke their

binds early. The referee, having warned them once already, immediately granted Cambridge the penalty try. Ufton duly converted.

For most of the middle third of the game the Dark Blues attacked relentlessly. For their efforts they were rewarded with two converted penalties, whilst Cambridge's David Tibbot added just one, bringing the score to 10-6. However hard they tried they seemed unable to put together the phases required to get over for the elusive try. Joe Roff, the much talked about Australian playing in the centres

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30