

# VARSITY

## THE ROBUST Visual Arts Page 24 TO THE RELIGIOUS

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## Annual audit reveals £10.5m hole in Regent House accounts

Oliver Tilley

THE UNIVERSITY has announced a deficit of £10.5m for the last academic year, raising fears over its medium-term financial future.

The deficit, a fivefold increase on last year's loss of £2m, was revealed in the University's annual accounts to Regent House on Tuesday and has prompted renewed criticisms of the government's funding policy as the financial future of the University looks increasingly unsound.

Reaching £17m before the consolidation of accounts and the inclusion of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) profits, the loss was incurred after a poor performance of the FTSE 100 in the late 1990s, which hit Cambridge's pension scheme, requiring a £12.5m payout to cover its liabilities.

The University has been keen to play down the significance of the deficit - which only amounts to 1.6% of its annual turnover - and expects to recoup the money within 4 years.

A spokesman for the University said: "this problem was not unexpected and no-one is panicking", while Andrew Reid, the University's financial director, emphasised the influence of building maintenance costs, adding "None of this catches us by surprise, but we've got to pull out of this sooner rather than later."

The University has also highlighted several factors which they hope will alleviate the problem, including the £11m they expect to gain from the top-up fees to be introduced by the government in 2006, along with a programme of "significantly intensified

fundraising efforts" and the "devolution of budgetary planning to Schools and Institutions, so they can decide their priorities".

The government has come under fire for its university funding policy as the new £3,000 top-up fees are not expected to be sufficient. Tony Minson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University, said in an statement issued upon the release of the budget "The University and the Colleges have faced years of chronic underfunding and although Tuition fees will go some way towards addressing the balance in meeting the costs of teaching, it will not be enough."

Mr. Reid appeared to give more ground to the government, commenting "We are highly reliant on the government and we believe that's right". But he did also note that "Government funding per student has gone down from £8,000 to £5,000 in the last 15 years."

The University is expected to push for a significant increase in fees after 2010, when the government's pledge to maintain current pricing runs out.

Contrary to many people's expectations, the University has ruled out a move towards Oxford University's policy of reducing undergraduate numbers and increasing overseas student intake.

A spokeswoman underlined the University's position when she said "The University of Cambridge colleges are absolutely committed to the principle that no UK student should be put off from applying here because of financial worries, and that no UK student, once admitted, should ever have to leave Cambridge for financial reasons."

- 'EU expansion costs university', page 4

## Eyes on the prize: Scientists discuss new direction for energy policy



Cambridge scientists convening at the Cambridge Energy Forum last week - science continues to blossom in Cambridge, with several exciting breakthroughs announced recently - 'Science Matters': page 4. Science: page 16. Editorial: page 11.

## New research could end animal testing

Lucy Phillips

A TEAM OF Cambridge University scientists are seeking funding for a new technology that could remove the need for animal testing in the development of drugs and any industry where toxicity standards need to be met.

The venture, called SimuGen, has combined microarray and machine learning technologies to produce a system that could form a method for creating new drugs without pre-clinical trials on animals.

Dr Quin Wills of the University's Computational Biology Department is a leading scientist associated with SimuGen. He hopes that the enterprise will become a market leader in the emerging field of 'toxicogenomics'.

Although it is still in the early stages of development SimuGen is looking for funding in order to develop a commercial 'research kit' from the raw science. It has reached the final of the Cambridge University Entrepreneurs business plan competition which could secure £50k towards the groundbreaking project. SimuGen hope to have raised enough funds to have a prototype kit ready by the end of the year.

The technology relies on microarrays, which enable the testing of tens of thousands of genes at the same time, and machine learning methods to analyse what is going on inside an organism. A specific tissue culture model is exposed to different toxins in order to generate a genetic response which can then

be profiled in any standard laboratory, with no need for sophisticated and expensive equipment.

Dr Wills said "There is overwhelming proof that it will work. Progress has already been made to move away from drugs trials on animals - it is now standard to first test for DNA toxicity using bacteria and cell cultures rather than animals."

He continued, "The long term plan is to replace animal testing research centres. I can see it happening in stages. The technology is there but drugs regulators are very strict as to what is appropriate and safe." Current regulations from drugs safety agencies require proof of safety by pre-clinical trials before human testing can begin. This usually involves trials on two mammal species to show that the product is not toxic.

Awareness of the potential of the technology comes after Cambridge University abandoned plans to build a multi-million pound animal testing laboratory last year. The strength of feeling among animal rights activists had escalated the projected costs of providing security for the facility. The new technology is thought to be much cheaper than animal research centres, particularly in relation to security measures.

Oxford University has also just announced that work will resume on its half-built £18 million animal laboratory this month. The project received a setback after one of the construction companies pulled out of the venture last year due to increased pressure from animal rights activists.

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THEATRICALY CHALLENGED PAGE 19 FOOTBALL CONSCIOUS PAGE 26 WALTZING ALL OVER MATILDA PAGE 24

## News in Brief

### Clean East

The East of England has been named the cleanest place in England, according to a new survey by Keep Britain Tidy. London was branded the dirtiest city.

### Fire control

Concern is mounting over proposals to merge six of the region's fire control centres, including the Cambridgeshire one, into a single site. Residents are worried about the impact this will have on emergency situations.

### Experience Islam

Experience Islam week starts on Saturday 5 February. A wide range of talks and cultural events will explain the ins and outs of the world's fastest growing religion. The highlight of the week is expected to be on Thursday night when there will be a chance to experience an evening of art, literature and music from across the Muslim world in a Moroccan souk atmosphere. Visit [www.isoc.co.uk/eiw](http://www.isoc.co.uk/eiw) for more information.

### Stem cell support

Education Secretary Ruth Kelly has confirmed that she will back stem cell research, despite her links to the Roman Catholic faith, which opposes such concepts. Mrs Kelly has said that she is completely committed to the government's ten year science strategy.

### Emma fundraising

Emmanuel College has raised almost £900 for the Tsunami appeal. Last Friday in an event named 'Show Your True Colours' members of college wore their college colours, pink and blue, during the day. In the evening 40 per cent of bar profits were donated to the appeal.

### One World Week

One World week kicks off this Sunday with a Global Village event at Kings, hosting dance performances, film showings, talks and food tasting. Throughout next week there will be a series of events across Cambridge, including a 'Rich-Poor Dinner', a Religious Fair, and numerous film showings, which aim to engender a spirit of One World in the people who take part and experience what One World Week has to offer.

### Error

We printed the date of The Chinese New Year Trust Society's annual ball incorrectly in last week's edition. The event is being held on Friday 11 February at the Guildhall.

# Lawyers 'poor' score

Lucy Barwell



The Cambridge Law Faculty. Law students have received criticism for their recent performance

## Lucy Phillips

UNIVERSITY LAW candidates have been branded 'not good enough' by an admissions test introduced this year.

Too many candidates produced "poor quality" work in the National Admissions Test for Law which is used by Cambridge, Oxford, UCL, Durham and other top institutions to help distinguish between different 'A-grade' candidates.

The tests were introduced

because of the high demand for places to study law. At Cambridge there are roughly five candidates for each place every year.

The report into the tests found that many candidates "were unable to construct reasoned arguments". But Dr David Fox, Academic Secretary of the CU Law Faculty and lecturer in law, has reassured members of the University that the results are not that straightforward and the tests are in their early stages.

Dr Fox said "The test is only one element of the admissions process. We were using them in a pilot sense."

The average score for the multi-choice questions was 13.16 out of 24, and the lowest was 3. The top mark, achieved by four candidates, was 21. Essay questions formed the second part of the test. He conceded that "many of the results were rather disappointing" but says he does not believe the results are determinative of prospective students potential.

# Researchers' law

## John McHugh

FIVE YEARS in jail could become the punishment for animal rights activists who target firms and individuals associated with animal testing under a proposed amendment to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill.

The bill seeks to give extensive protection to the animal experimentation industry with the proposed laws punishing those who target people with indirect involvement in animal testing. This will cover businesses in the supply chain, company employees and their families, charity shops and universities. Those considering becoming involved with animal research facilities will also receive protection from intimidation.

Trade and Industry Secretary Patricia Hewitt announced the proposals indicating that economic concerns are at the forefront of the government's new plans. This is because the bioscience industry is worth £3 billion a year to the UK. Hewitt outlined the threat posed by animal rights extremists to those trying to secure investment for scientific research on animals in the UK.

In addition to economic concerns, Hewitt highlighted the government's responsibility to those who carry out completely legal work yet find themselves in distress at the

hands of extremists.

Hewitt further justified the government's support for animal testing by highlighting the advances it can bring to medical research. She emphasised the fact that British law on animal testing is amongst the toughest in the world with features such as strict licensing rules and no cosmetic testing licences issued since 1999. Furthermore, efforts are being made by the government to further reduce the need for animal testing with the creation of a £660,000 centre for refining, reducing and replacing the use of animals for research.

Responses to the amendment indicate cross-party support for the measures. The Conservative shadow solicitor general Jonathan Djanogly welcomed the plans recognising the 'significant contribution to medical research' that the industry makes. Liberal Democrat Dr Evan Harris also fully supported the law to 'tackle the issue of economic sabotage' but also voiced concerns about the potential use of the legislation outside of cases directly related to animal rights extremism.

Not all showed such strong support for the plans. Greg Avery of anti-vivisection pressure group Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty said 'The government is bringing in laws to protect people who murder animals.'

# Paid to learn

## Anna McIlreavy

MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY revealed plans yesterday to introduce student bursaries worth up to £10,000 per year for the top pupils in the UK.

The attractive bursary will be awarded to the highest achievers at A Level – a move set to tempt the brightest pupils away from elite rival universities such as Oxford and Cambridge.

The bursary, called the President's Award, will be given by Professor Gilbert to the ten most outstanding students from Britain. It is one of many bursary schemes unveiled by Manchester University yesterday as higher education centres prepare for the jump in fees up to £3000 next year.

Whilst most universities indicate that they will be charging the maximum amount, a competitive market of bursary schemes looks set to develop.

Manchester University's introduction of a wealth of bursaries for high achievers is following the example of the University of California Berkely, which is publicly funded yet strictly only admits

the top 2% of school leavers.

Along with the 'President's Awards', Manchester University also has bursary schemes of up to £5000 per year for high-achieving pupils from low-income families.

University of Manchester President and Vice Chancellor Prof Alan Gilbert says the new scholarships reflect the university's commitment to attract the best students. "As one of the country's leading centres of research and learning, we are committed to attracting and supporting the very best students," he said.

When asked to comment on Manchester's new bursary offers for the elite of UK school-leavers, Cambridge University officials offered no response.

But Cambridge has said that it will not try to improve their financial position in the same way as Oxford University, whose method is to cut places for British students in favour of overseas students who bear great financial benefits for the institution.

Last week Oxford announced that it aimed to increase the proportion of international intake from 8% to 15% over the next ten years.

# Breakthrough as Cambridge scientists develop new technology for 'ethical' drugs testing



Brian Gunn

The standard rabbit array used for toxicity testing is pictured against new technology involving gene microarray. Each (faintly discernible) glowing spot on the slide represents what an individual gene is doing. A team of Cambridge scientists hope that this new method of drug trials will eventually take over from animal testing.

SimuGen have been approached by some possible sources of funding but they are still appealing to others interested in contributing to the project.

Editorial - Page 11



# Cantab priestess reveals masculine past

A recent Cambridge graduate disclosed this week that she was born a man

Chine Mbubaegbu

A PARISH priest who trained for the ministry at Cambridge University has stunned her parishioners by revealing that she used to be a man.

Sara Jones, 41, who is based in Herefordshire, trained at Westcott House, a theological college of the University and graduated last year before becoming an assistant curate of the Church of England.

Ms Jones was forced to reveal her background when a national paper made enquiries about her past last Friday after a tip-off from an unknown source.

When Jones refused to give the newspaper a photograph of her as a man, they threatened to obtain the photograph from other sources. This provoked her decision to tell her parishioners. She told *Varsity*: "We wanted them to hear it from us... I decided that as Christians, we're called to be honest people."

Anni Holden, Director of Communications for the Diocese of Hereford, said: "We felt that church wardens and others in the 14 parishes in the

Ross Team Ministry should be told about Sara's past before they read it in the newspaper."

**"I came to the conclusion that I was not a man. I just vaguely looked like one."**

Jones, whose previous name had been Colin, had been struggling with her gender for years. It took nine years for her to make the decision, after counselling from 'spiritual leaders.' She said: "When I realised I had to address this gender issue, I consulted parish officials and went on a retreat. I didn't want to do anything that would offend the laws of God. If God had made me a man, did I have the right to change?"

"I came to the conclusion that I wasn't a man. I just vaguely looked like one. If God had given me a heart complaint, I wouldn't say 'if God had wanted me to be well, he would have made me well.' God wants us all to be whole."

She said that her spiritual guides and mentors had said to her: "If this is your path then you have to take it."

Jones made the first steps to becoming a woman in 1991, when she had to live for a period of three years as a woman, as part of the social transition period that precedes surgery. After this three-year period, she legally changed her name and underwent gender re-alignment surgery.

Ms Jones had been married briefly to a woman before making the decision to change gender.

The former Roman Catholic read experimental psychology at Oxford University, and gained an MSc in occupational psychology from the University of Northumbria before coming up to Cambridge as a mature student to train for the ministry at Westcott House.

She praised the support that she received from staff at Westcott House who knew of her background from the beginning. She had decided not to tell the other ordinands (students) at the college, say-

ing: "They didn't need my baggage."

The same was said of her parishioners at the 14 parishes which constitute the Ross Team Ministry, for which she works.

She had not felt the need to tell them beforehand, saying that the matter was "private medical history, and irrelevant."

Despite the positive reaction that Ms Jones has so far received from the congregation,

**"She has received nothing but support from those who have been told."**

she anticipates that negative reactions might follow, once the parishioners have time to think about things. She said: "Some will have trouble."

Anthony Priddis, the Bishop of Hereford, has said: "She has received nothing but support from those who have been told. She was greeted with a round of applause when she went back into the church after those at the meeting had been told."

She hopes to become a vicar within the next four years.



Sara Jones, trained for the ministry at Westcott House, Cambridge, and has recently revealed to her parishioners that she was born a man.

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At the Union  
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**PREP**

VARSlTY

# Cam Iraqi student votes

## Raeid Jewad tells of his Iraqi election experience

**Amy Goodwin**

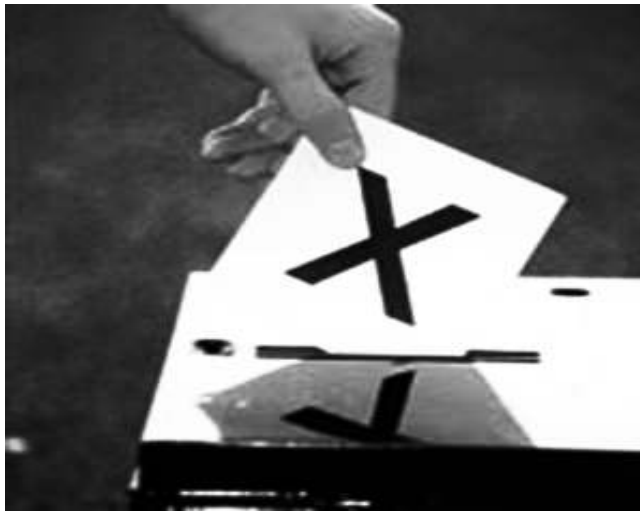
FOR OVER a year now, the continuing bloodshed and terror in Iraq have been a staple of our everyday news diet. Against this backdrop, it was perhaps inevitable that the elections which supposedly symbolise the democracy for which the war was fought ceased to be a bright light on the horizon, becoming instead the topic of frantic conferences and hushed rumours of delay. However for Cambridge student Raeid Jewad, the experience of voting was more than worth the wait, it was 'a day I will describe to my grandchildren'.

Voting for Britain's ex-pat Iraqis took place from 28-30 January in London, Glasgow and Manchester. Jewad describes how the roads around the polling station in Wembley became 'packed' with Iraqis keen to exercise their democratic rights, turning what should have been a ten-minute journey from his home into over two hours of roadblock. Any incipient rage was dispelled by the 'electrifying' atmosphere: 'It was an extremely moving scene. In every direction you looked, you saw Iraqi flags being waved, people dancing, cheering, singing... young people, old people, all

smiling and happy at the prospect of being able to vote'.

Jewad watched the ballots opening in Baghdad on live TV at 4am GMT, when President Ghazi Ajeel Al-Yawer cast the first vote. He arrived at the polling centre with his driving license and UK passport proving that he was born in Iraq. Despite the presence of protest demonstrations outside, there was a 'carnival feel' to proceedings. 'Kurds in their traditional dress were playing instruments and dancing, people were distributing sweets to the crowds waiting in line.'

The palpable air of excitement was heightened by the sound of the Iraqi national anthem blaring out from a loudspeaker mounted on a car and the sight of the world's media armed with their spotlights, microphones and satellite dishes. For Jewad, the day's resonance was increased by the thought of the 'bravery and resolve' of people voting in Iraq itself, for whom 'each trip to the ballot was a probable death sentence'. 'When I placed that tick next to the list I wanted, I felt my body tingle with excitement'. Smiling officials then asked him to place his right index finger in the pot of



indelible ink 'which has become the symbol of freedom for Iraqis all over the world'.

Jewad has no doubts regarding the legitimacy of the elections, instead praising the electoral commission for the 'incredible job' they did in organising them 'considering the major problems they faced' and the limited time available. He describes himself as 'relieved' that the calls to delay the elections were ignored: 'What would delaying achieve anyway? Who says that in six months the security situation will have dramatically

improved? Delaying would have given a moral boost to the terrorists'.

He admits that the road ahead 'is paved with thorns and dangers'. Having visited Iraq twice since the downfall of Saddam Hussein he believes that although a Shia theocracy 'will never materialise', the government 'needs to make sure all facets of society are involved in decision-making' in order to 'bring the disenchanted back into civil society'. Most vitally, they must be seen to be improving security and living conditions for Iraqis soon.

# PGCE concessions dropped

**Henry Bowen**

THE GOVERNMENT has announced plans to remove fee concessions to the postgraduate teacher training course, which will result in students facing a massive escalation in fees. Students of the Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) are currently exempt from the £1,150 tuition fee.

But when variable fees are introduced in 2006, institutions will be able to charge up to £3,000 for the one-year course, which is the most common route to qualifying as a teacher.

CUSU President, Wes Streeting, said that they had been 'caught completely unawares'. The proposals were announced without any consultation with teaching unions or the National Union of Students.

In contrast, the controversial Higher Education Funding Act was initially outlined as a white paper, and developed with recommendations from students.

Streeting reports that this process meant that the Act 'wasn't as bad as it might have been'. He explained that the

latest revelations have come as 'a kick in the teeth from the government'.

The plans have provoked a particularly strong reaction as the proposed changes will affect current students. First and second years planning to take the PGCE after completing their undergraduate degrees now face a huge escalation in their student debt.

Streeting dismissed a concessionary grant of £1,200 subsequently announced by the government as a 'tokenistic gesture'. He asserted that these grants usually only help

a small minority of students and would not be enough to prevent fewer students opting to do the PGCE.

On Wednesday night CUSU passed an emergency motion resolving to launch a campaign against this decision, targeted at both a university and government level. Wes Streeting said that the funding debate was beginning to 'kick off again' after a key education advisor to Tony Blair suggested that the top-up fees cap of £3,000 may be lifted before the agreed date of 2010.

# EU expansion costs University

**Lucy Phillips**

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY estimates that it has lost £1 million a year in fees as a result of the expansion of the European Union.

New figures show that the number of students admitted to British universities from the EU's ten new member states has more than doubled in a year. The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) has revealed that 2,422 students were enrolled in 2004 from the ten new states compared with 1,045 in 2003.

Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Cyprus and Malta

joined the EU last May.

Andrew Reid, the University's Financial Director, said, "Any loss is not good but the University believes it has steps in place to get things back on track." He cited variable top-up fees and cost saving improvements within departments. "Extra revenues can be generated."

Citizens of the EU are entitled to apply for places at British universities as 'home' students and pay the same fees as British undergraduates. Home students pay a maximum of £1,150 a year, instead of from £8,500 to £20,500 for students originating outside the EU.

The University's revenue from fees of full-time home students

is 2.3 million, compared to 24.6 million from 'foreign' students.

The figures are released at a time when overseas students are an increasingly lucrative market for British universities suffering financial difficulties.

But Cambridge has condemned proposals by Oxford University to take in more overseas students to balance the books. "Cambridge wants the brightest and best students from around the world but maintains an obligation to give the best education to home students" said Mr Reid. He added that to his knowledge there were no plans to alter the current student mix of nationalities for financial reasons.

## Science Matters

### Antarctica: A "Giant Awakened"

According to the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), the ice in Antarctica is melting faster than had originally been thought.

The group of UK researchers, based in Cambridge, has revealed that the rapid melting of the ice sheets will lead to a 'concerning' rise in sea-levels around the world.

Professor Chris Rapley is Director of the British Antarctic Survey, and a fellow of St Edmund's College. He said: "Satellite measurements tell us that a significant part of the West Antarctic ice sheet in this area is thinning fast enough to make a significant contribution to sea level rise, but for the present, our understanding of the reason for this change is little better than hypothesis."

The findings of the team of scientists were announced at the Climate Change Conference hosted by the Met Office in Exeter this week. It has been estimated that over 13,000 sq km of ice from the Antarctic Peninsula has been lost in half a century.

The recent worrying statistics contradict the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) prediction in 2001, which said that the Antarctic ice sheet would not make a major contribution in the coming 100 years. Studies in the past five years have shown, however, that the ice caps that have melted in the Antarctic add around 15 per cent to the current global sea level rise of 2mm a year.

Professor Rapley refuted the IPCC's earlier predictions, saying: "The last IPCC report characterised Antarctica as a slumbering giant in terms of climate change. I would say that this is now an awakened giant. There is real cause for concern."

Chine Mbubaegbu

### Is there a maths gene?

A researcher at Cambridge University is undertaking a groundbreaking study to find out whether people who are good at maths are genetically different from those who are not.

Simon Baron-Cohen, a fellow in Experimental Psychology at Trinity College, is collecting the DNA of maths students at the University in order to compare it with the genetic make-up of "numerophobes."

The new project will be studied alongside Professor Baron-Cohen's principal interest in autism. As Director of the Autism Research Centre, he has conducted studies which have revealed that sufferers of autism have a high proportion of engineers in their family line, and that a number of mathematics students are autistic.

If the study proves that a maths gene exists, it will further the Professor's theories that autism is a genetic trait.

CM

### Global Warming

Scientists at the University of Cambridge's Department of Chemistry have reported the first signs of ozone loss over the arctic this winter. The presence since late November of the largest areas of polar stratospheric clouds in 20 years has led to ideal conditions for ozone depletion.

The presence of the polar stratospheric clouds alters the chemical balance in the stratosphere, changing the breakdown products from CFCs so that rapid chemical ozone destruction occurs in the presence of sunlight. If the current conditions of extreme cold prevail through February and March then northern areas of Europe could experience much higher levels of ultraviolet radiation than normal.

In the last few days the clouds have reached their greatest geographical extent since records began and scientists working on the project are now trying to address some of the major issues of concern, in particular trying to calculate how much of the ozone layer is in danger of being lost.

The observations were made by scientists from the EU SCOUT-03 Integrated Project, a venture funded by the European Commission and coordinated by the University of Cambridge, involving 59 other partner organisations. Over 200 scientists from 19 countries have been studying links between the stratospheric ozone layer and arctic climate change since early 2004 using a combination of measurements and atmospheric models. The project receives around 30 million euros in funding each year, around half of which comes from the EU, and is at the forefront of research into climate change.

Dr Neil Harris, one of the project coordinators, said that "The meteorological conditions we are now witnessing resemble and even surpass the conditions of the 1999-2000 winter, when the worst ozone loss to date was observed."

He went on to say that although "it is still too early to accurately predict temperature development in February and March...the situation is now colder than anything I have seen in the Arctic before." The extreme conditions are of great concern, especially with regards to the potential impact of UV radiation in inhabited areas. Dr Harris sought, however, to reassure people, saying that "we will inform the public and our authorities if the situation becomes worrying".

Joe Gosden





# Voting for change

Plans for greater transparency at the Union

Amy Goodwin

THE UNION has hit back at critics who have accused it of "dragging its heels" on the issue of online voting for executive posts, by stepping up other aspects of its drive to increase internal democracy.

In a review of the potential online voting scheme last week it was decided that too many practical obstacles to its introduction remained. President Alasdair Ross, who is a "strong supporter" of eventually going online, stated that the biggest problem with the scheme at this moment in time was the possible disenfranchisement of a large section of Union members.

Not only would the considerable number of resident members who did not put their Cambridge email address on their original membership form be unable to vote in elections, but also the thousands of alumni who joined during their time at

Cambridge. Most of these older members joined before the invention of email.

The Union is currently making huge efforts to update its database but at present disenfranchisement remains a constitutional issue.

Ross also points out that there are very few precedents to follow at either a university or national level, and therefore concerns regarding security cannot be easily dispelled. Cambridge County Council recently decided against conducting elections online because it was not convinced that adequate security measures could be put in place.

The Union's Director of IT is investigating potential safeguards and reporting on the feasibility of introducing the scheme on a termly basis.

On Tuesday the Union passed a constitutional amendment extending voting hours from 10am-8pm to 8.30am-9pm, which Ross hopes will encourage people

to vote on their way to lectures or after supper.

He is also promising the "most vibrant campaign yet" for the next set of elections. These are being held at the same time as CUSU elections, potentially creating a 'bumper day' for democracy in Cambridge.

Although Ross believes the Union is "definitely moving in the right direction" by making it easier for its members to vote, he emphasises that such changes are not in themselves enough to increase participation.

"Although online voting is a great idea, it doesn't go to the heart of the problem". It is by "putting on quality events and providing opportunities for members to have fun" that the Union will prove it is worth the membership fee.

Ross believes that with the "excellent team" he has in place and the events already lined up for this term it will be possible to achieve this goal.

# Student deported

Anna McIlreavy

AN AFGHAN student, Azim Ansari, currently studying Engineering at St. John's College, Oxford, faces deportation after a 4 year UK residence.

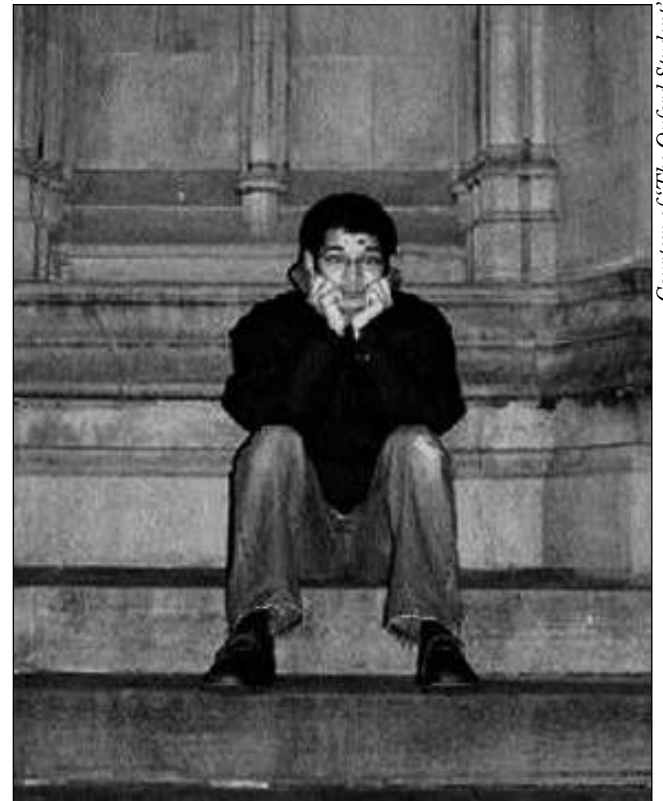
Midway through his degree, Azim, 18 years old, is appealing against the action which also extends to his brother Wali amid an outpouring of support from the Oxford student body and Asylum organisations in Bristol.

Azim and Wali fled the Taliban in 2001 and were granted extended leave to stay in the UK until August 2003. When the time came for renewal, a further extension of UK residence was refused, and Azim faces the possibility of a detention centre, followed by deportation if his appeal is unsuccessful and he is forced to return to Afghanistan.

Azim studied A Levels at City of Bristol College, gaining 2 As and a B in Physics, Mathematics and Computing, before winning a place at Oxford to study Engineering.

The decision on deportation rests on the assessment of the Home Office of whether it is now safe to send individuals home to Afghanistan.

A Home Office spokeswoman stated: "Prior to April 2003 we were unable to enforce the return of failed asylum seekers to Afghanistan, as the country was deemed to be too unstable. Our assessment of the situation is that now we are able to return single men safely. The asylum system is purely



Courtesy of 'The Oxford Student'

about providing protection to people who would be in danger were we not to do so." Amnesty International, however, has stated that Afghanistan is not safe for asylum seekers to return.

Azim's appeal against the government's decision to send him back to Afghanistan failed last week. He will now attempt to take his case to the Immigration Appeal Tribunal. If that is refused, Azim will then seek the help of a judicial review at the High Court.

Azim said: "It is not safe in

Afghanistan now. I want to finish my education." When asked how he reacted to the failure of the appeal, Azim said, "I wasn't shocked by the result; in fact I was certainly expecting it. I have remained quite calm about it."

Determined and desperate to stay, Azim and his brother Wali do not know what happened to their parents after they left their home in the northern town of Polekhome. More information on the campaign to 'Keep Azim in Oxford' is available at [www.oxfordstudent.com](http://www.oxfordstudent.com).

# Grammar school success

Amelia Worsley

RECENT FIGURES published by UCAS suggest pupils from state-funded grammar schools have a higher success rate in higher education applications than those from independent schools.

Nationally, the success rate of grammar school applicants to higher education was 89.1 per cent, whilst 86.3 per cent of independent school pupils were awarded places on their preferred degree course.

Although the University of Cambridge has yet to publish statistics for this year's applications, statistical trends in previous years suggest that success rates in Cambridge admissions do not correlate with the UCAS national statistics.

In 2003, the success rate for

independent school pupils applying to Cambridge was 32 per cent, compared with 30 per cent for grammar school pupils.

Of the 3,003 students currently in their first year at Cambridge, 366 attended grammar schools. Whilst independent schools account for 7 per cent of pupils nationwide, 45 per cent of the current first year are from independent schools.

The success rate of those who attended comprehensive schools, however, was significantly lower than that for both grammar and independent schools: only 23 per cent of those who applied in 2003 were offered a place.

'Value-added' league tables show that around 30 per cent of the 'best schools' are selective state grammar schools. Mike Baker, BBC News education

correspondent, stated that "this is a strong over-representation, considering they make up only around 5 per cent of eligible schools."

Grammar schools' selection of pupils by academic ability may go some way to explaining their subsequent success in gaining places in higher education. Not all independent schools, however, are selective.

Geoff Parks, Director of Admissions for Cambridge colleges, commented "The high success rate of selective schools goes some way to helping us understand why we do not meet the HEFCE benchmark of 65 per cent state students. But it also shows us that we need to do even more to break down the barriers that are still preventing talented young people from applying to Cambridge".

# Gap year payroll

Thomas Tharakan

THIS WEEK Gordon Brown outlined plans to pay gap year students who volunteer at home.

Designating 2005 the 'year of the volunteer', he plans to extend a present scheme that pays 18-year olds with public money for spending their gap years doing voluntary work.

A government spokesman stated "This would mean that instead of backpacking overseas or sitting at home for a year, young people would have a financial incentive to volunteer to work restoring parks and playgrounds in inner-city estates, or providing home help

to older and disabled people".

At present 3 million young Britons volunteer each year; 41 per cent are involved in formal schemes with 67 per cent taking part in some form of informal volunteer work. Brown hopes to boost the number of young volunteers by one million within five years.

This drive to create a domestic gap year corps is part of Brown's broader policy of converting spontaneous charitable feeling into lasting involvement. The tsunami appeal saw 81 per cent of British adults donating, with Britons giving twice as much per head as Americans and three times as much as some

European counterparts. Whilst admitting that this is extraordinary, Brown wants to see this proactive response entrenched in institutions and schemes like the domestic gap year corps.

However, the success of the proposal hinges on the response of young people and it remains to be seen whether students view a gap year as an opportunity to do good works. For many, a year out is a chance to gain life experience whilst travelling and of those who take gap years with good works in mind it is uncertain whether they would consider domestic charity work to be as worthwhile as that conducted overseas.

# Footlights reunited

Liz Bradshaw

ON THE back of the Friends Reunited phenomenon, the organisers of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival are launching an initiative to bring past performers together.

The project, dubbed 'Fringe Reunited', also aims to provide a forum for networking in the arts world. An online database will provide information on some of the 350,000 acts that have appeared at the festival, one of the world's

biggest arts events, over the last 58 years.

Amongst those 350,000 are a not inconsiderable number of former Cambridge students, thanks to the festival's traditionally strong links with the Cambridge Footlights troupe. 'The Cambridge University Footlights Dramatic Club', which celebrated its 120th birthday in 2003, has many impressive alumni including artists who went on to become household names, often via a stint at the Fringe.

The theatre critic Harold Hobson commented in 1974 that "One has grown accustomed at the Edinburgh Festival to finding year after year the most successful late night show is the Cambridge Footlights Revue". In 1981, Footlights stars Emma Thompson, Stephen Fry, Hugh Laurie and Tony Slattery won the inaugural Perrier Award – the festival's prestigious comedy prize.

As far back as the 1950s, Cambridge students were creating a storm in Edinburgh, in the form of the legendary team of Peter Cook (a former Footlights President), Dudley Moore, Jonathan Miller and Alan Bennett.

They formed the cast of the original 'Beyond the Fringe' production, which was performed at the festival in 1960 and then moved south, including a visit to the Cambridge Arts Theatre. 'Beyond the Fringe' boosted the popularity of satirical comedy on both sides of the Atlantic and turned its cast into international stars.

Other actors and comics who have performed at the festival include artists as diverse as Jude Law, Rowan Atkinson, Graham Norton and Dame Maggie Smith.



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# Cambridge: baby boom or baby bust?

Rachel Willcock asks whether it's the parents who need looking after

This week the government announced that childcare costs were expected to increase by 5% in the coming year, raising the estimated sum for a week's day care to £141. Have stretched finances become the most pressing concern for one of the most under-represented groups in Cambridge?

At present, according to the University Accommodation Centre, student parents can expect to pay up to £680 a month for a subsidised two-bedroom flat in Cambridge. In the private sector this increases to up to £850. As well as day care, there are considerable extra costs of having a child, such as food and running a car. On top of this, student parents must live in Cambridge for a full year. The most a parent can expect from the University Child Care bursary is £1500 for a year, which *Varsity* calculates will last about a month.

Of course, student parents are not solely the responsibility of the University and there are several government schemes to help them. Nevertheless, it appears that there is a lack of consideration on behalf of the University towards Council requirements for such grants. One single mother reports that she applied to St Edmund's because they promised family accommodation only to find that college accommodation denies parents entitlement to housing benefits making it frequently more expensive than private sector housing. This forces the majority to live further out of town and means that they don't have access to the same support, security and convenience of living in college.

According to the University Child Care Centre there are approximately 490 student parents in Cambridge. Nearly

every student has difficulty balancing the time and financial demands that a Cambridge degree entails but having a child makes even relatively simple tasks a logistical nightmare. Take the fact that the University Library (or indeed any of the faculties) do not have child care provisions. The library's advice if a parent needs to go in to look up a book is to leave the child in the foyer to be 'kept an eye on.' It is a typical example of the failure on behalf of University authorities to recognise parents as an important student group and petty bureaucracy preventing action.

It was only last summer that a central University child care facility was built. However it only has 20 full time child places leaving hundreds of others to fend for themselves. Compared to Birmingham University, which has 88 full time places, there is a massive shortage.

The collegiate system means that although colleges do try to look after their own students, there is a fundamental

**It would only take a little to make our lives a lot easier**

lack of central communication that would make life a lot easier for student parents. Oxford University works on a similar structure to Cambridge but they have a central family accommodation pool where, for example, a college would be able to donate one of its family houses to St Catharine's if they were oversubscribed that year. This also means that parents would have more choice over which school their children attend.

Though Cambridge University is actively trying to accommodate a more diverse



Photo Credit

Cambridge still has a long way to go until scenes like this become a common reality.

student body, the antiquated system on which the University runs was never designed to fit around children. Saturday lectures and Bank Holiday exams are two examples of times when students find it very difficult to look after their children. In some cases this leads to students, particularly Natural Scientists, being forced to change course options in order to fit in with their children's arrangements.

Helen Chambers, the president of Cambridge University Family Society and an undergraduate single mother describes feeling 'isolated' from college social life. 'It would only take so much as a high chair in Hall or child portions in the buttery to make it feel that you were welcomed rather than stared at for being a student parent. As it is you don't feel you fit into the Cambridge ethos.' One student parent tells of taking her child while she dropped off an essay at her faculty only to be made to show her university card and state her busi-

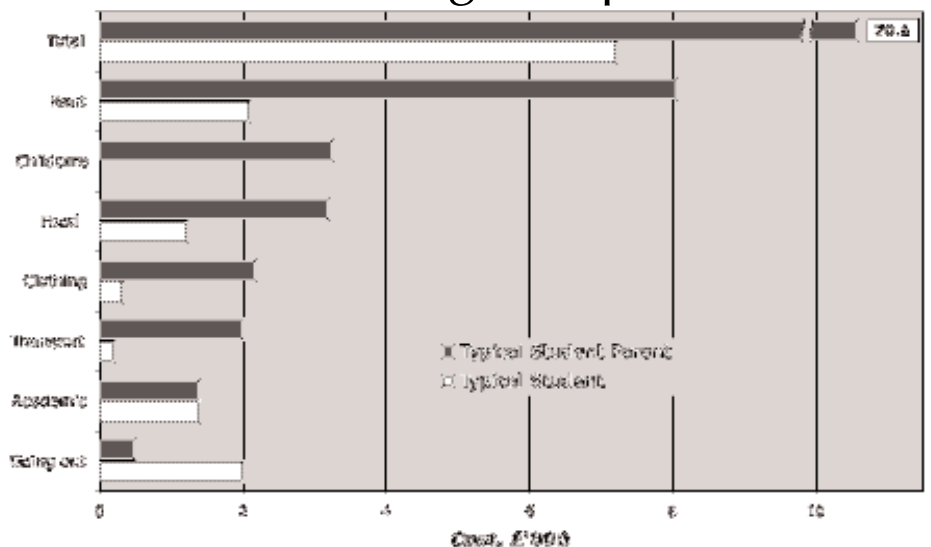
ness. Thankfully due to Admissions campaigns, the student body is evolving to be more diverse; this anecdote is proof that the attitudes of the university are failing to adapt in the same way.

There seems to be a disparity between the way student

parents and other students are treated. Parents must conform to the 'nanny state' of college bureaucracy; a much-resented fact is that they must register their car with the University, whose authorities are very hostile to car use even when it is almost essential. On the

other hand, they are denied the care that live-in students get – the luxury of having their bed made for them and college meals. Cambridge should recognise its students with children and started catering for them, rather than resenting them.

## Cost of living comparison



## Why can't undergrads make babies in college?



Sam  
Richardson

If you've ever overheard a punt tour going past Trinity, you will know that in Byron's time there was a long list of animals that were prohibited from being kept in college rooms. However, bears were not on the list, and at considerable expense Byron import-

ed a bear to keep in college. However, 200 years later, it appears that undergraduates are still more likely to be allowed to keep a bear in college than a spouse.

Next year, I'm being thrown out of college. I haven't burnt down a large section of historic building. I haven't urinated on the horse in Jesus First Court that you supposedly get sent down for touching. In fact, I haven't even urinated in my sink (that much). But I have made a cardinal sin: this summer, I'm getting married to a member of college.

Before I move on, I'm sure

that you're all thinking, 'Sam Richardson's good looking enough that surely he can get a lay without having to marry her. Why would he want to go and get married?' It's simple.

**Colleges want students to get firsts, not to get laid**

I've found someone with whom I want to spend the rest of my life. Why wait?

Returning to my theme, most Cambridge colleges no longer have married couples' accommodation but 'partner

accommodation'. This seems nice and friendly and I don't have a problem with it because I don't have a right to judge anyone else for their relationships, and nor do the colleges.

Yet, in fact, that's exactly what most colleges are doing, because their partner accommodation is only available (or, in a few cases, initially available) to graduate students. Our relationships as undergraduates are effectively considered to be utterly meaningless. Why is this?

Basically, colleges don't like the idea of undergraduates

having sex. Surely, they think, we'd be better off trying to get a first. Once we've got a degree, we're worthy to do graduate study and then we can have sex in college. But for now, shagging, rather like having a part-time job, is seen as a waste of valuable time, even though playing sport or singing in chapel or being a thesp are actively encouraged.

But ironically, so that I can afford to live out of college next year, I've had to start doing a part-time job anyway. Sex, however, will have to wait. This is partly because my fiancée's in France on her

year abroad, and partly because (and I hope this doesn't sound moronically holier-than-thou because I don't have a right to be self-righteous) we chose, as Christians, to save our virginity to be a wedding present to each other.

If that's how much marriage means to us, then I'd tentatively suggest that we might be deserving of consideration for some partner accommodation even though neither of us are graduates. But in this town, it seems like your degree is the only thing that carries any meaning.




 Neeson talks about playing a pioneering entomologist in the upcoming biopic *Kinsey*

I wait patiently at dusk for Liam Neeson to arrive, and find myself a little shaky, a quiet agitation passing through my hand to the glass of water it holds. I am, after all, about to meet a bona fide film star. I put the glass down - firmly, re-establishing my confidence. But then he enters the room and it's gone again; at 6'4", he has to stoop as he glides through the doorway, and then he stands, still, surveying the room, and an air of regality washes in. Yet as he towers above me, a warm, hushed introduction assures me

that this is the gentlest of giants, and I recommit to my glass.

It's this paradoxical marriage of the assertive and unobtrusive that has made

**"It's so frightening, we are seeing America regressing to the '50s"**

Neeson's name. His is a strength with a sensitivity rooted solidly within it. It

seems fitting, then, that before Neeson embarked upon a career in acting, he was first an amateur boxer, second a trainee teacher. Why did he abandon these avenues in favour of theatre and film? "Boxing wasn't my future," he confides. "I just didn't have the killer instinct. As for being a teacher - I was a very bad one. With acting, there's just something great about doing it. There's something nurturing about great writing. The more you go into it, the more it nurtures you. It's

invigorating. But I don't analyse it too much. It's like a dog smelling where it's going to do its toilet in the morning."

Unseduced by the prey of the punch, and disillusioned with his academic efforts, he dropped out of Queen's University, Belfast, in 1973 and three years later joined the Lyric Players Theatre. After that, he was signed to Dublin's revered Abbey Theatre, his performance as Lenny in the Abbey's *Of Mice and Men* catching the eye of director John Boorman, and prompting a decision to cast him as Sir Gawain in his Arthurian adventure, *Excalibur*. That was 1981. Shortly after this, he tells me, he joined Field Day, the touring Irish theatre company established by the actor Stephen Rea and the playwright Brian Friel. After acting in a production of Friel's masterpiece, *Translations*, at the National, he began to be offered a number of minor roles in television and film. "But then," he says, "it just started to dry-up."

It wasn't until 1993 that the waters started to surge. Steven Spielberg called to offer Neeson the lead in *Schindler's List*. This is the role for which he is best known. It won him an Oscar nomination for Best Actor, and opened Hollywood's eyes to the quiet, understated dynamism that would allow him to carry films such as *Rob Roy* in 1995, and *Michael Collins* the year later.

Today, we're here to talk about his third biopic, *Kinsey*, at the mention of which Neeson's eyes light up. This is clearly a man more comfortable discussing his work than himself. He enthusiastically describes *Kinsey* as "one of the better scripts I had read in a long time. It was real and interesting and wasn't just all there on the page. There was a huge amount to discover."

There certainly was. *Kinsey* follows the life of Dr Alfred Kinsey, the Harvard-trained entomologist (entomology: the study of insects) who pioneered research into male and female sexuality in 1940s and '50s America, blowing the lid

clear off Puritanism, and ushering in the sexual revolution of the following decade. The film deals with an era blinded and suffocated by sexual ignorance, a time when an irrepressible erection or a pair of moistened knickers would leave both men and women in fits of fear, guilt, and horror. At one point in the film, Neeson, playing Kinsey, asks a young, married couple

**"When sex is shown in this light, there's really no danger"**

whether or not they perform oral sex on one another. They stare at him, dismayed, and tell him that oral sex leads to infertility. But in a society in which it was institutionally dictated that sexual openness would unavoidably initiate the decline of human morality, this shouldn't come as a surprise. In 1948, when Kinsey's publication, *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male*, sold out in days, it transformed its author into a scientific and cultural pariah. Politicians accused him of conspiring with Communists to weaken traditional American values.

**"This is a subversive film. But there's still people going to see it"**

Moralists peppered him with charges of paedophilia. In other words, the political and religious right burnt him at the stake.

Now, fifty years later, the flames are just as torrid. There were censorship cries heard high and low following the release of *Kinsey* in America last year, Bush's much loved bible belt clamouring to quench its thirst for the blood of the blasphemous. Tom Neven, film critic for the magazine *Focus on the Family*, called the movie "rank propaganda for the sexual revolution and the homosexual agenda", and Judith Reisman blames both doctor and film for "a legacy of massive vene-

real disease". I ask Neeson what his thoughts are on the reaction to the movie.

So was it the political subversion of the film that attracted him to the project? "I understood and liked the rebelliousness of it - and of Kinsey himself. His father was a very, very strict minister, who was Bible thumping all the time. Kinsey was forced to attend these ridiculous lectures on morality. It was what inspired him to eventually take on this subject matter, which nobody talked about. Even saying the word 'sex' was regarded as a sin."

The film has no qualms about saying the word 'sex'. Nor do many contemporary films. But with such sexual openness, do we lose our boundaries? At the risk of proving myself as prudish and puritanical as Judith Reisman herself, is there a danger, I ask Neeson, of cinema - and indeed society - becoming over-sexed?

"Kinsey was driven by the study of sex. He was obsessed with it. He experimented with his own sexuality, and used his sexuality as a springboard to investigate and empathise with the people he was talking to. But it was his marriage that was an absolute bedrock to him, and if anything, the film is a love story. Ultimately, *Kinsey* shows us that what lies at the centre of sex - what should lie at the centre of sex is love. When it's shown in this light, there's really no danger of anything."


 Still from *Michael Collins*, in which Liam Neeson played the eponymous hero

#### Liam Neeson - Filmography

##### Ones to watch:

- Michael Collins - 1996
- Schindler's List - 1993
- Husbands and Wives - 1992
- The Mission - 1986

##### One to miss:

- Love Actually - 2003



# Don't throw the book at me



Ellen E.  
Jones

"Books! What's the point in books? They're like TV for the Amish." Or so I thought. Having spent this December working in my local bookshop I've reluctantly come to love the antiquated little devils, if not quite for their inherent value, then at least for the weird things which happen in their presence. All bookshops, it seems, are designed by the same diabolical architecture firm responsible for David Bowie's staircase in *Labyrinth*. This is the only way of explaining why however purposefully you march in the opposite direction, you inevitably find yourself standing suspiciously near the erotic fiction shelf five minutes later. Perhaps it also explains why one afternoon, a little old lady approached me at the enquiries desk to ask if we sold books of spells, "for someone 'ave put a spell on me and I can't be rid of it." It seems the medieval belief system survives to this day in those harder to reach corners of East London, where the new-fangled concept 'science' has yet to penetrate. In case you're interested, the title I recommended was *Sabrina the Teenage Witch's Bumper Book of Spells*, because although it doesn't have a section specifically on the removal of curses, the chapters entitled 'Boys' and 'Homeopathic Remedies for Problem Skin' are really some of the most thought-provoking and original of their kind.

Books are also useful for what they can teach us about the national character, and without even going to the bother of opening them. For instance, the British often boast of the subtly and sophistication of their sense of humour, usually at the expense of Americans, who, so goes the platitude, are far too thick to understand irony. By way of contrast, every Brit is a witty and urbane blend of Stephen Fry and Oscar Wilde. People from places other than America and England may well be bloody hilarious, but since we can rarely be arsed to learn their languages, it's hard to tell. Having re-organised the humour section of a bookshop by subject, I can exclusively reveal that all this is rubbish. There are in fact only four things British book-buyers find funny – George W. Bush (isn't he thick!), cats (aren't they cute!), women (aren't they moody!) and men (aren't they unhygienic!).

It might be supposed that having such a low opinion of stuffy old books, a bookshop would be the last place I'd

**Fancy imitating whale noises during sex in a multi-storey car park? All the celebs are doing it!**

what to spend the holidays, but let me explain: like all witty and urbane blends of Stephen Fry and Oscar Wilde, I pretend to dislike superficial interactions and am often to be seen slicing through them with sharp satirical comments and incisive wit. I firmly believe, for example, that double-sided cheek kissing should be limited to close family members you haven't seen for a long period of time (no less than five



months) or people you intend to have sex with in a short period of time (no more than five minutes). But, despite this pretence, the truth of the matter is that while interacting with my friends and family is a constant source of disgust and tedium, nothing delights me more than chatting to strangers.

There are increasingly few situations in which it is permissible to indulge this particular repulsive perversion. You want to dress up like a giant baby? Sure, why not. Fancy imitating whale noises during sex in a multi-storey car park? All the celebs are doing it! But if it's sidling up to a complete stranger and striking up conversation that floats your boat, you'll run into some difficulties. The only way to guarantee frequent opportunities for interacting with unfamiliar persons is by taking up a job in some area of customer services. And particularly book shops.

Don't get me wrong, I'm almost masochistic in my slavering respect for surly waiters, bored checkout girls and incompetent telesales staff. No one with even a modicum of dignity would

do their job properly for less than £6 an hour and thus the ruder they are, the higher they rise in my esteem. But I'd be a selfish hedonist indeed, if I didn't heartily recommend the joys of being overly polite to strangers to the widest audience possible. The power that a five minute exchange of pleasantries has to increase your faith in humanity is roughly equal to seven back to back viewings of *It's A Wonderful Life*, three soap opera weddings or twelve glasses of mulled wine. You compliment them on their choice of book, they offer a brief anecdote about their auntie, the next customer in line weighs in with a weather-related observation, and before you know it the world is a smaller place. Then you think to yourself, "y'know what Humanity, never mind what all those politicians and news-readers say about you behind your back - you're alright by me." If I could get such an intense hit of camaraderie from staring at the television, I would, but there just isn't a channel in the whole cable universe with that kind of power. And believe me, I've looked.

**"Cindy's claim they have CCTV footage to prove it"**

Accusations being levelled at Cindy's bouncers won't necessarily surprise regular clubbers. Two female Cambridge students this week told me that on being ejected from Rumboogie for being drunk they were forced by the bouncers to leave through the upper storeys of the Lion Yard car park, with the doors being held shut so they could not get back outside. On their way out they were attacked by two men, and avoided serious harm only because a car drove into the car park. The club's management deny responsibility and say the girls left alongside the queue and not the Lion Yard, and claim they have CCTV footage to prove this, but when I asked to see it I was told that there were "no circumstances" in which they would show it to me.

**Parker**

It's that time of year when elections seem to be everywhere, so much so that it can all get quite confusing. On March 9th the two unions - CUSU and my old home the Cambridge Union - both plan to hold their elections. The Union's election race looks set to be the most strongly contested for years and CUSU will be sure to have the usual plethora of candidates standing. So when people are going to be asked to vote for their Union President and then their Union President- if you see what I mean- on the same day, we hope someone will be on hand to explain who's who!

**Bobby Friedman**  
Anything we should know?  
Email [parker@varsity.co.uk](mailto:parker@varsity.co.uk)

# The tycoon's toenails



Ross  
Ionawr

Apparently there are only seven basic narratives that – when unravelled, carded intricately and re woven – form the fabric of all stories ever told. I've often wondered what these seven narratives might be. Many people have written books to satisfy my curiosity, that I have not read. If someone – a U.S.A.-sized government, say – put enough money into it, the human race could discover definitively the Form of those narratives and writers' problems would be solved forever. The American government cut its literary-critical teeth during McCarthyism; now, three generations later, is the time to put those book-smarts to use. Once we decrypt the poetic genome, J. K. Rowling won't need to lose sleep over writing the final *Harry Potter*. A machine will do it for her.

What combination of story warp and weft goes to make the Mogul Epic, I wonder? By this I mean the strain of Hollywood film that originated in the 1920s, formed the original framework for such works as *Citizen Kane* and continues to form the framework of such works as *The Aviator*. It focuses on a single individual who is too rich ever to empty his coffers. The wars he takes part in generally involve neither horse-

back nor Ack-Ack – only greenbacks.

I find it striking that this sort of film is still made. It says a lot about the state of the West that its manifestations are still admired. Kenneth Tynan wrote this in his diary on 25 January 1975: 'To the Old Vic for a preview of Peter Hall's production of [Ibsen's] John Gabriel Borkman. . . Why this Ibsen anyway? Today we just can't accept the late capitalist as a tragic hero, as Ibsen just could: when Borkman declares that it was he who brought the minerals from the mines, he who awakened them from their slumber, we want to say: "No

**A machine will write the final Harry Potter novel**

it wasn't, it was the miners." We no longer feel awed at the fall of a banker. . . Tynan wasn't and I am not a Good Socialist. But I saw the same kind of hollowness at the heart of *The Aviator* as he saw thirty years ago at the heart of John Gabriel Borkman.

It's very difficult to determine what exactly we're supposed to admire about Howard Hughes' life. Charles Foster Kane is a not dissimilar character but in *Citizen Kane* we are certainly not left with the impression that his influence on the world would have been benign. Hughes without his inexhaustible reserves of money wouldn't have been at all interesting. Perhaps he wouldn't even have gone mad. What, in *The Aviator*, does he sacrifice his money and

his sanity to? Technological progress at any cost, it would seem: an important portion of the American Dream.

That films are one of the most influential mass media and are the kind that hammer home the 'beat the baddies, win the race' message most forcefully is a given. That these ideas and the thirst for technological progress are not good things in themselves should be obvious. The push that makes Transatlantic travel possible and spy planes more efficient eventually ends in a world in which everywhere can be reached and nowhere is safe from interference and destruction of thoroughly malign types. It's frowned-upon, one might say infra dig, to be a Luddite nowadays but I'll own up to it.

For a skilful satire of the technology debate (and flight) I point you towards *The Right Stuff*, directed by Philip Kaufman. This time, we're looking at the Space Race. Like its genetic ancestor *The Flight of Lindbergh* by Bertolt Brecht it reminds us of the ways in which pilots received untold admiration for much of the twentieth century. In Lindbergh's case this gave him a platform to air his reactionary and racist views and be taken seriously. *The Right Stuff* shows the first men in space gradually becoming less and less important as pilots and more and more valued as media personalities until that seems to be their sole value. A background fear of theirs in the film is that the only portion of their work a monkey could not do is pose for photos with his wife.



Leonardo DiCaprio, right, as Howard Hughes in *The Aviator*




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"The University's lack of responsibility towards students' children is shameful"

# Ask yourself: Why do these lying bastards keep lying to us?

Not only is it fun watching politicians being tied up in knots on *Newsnight* - it's an essential part of keeping our government honest

Sky Digital is brilliant. You get a million movies every month, the first look at spunky American teen sagas, and all the football you can eat. Also, ten minute freeviews on the porn channels.

But as much as I enjoy these offerings, when it comes to truly compulsive viewing, it has to be channel 531: the home of Fox News, the most convincing vision yet of a world where the distribution of information is controlled by rich old men whose fingers are so deeply embedded in brutally capitalistic pies that they're in danger of losing the Rolex. It's completely addictive, and completely terrifying. Personally, I can't take it for very long without recourse to a lie-down or a stiff drink, so after a few minutes of, say, rabid NeoCon attack dog Bill O'Reilly's laughably mis-nomered 'no-spin zone,' I tend to head over to 507, and the greener pastures of BBC News 24. And what a tonic it is: no flags in the top corner of the screen, no TERROR ALERT LEVEL graphics at the bottom, and, above all, behind the whole thing, the guarantee that this is the BBC, and the BBC answers to no-one but the public.

For all its obvious strengths, though, no-one can deny that the Beeb's news division has been through the mill lately. The Hutton enquiry and subsequent resignations knocked the stuffing out of the organization, and, whatever one thinks of the fact that the only people to lose their jobs over the war in Iraq have been Gavyn Davies, Greg Dyke, and Andrew Gilligan, it's indisputable that

Personally, I can't take Fox News for very long without recourse to a lie down or a stiff drink



**Archie Bland**

Student Columnist of the Year

mistakes were made. New Chairman and Director-General Michael Grade and Mark Thompson have subsequently instituted a series of rigorous self-examinations, and they're right to have done so: these are dangerous times for the corporation.

But a year has passed since Hutton now, and perhaps it's time for the breast-beating to stop. The Beeb is still engaged in a cult of public self-flagellation, and it's no longer doing any good. Consider Michael Grade's speech earlier this week, which argued, in a thinly-veiled dig at the interviewing style of the

Perhaps it's time for the breast-beating to stop

likes of John Humphreys and Jeremy Paxman, that the BBC must work harder to avoid the 'knee-jerk cynicism that dismisses every statement from every politician as, by definition, a lie.'

Well, you would be hard pressed to find anyone who will confess to being in favour of 'knee-jerk cynicism'; except, of course, that that's not what Grade really means. There are certainly instances in which the Paxmans of this world over-

step the mark - when what has been termed the 'why is this lying bastard lying to me?' approach becomes rather too literal - and they are less than ideal; but the vast majority of tough interviews are tough because there is something the politician involved is trying to avoid saying, which everyone knows to be the truth. Paxman put it rather well himself, when questioned a couple of days after the Grade speech: when *The Guardian* charged him with the responsibility for a climate in which people trust politicians about as much as they do tabloid hacks, he suggested, not unreasonably, that "the way to remove people's cynicism is, when asked a straight question, to give a straight answer. The cure for cynicism is simply to engage honestly." The truth shall set ye free.

The great irony in what Michael Grade said is that it rather resembles the euphemistic approach to the matter in hand that makes so many people cynical about politics. Grade's remarks were superficially uncontroversial, articulate, and indeed admirable in their apparent spirit; and, at root, mean something rather different from what they claim. One needn't be a heartless

cynic to imagine that if the chairman of the BBC can employ such strategies, so can our politicians.

Here, by way of comparison, is another admirable sentiment, which I'm sure everyone would agree with: "In the long term, the peace we seek will only be achieved by eliminating the conditions that feed radicalism and ideologies of murder. If whole regions of the world remain in despair and grow in hatred, they will be the recruiting grounds for terror." Hear hear. And guess who said that? Why, George W Bush, in Wednesday's State of the Union address. There can be few clearer indications that to unearth the uncomfortable truths behind the smooth rhetoric, a venue for robust interrogation is essential.

That Bush won another election in part because much of America currently subscribes to the view that dissent is the same as treachery, and that Fox is the most watched news network in the USA, are, it seems clear, not unrelated phenomena. Should you need any more convincing, consider the tenor of the interviews Dubya conducted in the build-up to the poll. He got some real doozies from the Fox team, but the most spectacular of them was probably this: "Do you think that when he says these things, John Kerry, your opponent, do you think he knows he's not telling the truth?"

Well, that's another way of getting after the truth. I expect it's the one politicians would choose; personally, though, I prefer the BBC's.

To get involved in a section, email the relevant section editor listed above, and come along to a meeting. No experience necessary.

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# VARSlTY

## Progress against precaution

"While the men of science are in the main conservative", wrote Bertrand Russell, "science is still the chief agent of rapid change in the world". Russell, ever the defender of the Enlightenment spirit, was writing in 1926, having left his post as a lecturer at Trinity. His words are as valid today as they were back then. Public attitudes to science are still dominated by scepticism over its capacity to do good, by an irrational fear of experimentation, and by a collective embracing of that most conservative little phrase: "better safe than sorry", otherwise known as the precautionary principle.

In response to this public consensus, the work of Cambridge's scientists remains a convincing and demonstrably effective means of re-asserting faith in science. Researchers at this University continue to produce work that is as impressive for its breadth as for its intellectual rigour, and it is for this reason that we have introduced a new and weekly column in our News section, honestly labelled 'Science Matters'.

The Cambridge Energy Forum (see page 16) might have taught a thing or two to the world leaders that gathered recently in Davos. The latter was gesture politics; the former was constructive co-ordination. A consensus emerged from the Cambridge meeting, in which the following two points were agreed upon: firstly, that despite protests from those that call themselves 'sceptical environmentalists', emissions of carbon dioxide do constitute a real and present threat to our environment. And secondly, that businessmen and academics need to work more closely than at present to drastically reduce emissions of carbon dioxide worldwide. The urgency of this forum in asserting such a need was given backing by scientists elsewhere at this University, who have recently produced what appears to be incontrovertible evidence detailing the rapid disintegration of polar icecaps in the Antarctic.

And the co-ordination of scientific endeavour and business instinct has also been given impetus by drug specialists at the University. SimuGen, in offering the possibility of reducing the need for animal testing in medical research, are entering into very controversial territory; Huntingdon Life Sciences is, after all, a Cambridgeshire program. It seems quite possible that their research constitutes one of the most significant breakthroughs in recent medical history. It would be in line with Russell's pioneering spirit for the entrepreneurs of the university to grant their project further funding, and this newspaper sincerely hopes that they do precisely that.

## The kids aren't alright

In a national context, Cambridge's lack of responsibility towards students' children is shameful. This means a less diverse student body. Those students with children that are determined enough to apply to the university clearly feel resented when here.

There are few other major institutions in the public sphere that could get away with neglecting this proportion of the young population. Nor with judging the relationship status of those to whom they offer accommodation. This week's Analysis identifies in this university a parochial approach to student marriage and student parents that demands re-assessment.

## The unimportance of being in it

We have received mixed reactions to the Talent List accompanying last week's *Varsity*. With a population as talented as that in Cambridge, it was extremely difficult to organise a fair and unbiased system for separating the best from the better. Inevitably we have had to leave out hundreds of extremely talented people. But at the same time as the list isn't meant to be exhaustive, it isn't intended to provide those included a significant service.

Some were pleased to have been included, others upset by exclusion, and others still were ambivalent. Nevertheless, the list serves a useful purpose: not just to recognise people who have contributed significantly to university life, but to demonstrate the enormous wealth of talent across an extremely broad range of skills that exists in Cambridge. Many of those included have demonstrated talent and dedication across a number of these areas.

Whether or not those included in the list will receive any lasting benefit beyond the immediate thrill of recognition remains to be seen. But for any individual, included or not, the record of their own achievements speak volumes louder than a place in our supplement. Ultimately, the value of any sort of fame is really only transitory. As Woody Allen pointed out: "I don't want to be immortal through my work. I want to be immortal through not dying".

## Letters

letters@varsity.co.uk

Letters may be edited for space or style

### I'll drink to that...

Dear Sir,

With regards to Ned Beauman's recent column (Comment, 28th January) I must express agreement.

It seems to me one of the more insidious features of Cambridge life is the tendency to form societies of the kind whose motivation is as much to exclude those who are not members as to socialise with those who are. This kind of association - which is in reality anti-social in the fullest sense - should certainly be viewed askance when it demands a tie or dress code which no one would wish to wear in any other context.

There is a use for such things - in schools or services where collective pride is advantageous - but when the object is mere exclusivity a little thought will expose it as an odd way to spend one's time. Personally, I had far rather have good friends than a host of acquaintances and an ugly tie.

Yours faithfully,

David Marusza  
Corpus Christi

### Talent is temporary

Dear Sir,

In response to the 'cut out and keep' talent list produced by your newspaper last week I wish to point out that the university is packed full of many thousands of talented individuals in almost every discipline imaginable.

I suspect the only extraordinary ability exhibited by the people highlighted in your list is a talent for self promotion.

Yours faithfully,

Juliette McGregor

### Class is permanent

Dear Sir,

I read your 100 most powerful (or was it predictable) people in Cambridge list this morning with eager anticipation. Imagine my surprise and anger to find that neither I, nor any other persons of my ilk, featured at all. I think it appalling that *Varsity* should advertise over ten of its own writers and yet neglect to mention even one of the many powerful Chavs in Cambridge.

I'm ashamed at how un-PC *Varsity* has become. I'm never buying it again,

Yours faithfully,

Kevin Brick esq.

### Not funny anymore

Dear Sir,

Is the work of the *Varsity* satire editor focused on editing the satire out of this paper? If not, then where has it all leaked away to?

I think we should be told.

Regards

Alex Corio  
Queens' College

### Lest we forget

Dear Sir,

I was shocked and disappointed to note that National Holocaust Memorial Day was not mentioned in last week's *Varsity*. This national institution is intended to further education and awareness of the Holocaust and the ongoing lessons we can draw from it. Furthermore, this year's Holocaust Memorial Day marked the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

As became apparent during the furore over Prince Harry, 60% of people surveyed had never heard of the aforementioned Nazi extermination camp, and judging by the poor turnout at various organised events, Cambridge students either did not know or did not care enough to make an effort to mark the day. As one of the two major student newspapers, you have a duty to inform and educate the student body about issues that are important to them.

The Holocaust had and continues to have grave ramifications for Britain and Europe. It was a defining moment in our shared history and carries with it the lessons of tolerance and justice, and an end to racism and bigotry throughout our community and the world.

In an issue where you devoted a number of pages to an uncontroversial yet nevertheless self-congratulatory feature on influential students, I had hoped you might also show compassion enough to devote a small amount of space to the memory of what is perhaps the most tragically influential event in modern European history.

I would like to draw your and your readers' attention to the relevant website, [www.holocaustmemorialday.gov.uk](http://www.holocaustmemorialday.gov.uk), which is an excellent place to start if you wish to learn more about National Holocaust Memorial Day and the Holocaust itself.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Roberts  
Downing College

### Correction

On our front page last week we wrote that CUSU had launched a pro-life campaign led by Jo Read, their Women's Officer. This is not the case; CUSU has launched no such campaign. We sincerely apologise for the error.

On page 8 of last week's Talent100, and on page 2 of our last week's News section, we failed to credit pictures to Michael Derringer of TCS. We ought not to have done this, and apologise for the error.



# Truth behind the story: Media uncovered

## Jenna Goldberg looks at the rapid growth of media monopolies

Last week Michael Powell, son of Colin, announced his resignation from his post as Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. Powell has courted controversy over the last four years as a result of his reactionary method of media regulation and his relaxed approach to corporate media ownership.

Powell presided over the largest ever fine for on-air indecency: radio conglomerate Clear Channel were ordered to pay \$1.75 million after Howard Stern discussed sexual positions over morning radio. In 2004 an appeals court banned the implementation of the new media ownership laws that Powell spearheaded, laws that would have allowed a single organisation to own up to 45% of television air space, up from the current 35%.

Despite Powell's vigorous content control, Clear Channel's business is booming. In 1995 their portfolio consisted of 43 radio stations and 16 television stations. They now own over 13,000 radio stations in the US alone and their revenue accounts for over 20% of the American radio industry. The implications of one massive corporation being responsible for all that we hear and see, deciding which songs we hear and which news stories are important. Alarming, Clear Channel are only babies in the world of corporate media.

Clear Channel owns 9% of American radio. News Corporation, owned by Australian tycoon Rupert Murdoch, currently owns 32% of the British newspaper market as well as BSkyB, Fox News, Fox Movie Studios, HarperCollins Publishers and countless others. If you've read a paper, picked up a novel, seen a film or watched some TV in the last week, the likelihood is that you've put some money into Mr Murdoch's pocket.

These huge corporations follow in the footsteps of the groundbreaking merger in 2000 between Time Warner and AOL, which made the resulting combination the world's largest media entertainment company, worth \$183 billion.

Media monopolies confront us now as never before. The Department of Culture's new Communications Act sees a relaxation of media ownership

### A massive corporation, responsible for all that we hear

laws in Britain. In a clause dubbed the 'Murdoch Clause,' the law that prevented anyone who owned over 20% of the newspaper market from owning a terrestrial television channel is to be dissolved, this to allow Murdoch to place a bid for Channel 5.

When so few companies own so much of the media the information that the public receive is inevitably distorted. Charles Layton of the *American Journalism Review* recounts the coverage of the Powell controversy: 'In the first five months of

### It's impossible not to notice the biased of Murdoch's Fox News

2003, when the FCC was debating the media cross-ownership rules that were overturned in June of that year, the commercial TV and cable networks showed "virtually no coverage" of the issue, with the big networks typically airing nothing until a week before the FCC decision.'

It's impossible not to notice the biased reporting of Murdoch's Fox News network or *The Sun* newspaper, which ran a front-page headline not so long ago accusing asylum seekers of brutally murdering and eating a royal

swan. *The Sun* had absolutely no evidence for the story.

These corporations are an incestuous lot too. Antitrust allegations were rife last month as it was announced that Clear Channel are to start providing all the news on Murdoch's Fox Network. In real terms this would mean that 60% of American news programming (including radio, television and print news) will be provided by a single news outlet.

There are advantages to a corporate media. Financially, it makes sense to have a large, money-orientated control centre and, often these centres have little interest in what their local subsidiaries (radio stations, local paper) are up to except in terms of advertising.

A spokesman for Clear Channel stated, 'Clear Channel Radio is not operated according to any political agenda or ideology. Local managers make their own decisions about programming and community events.' Clear Channel is also keen to make us aware of the fact that the media world is not alone in its fall to the corporate giants. 'The top 5 music companies account for 85% of that industry's market share; the top 8 film companies account for 84%; the top 10 cable companies account for 67% and the top 6 ad agencies account for 65%.'

Whilst this trend is worrying in all facets of culture and society, the proliferation of teen pop stars is not nearly as concerning as the loss of an independent, objective mass media.

For the informed there are countless independent news outlets. However, most of these are web-based, such as Indy Media and Media Lens, and that implies access limitations. The loss of media independence and accountability is a worrying trend and a reflection of corporate concerns superseding journalistic integrity.



Anna Af-Hallstrom

## Sarah Sackman explores the colourful history of British journalism

Journalists are in the storytelling business. An arresting beginning, embellishment, sensation, engaging protagonists – heroes and villains – built up only to knock them down. With so much deception and ruthlessness, little wonder that journalists have been and continue to be regarded as a fiendish underclass, the bedfellows of traffic wardens and estate agents. How did this come to be the case? Where in the history of British journalism did the mean scribbles earn this reputation?

In Andrew Marr's short history of British Journalism, *My Trade*. Bright-eyed and wide-eared, he takes the reader on a romp through 'the snobs and the soaks', the history of hackery, political journalism, TV news, all generously seasoned with anecdotes of his personal ascent from student journalism to BBC fame. I empathised when he described his own intimidating encounters with Cambridge hacks. 'At university there had been lean young men and handsome women with urgent faces who were always too busy to speak and rarely smiled, except "ironically"... They took the student newspaper seriously.' Excellent, I thought, there's hope for me yet.

The modern hack has a rich and glittering ancestry. Beginning with the impassioned pamphleteers of Cromwell's Protectorate, they represented the forerunners of modern British journalism. Before the Civil War, Crown and Church censorship had stifled independent news writing. However, the explosion of religious non-conformity under Cromwell saw a boom in journalism with one estimate revealing as many as 30,000 pamphlets and journals being produced in London of the 1650s. Such free-

dom of expression was once again quashed with the Restoration of the monarchy but the dynamism of the pamphleteers had given a foretaste of things to come.

It was the Glorious Revolution which ushered in the glorious revelation of coffee-house culture. Whigs and Tories, poets and scribblers would pack out the Starbuck's of the day and exchange tittle-tattle of court gossip and legislative scandal. The 17th century journo, then regarded as an educated but poor sub-class, occupied an area dubbed 'Grub Street' where they produced their newsheets.

By the 1700s these sheets had developed into a London newspaper market with the *Courant* established as the first daily newspaper with a circulation of 800. Its pages were filled with gossip, political propaganda and sensational news stories – little has changed, then.

Daniel Defoe, author of Robinson Crusoe, was one of the first real reporters. He believed that the future of journalism relied on the public's trust in the news they received. He therefore championed the idea of attending, witnessing and reporting newsworthy events which he would later recount in his engaging uncluttered style.

Although we can trace the history of writers like Defoe, other 18th century journalists, who worked under quite brilliant pseudonyms, are more difficult to trace. Amongst them, Scandalosissima Soundrelia, Mr Nibble-news and Verbosus Enthusiasticus all delighted readers with their columns. However, it was not until the 19th century that print journalism really took off. The Victorians were newspaper-mad and initiated major structural developments which form the

basis of our newspaper culture today. Firstly, they cut taxes. By removing the stamp duty on newspapers in 1855, based on the idea that there should be no tax on knowledge, they made newspapers affordable. Technological development was crucial. From sophisticated printing machinery to the telegraph, which communicated news stories over longer distances, to the expansion of the railways, which revolutionised distribution, the Victorians wrought major changes in print media. The Education Act which broadened access to primary and secondary education and the advent of mass democracy also created a mass, literate, politically engaged audience for British Journalism.

The celebrity columnists of the day, Hazlitt, Dickens and Thackeray, could rival the likes of Jenkins, Parris and Littlejohn. Fleet Street moguls such as Lord Northcliffe who founded the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Mirror* and owned the *Times*, could be considered as a late-Victorian Murdoch. *Plus ça change...*

What seems true is that in every age people have fallen into journalism – by mistake, by family connections, for want of anything better to do. Though journalists have rarely been rewarded as well as they are today, their social reputation appears to have changed little since this 19th century description in the *London Review*: 'the conduct of our journals falls into the hands of men of obscure birth, imperfect education, blunt feelings and coarse manners, who are accustomed to a low position in society.'

The world of journalism, it seems, has a magnetism for the brilliant, the scandalous, the sensational and the corrupt. After all, it makes a good story.

## Briefing: The Freedom of Information Act

New Labour heralded the New Year by fulfilling a long-awaited manifesto promise. Set to give access to information held by public authorities to anyone who asked for it, without requiring justification, is the Freedom of Information Act. It was intended to satisfy society's demand for transparency and lead to more honest and fairer dealings between individuals and institutions.

Public bodies have received more than 2,600 requests for information; directions under "FOIA" revealing all manner of tidbits from the state of Cambridge College accounts to TB and Cherie's controversial dinner guests. Last week, however, the PM refused 40 requests to release the full advice he received from Lord

Goldsmith on the legality of the invasion of Iraq.

The advice of government lawyers on various issues relating to the invasion of Iraq has been made public several times in the past, undermining the government's refusal to disclose the information due to it being subject to legal professional privilege. The government has, it has been said somewhat predictably, failed its first significant test.

To assume that investigative journalists would have an easier time of it with FOI places too much faith in the idea that our culture of secrecy can be so simply unravelled. There can be no doubt that when the clock chimed midnight on December 31st documents were being shredded and emails deleted; it is to be

expected that those in power will hide from exposure.

The Press Association was just one of the media organisations to ask for the Iraq war legal advice, which had it been obtained, would have been simultaneously published on the Internet. The media is a powerful tool for enacting change and settling scores by delivering the clarity we command. Blair's recent and unjustified refusal to cooperate with the stipulations of the new act is a reminder that the media still has its work cut out if it is to combat the authorities' negation of responsibility, despite being superficially enlightened as to its affairs. Transparency is not the same as culpability; the Freedom of Information Act is a pane of glass but not a window.

Kay Drage



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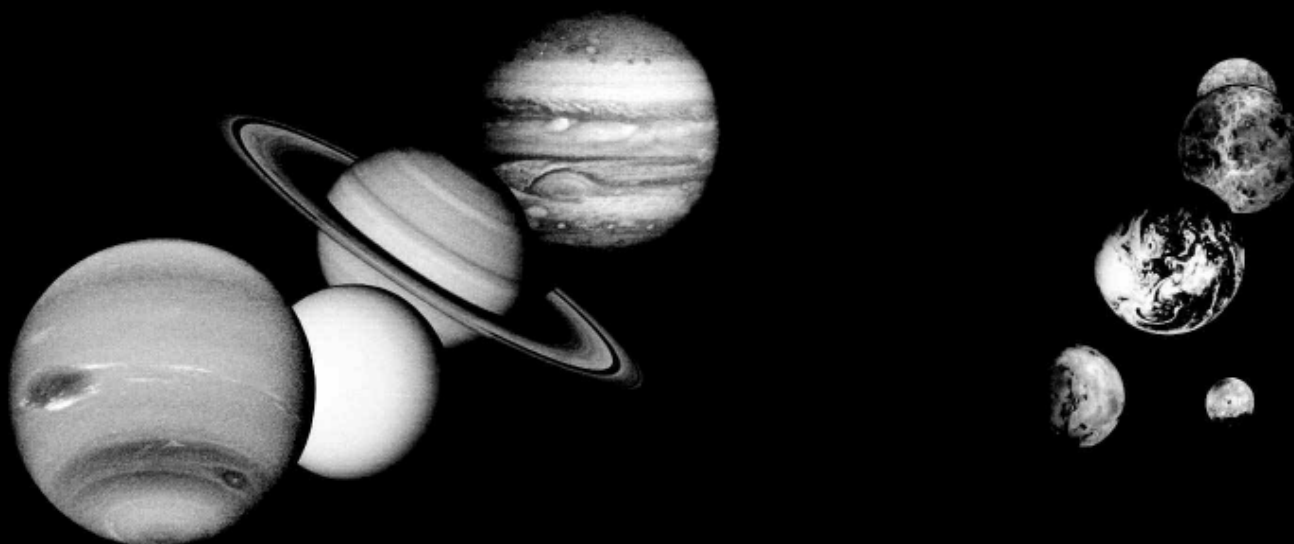
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*Head of the Department of the  
History and Philosophy of Science.*

Prof. Simon Baron-Cohen,  
*Professor of Developmental  
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Sunday 6th February, 8pm, The  
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£2 Donation (to the Tsunami Appeal)



The ADC Theatre invites  
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We would like to receive  
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Further information and  
application forms from:  
Michael Mahony, Theatre Manager  
michael@adc-theatre.co.uk

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www.adc-theatre.co.uk

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FOOTLIGHTS open applications to DIRECT and PRODUCE the winner of the 2005 Harry Porter Memorial Prize, as judged by Bill Oddie.

The play will be the  
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Please send a CV and contact details to Simon Bird, at sab77, by Wednesday 9th February. Interviews will be on Thursday 10th and Friday 11th and applicants must be free to hold auditions on Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th.

Get involved:  
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VARSLTY

## Emmanuel May Ball

Auditions

12th and 13th  
February, 10am - 4pm

Old Library, Emmanuel  
College

The Emmanuel May Ball, on Monday 20th June, is set to be one of the most exciting and innovative of May Week and the committee is in search of a variety of acts.

We'd like ensembles, buskers, street performers, magicians, comedians and much much more...

For further information and to book an audition time contact Fiona at firstyear@emmamayball.com

## Auditions

For acts to perform  
at St John's College  
May Ball 2005

Sat 12th Feb  
Sun 13th Feb

Please contact  
ents@  
stjohnsmayball.com

Specifying day,  
am/pm  
preference  
& type of act.

## This week

Fri 4th: Bop, £1 pint, 50p vodka.  
Thu 10th: 3rd world aid debate,  
speakers from Royal Africa Society  
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Mon-Wed and Sat.  
Thurs 3rd: Religion debate 8pm.

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7pm and 10pm

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9pm

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# CO<sub>2</sub>: Weapon of mass destruction?

Krystyna Larkham investigates at the Cambridge Energy Forum

'The end of the world is nigh! Repent! Repent!' Such is the message of the recent Carbon Trust adverts, which cheerfully interrupt my evening's television viewing. For all of thirty seconds, global warming seems a pretty scary prospect: the grim clouds belching from chimneys, the swirling masses of smog, and the urgent soundtrack are perturbing indeed after the enforced brightness of 'Desperate Housewives'.

But after the ad break it's the 11 o'clock news, and with it pictures of the tsunami disaster, another suicide bombing, and the impending bird flu pandemic. Surely, we have more to fear from Osama & co. than from a little bit of Carbon Dioxide? Well, according to the Government's Chief Scientific Advisor, Dr David King, 'Global warming is more important than the fight against terror.'

On January 20th, over 140 individuals from business, technology, academia and government attended the launch of the Cambridge Energy Forum. Set up by Dr Philip Sargent, Mark Haslett and Hugh Parnell, the Forum's mission is to exploit the diversity of energy knowledge available in Cambridge today. They hope to 'focus, coordinate and support the powerhouse of academic, entrepreneurial and technology capability' and so to promote Cambridge as an 'internationally as a centre of energy expertise, creating processes, technologies and companies that will make a real difference to the UK's low-carbon energy future.'

But why all the fuss about carbon now? Dr King, ex-master of Downing College, and current 1920 Professor of Chemistry, explained at the forum in his talk 'Energy in a changing world'. With an audience of representatives from almost every field of business and academia, his message was clear: carbon dioxide emissions must be reduced, and reduced now.

Our air consists of approximately 79% nitrogen, 21% oxygen and 1% carbon dioxide. The greenhouse effect is the phenomenon of solar energy being trapped by atmospheric carbon dioxide, warming the earth. Without this process, the earth would be too cold for life to exist. However, releasing carbon into the atmosphere – by, for instance, burning fossil fuels – has massively increased the CO<sub>2</sub> levels.

50% of the severity of the 2003 European heat wave, which caused thousands of deaths across the continent, was due to this increase in basal temperature, which is also responsible for the devastating flooding in recent years, such as that in Carlisle earlier this month. The most worrying symptom of global warming, however, is the observed melting of ice caps and associated rise in sea level: our weakness for building sea-side towns means this effect may spell the end for many civilisations.

February will see the introduction of Carbon Emissions Trading International, a scheme to cut emissions, in which heavily polluting nations such as Russia can buy emissions quotas from greener countries such as

the Netherlands and Sweden. However, almost seven years after its conception, the US has yet to join this policy. Despite his stated concern about weapons of mass destruction, Bush appears quite happy to ignore the invisible problem spewing daily from his country's factories and power stations.

And yet, maybe the Americans will find a WMD in the Middle East: oil. If the cynics are right though, and Bush is trying to take the power the Arabs hold over us due to their large reserves of 'black gold' for himself, then he is backing a loser. Whispers amongst political rivals suggest that the only way to avoid the monopoly held by oil-rich nations is to cease using oil at all – by going green. With the potential for innovation and technology already present in the US and UK, enough investment might see oil out-competed in the energy sector – within a few years. This would be an environmental as well as a political victory.

A White Paper published by the Government in February 2003 aimed at cutting our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 30% by 2050, with real progress made before 2020. Dr King pronounced the target of deriving 10% of our energy from tidal sources 'challenging', but still remains enthusiastic about this and many other green sources of energy. His greatest current hope for cutting carbon emissions, however, is by changing the way we build.

At present, 50% of our carbon pollution comes from the built environment. London's controversial 'Gherkin' was designed to minimise carbon emissions and



Phil Wigglesworth

Former Master of Downing Dr David King at the launch of the Cambridge Energy Forum

maximise the use of renewable energy; it is just one example of a new wave of green architecture.

With China in the process of building as many power stations as the UK currently has, any reductions in carbon emissions

that we make may be cancelled out completely. In addition, any drop in CO<sub>2</sub> made now will not come into effect for another 30 years. The time has never been more appropriate for an enterprise such as the Cambridge

Energy Forum, 'creating processes, technologies and companies that will make a real difference to the UK's sustainable energy future.'

For more information, see [www.cambridgeenergy.com](http://www.cambridgeenergy.com).

## The secret of Eternal Youth? It's in the DNA



Described by Paul as 'the gift of God' (Rom 6:23), eternal life has long been coveted by mankind. The desire to maintain youthfulness has been felt even by those far removed from religion, and today many scientists are seeking to fulfil this dream. The answer must lie in first establishing why we get old at all, and we seem to be getting a lot closer to knowing this than many people realise.

The answer seems to lie in DNA damage. Throughout our lives, mutations in DNA, often caused by mutagens such as UV radiation, will unavoidably occur. These mutations are generally removed by complex repair systems that recognise and excise DNA sequence errors, replacing them with the correct sequence. In spite of this damage limitation process, over time mutations will tend to accumulate within our cells and lead to the deterioration of health known as ageing. Neglecting these repair systems in favour of other activities, such as reproduction, may ultimately be to blame.

Several recent experiments

have also located specific ageing genes which are important in determining lifespan. For example, Cynthia Kenyon has described how mutations lowering the activity of the daf-2 gene in *C. elegans* can double the lifespan of these worms.

The mutants seem more resistant to the accumulation of cellular, including DNA, damage, and this is thought to be caused by increased activity of the DNA repair systems – daf-2 mutants lacking genes encoding vital repair enzymes do not show any increased longevity. The mutants show delayed signs of ageing, suggesting that the slowing down of this process results in their extended lives.

Since Kenyon's experiments with *C. elegans*, the daf-2 gene has been found to encode an insulin receptor protein, used to transport the hormone insulin into cells. Further indications that insulin may have a role in longevity came from mice in which an insulin signalling pathway had been hindered (by mutation of the insulin-like growth factor-1, IGF-1) leading to extended lives.

It has been hypothesised that insulin plays a role in ageing by interacting with neurons to cause the release of a second substance – as yet unknown – which inhibits cellular repair systems, and so accelerates ageing.

This theory is consistent with the observation that lowered insulin levels have been associated with longevity in humans. By keeping insulin levels low we can increase the activity of our DNA repair mechanisms and hence slow down the ageing process. The proposal could also help to explain the fact that caloric restriction causes extended longevity, sometimes by up to 50%, in organisms including yeast, worms, rodents and monkeys. After a meal, insulin is released into the bloodstream to lower the newly-raised glucose levels. A reduced-calorie diet would require less insulin to be released which, over time, would lead to the longevity effects.

A diet similar to the Atkins diet, then, could potentially prolong life. By limiting calorie intake, followers of this diet should eventually show

reduced insulin levels.

There is good news for non-dieters though. Attempts to produce an anti-ageing drug are now focussing on the possibility of mimicking the effect of a calorie-restricted diet to give longevity without commitment to a strict diet. Other drug research is targeting longevity proteins which affect the insulin pathways found to be associated with ageing. For example, resveratrol – a chemical found in red wine – has been found to increase the activity of a protein in worms which affects the insulin/IGF-1 system.

The collection of currently available experimental data has already brought us a lot closer to the secrets of longevity. The future will almost certainly bring anti-ageing drugs and possibly genetic therapies to keep us youthful. For the time being, though, caloric restriction to maintain low insulin levels seems to be the only sure way to achieve a longer life – the Atkins diet is possibly a bit extreme, but it certainly wouldn't hurt to cut out the trips to the sweet shop.

Zoe Smeaton





# NEWS



## Idiot boy drinks himself to death



Mosely  
Hant



He was dead drunk. Now he's just dead

David Smith was just another normal boy. He went out with his friends. He listened to fashion-of-the-minute bands like Drinking Machine, and his beloved Urban Dan. Now, tulips grow on his soft and leafy grave.

David drunk himself to death on purpose. Unable to see a way out of the 24-hour drinking culture with which this country has become, if not obsessed, certainly in conversation about, rightly noticing that 24 hours accounts for EVERY hour in the day,

David was stuck in a time trap.

Friends reported that David started drinking at first: 'He just carried on drinking. When he'd finished he'd drunk more than he had at the start'. As we relish in the details, grisly and

piss-poor meaningless Welsh existence of this unimportant boy, what are the government doing to prevent more deaths of this sort, and to shield the two young princes?

This paper has repeatedly suggested more youth clubs to prevent deaths, and yet, despite more youth clubs, there are more deaths. Government? Answers? We have consistently opposed any more deaths, and have been one of the most vocal opponents of stealth tax schemes, which cause death. Now is the time for answers. Government?

JOIN THE NEWS KING CAMPAIGN: Lets keep death off the street, and in the prisons.

### Law King

- Home-owners must kill burglars. It's the Law.

### Tycoon King

- World disgusted by Gates' irresponsible charity BINGE.

### Religion King

- God indifferent to Pope's hopeless suffering: 'He is old.'

### News Queen

- Oooh, cooey, I love Wham!

### International King

- Who is Estonia and what does he want?

### Photo King



'It's been a ball': The Iraqi election survivors' photo.



New 'land' aircraft hailed as replacement for taxi.



Family dubious about parents' 'Holiday in the Rockies'



Prescott rides dolphin in a bid to upstage Bush's State of the Union Address.

## Clarke bans childhood



Lucas  
Cranch



A tiny child in a grown-up hat

Following recent things, the government have decided to implement tough measures to combat youth anti-social behaviour. In a statement released today, the shiny new Home Secretary Charles Clarke said, 'We in the government feel that the best way by loads to tackle the problem is to introduce a massive ban on children and childhood. From now on, people will start at 18, and work their way up from there.'

In a thinly veiled swipe at his sexy heart-throb predecessor, Mr Clarke

Under the proposals, children would be incubated in massive warehouses like featherless mammal-chickens for 18 years, at which point they would be released.

Mr Clarke revealed he had had the idea after watching The Matrix: 'Did you notice Neo is an anagram of One? That is bloody brilliant! Absolutely fucking brilliant! So clever...' he sighed. As a further incentive, everyone above the age of 18 will have their ages backdated by 18 years, thus eradicating any concept of 'childhood'.

A referendum on the issue is expected next week, and with everyone under the age of 18 ineligible to vote, the proposal is expected to pass with an overwhelming majority. YOU DECIDE.

added this was his 'vision' for a better future. 'Research shows that in the vast majority of juvenile crimes, the perpetrators are under the age of 18.' He added 'We're sending an S.O.S. to the world.'

## Inside Gossip



Cosmo  
Moonlander

3 simple steps to a  
happier sex-life

Forget lemon fresh soles and throw out those tired out rugs. This season is all about Wendy!

1. Brush up on your dentine Alright, no one says you have to be an Albion Pullman. But that daft frock won't win you any friends either, sister. Tag up some frilly details, or simplify and regroup with a funky Topshop snatch texture. Brush up, and ship out!

2. Fag that man Okay - you're in tune with yourself, but what about your man? Instead of just abandoning him with the catch-all 'Peugeot' solution (come on - we all do it,) do something to make you both feel better about yourself. Seeing you tagged up in a rag-bag will really turn him on, and you'll have a chance to catch up on all the girly goss as well!

3. Think 'Albion' Your career's in shape and those engine sidecars will look great at the office funhouse. All that's missing is a last night dash with a fabulous amebular tart partner. Whether it's being totally confident with your sexuality, like SATC's Samantha, or discreetly feminine in a mended bib, just be totally confident, feel fabulous, and bring home that mended bib!

## Inside Britain



Sally, Ann  
& Starla

Talk tough to cut deaths

Death can be reduced. Hard to believe? 'Believe it and shut up!', Doctor Black -



Kelly Brook: 'Just as the undiscovered oceans of the East signified the boundaries of human exploration for the 15th Century voyager, so too the Moon, to those brave aeronautical pioneers of the modern era, came to embody what can be achieved in the mind of Man.'



Sumo  
Sam

Clarke Diagnosed With  
Common Cold

New fat Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, has been suffering from a cold since 1987, it was revealed yesterday. 'I am not, repeat not, disgusting,' he said, before sneezing his sickening, fat snot all over my dictaphone.

Several quarters have been vocal in voicing their call for Clarke to 'Resign! Sharpish! Where did you get your disease and who did you get it from is the real question here. So just piss off home you fat, dying man.' YOU DECIDE.

head-executive-president-in-chairman of a new medical 'technique' - might say. 'Cancer may be reduced by percentages,' wines the equivocal Doctor, 'if we can just get it into people's stupid fat heads that cigarettes are rubbish with the lungs!'

I watched him shout a young boy into tears who had been caught with a cigarette. 'Stop doing it, you fat bastard!' shouted Black, taping pictures of black lungs to the boy's face, as if he were a latter-day Timmy Mallet. I watched him prod a blind-folded OAP lady in her malleable face with a spatula until it spelled out: DRUNK (in mirror writing). 'This way, every time you look in the mirror you'll know how low you've sunk: you're nothing but a fat worm, old girl, a dirty worm!' YOU DECIDE.

Robber Jailed for Years

Onlookers watch at the [court] as robber is sent down for ages. Robber says, 'It'll be monkeys' years till I get out at this rate.'



Ishmail: Multi-colour coat from Save The Children (Magdalene Street); Kathryn: Dress from Oxfam (Magdalene Bridge), earrings from ebay





## pick of the week



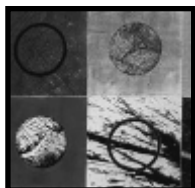
**Music: NME tour**  
**Cambridge Corn Exchange, Fri 4th Feb**  
Gig of the year, let alone the week, if you manage to get tickets to see the brilliant Killers, Futureheads, Bloc Party and the Kaiser Chiefs you'll be telling your kids about it.



**Film: Sex and Lucia**  
**Trinity College Winstanley Lecture Theatre, Sun 6th Feb, 11pm**  
Visually beautiful and sexually explicit, this award-winning Spanish film has a non-linear narrative and breathtaking acting.



**Theatre: Comedy of Errors**  
**Arts Theatre, Tue 8th - Sat 12th, 7.45pm**  
The Marlowe Society presents Shakespeare's tale of crossed paths and true love, directed by acclaimed London director Laura Baggaley.



**Visual Arts: Lesley Davy**  
**New Hall, 5th Feb - 6th March**  
This artist and print-maker has worked on making the invisible visible, using brain scans to show human emotions visually. Her new exhibition promises to be just as innovative.

## New life for Cambridge theatre

Drama fellow Yvonne McDevitt talks to **Serge Malensky**

Is theatre boring? Yes. Almost always. As the director Ken Campbell said by way of introduction to a workshop he recently led in Cambridge, "Something that worries me, and that I can hardly believe should be the case, is that when I go to see a play nowadays, nine times out of ten I am going to be bored as shit." Is theatre not the one thing that should always make boredom its enemy? Yes. Because theatre has the potential to be revolutionary, and boredom is certainly an unsuitable bedfellow for revolution.

Where am I? I am sitting in the English Faculty, in the office of Yvonne McDevitt, Irishwoman. Yvonne is the first Judith E. Wilson drama fellow to have a theatre space - the drama studio at the English Faculty - at the University. Before we get down to theatrical nuts and bolts I ask her about her vase of lime-green orchids. Where did she get them from?

"I was given them. I did a reading of a play" - *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* by Fassbinder, which Yvonne is directing at the moment - "in the house of a friend of mine. It got me to thinking about how theatre could possibly reinvent itself. Bringing a small group of people together to listen to a play in an intimate setting with time and space to discuss it afterwards. It was more exciting to sit in a front room of someone's house in London than to sit in a theatre."

"The late Sarah Kane spoke about the radical power of the medium of theatre because it was

one place you could do what you like, uncensored. Why emerging artists don't exploit this opportunity to the maximum is a puzzle to me. Like-minded artists should band together and experiment with the form itself and see what happens. We must start as we mean to go on."

I briefly explain to Yvonne how the Cambridge theatre scene works - the funding procedures, the venues that are used, the types of production that generally get put on, the directing styles employed.

**"9 times out of 10, I am going to be bored as shit"**

"From what you've said that sounds like a microcosm of the London theatre scene. It's a pity. This is a time in your life when you should be innovating and experimenting. There are lots of clever people in Cambridge but if you only practice second-hand versions of what you think theatre directing is you'll never discover what you're capable of. I've heard so many theatre directors say 'I'll just do a safe version of such and such a play until I get noticed by the National.' It never happens like that."

"It tends to be the safe stuff, and the Next Big Thing, that get noticed and celebrated in this country. The right people don't get the respect they deserve here. Terence Davis is a superb British filmmaker, and he can't even get his films made. Neil Bartlett - do

you know who he is? He should be given a throne to sit on for the theatre work he's been doing for the last ten years."

What can we do about this state of affairs? "The next theatrical revolution is going to come from acting. It's always the writers who are celebrated but directors are the real visionaries. Unfortunately we live in a climate in which directors are generally expected to be little more than stage managers."

I tell Yvonne that I attended Ken Campbell's workshop at the English Faculty and it was a tonic. No, it was atomic. It is very much the kind of thing that Cambridge needs. Yvonne tells me that he is coming again on successive Wednesdays over the next three weeks. "I want the English Faculty drama studio to be a place where people can be genuinely liberated from the politics of the theatre scene, where people can be feckless but serious too. People don't take themselves seriously enough in the right ways."

What is the greatest theatrical event you've ever experienced? "Late at night in the Edinburgh Festival Theatre, which is a cavernous place, the French choreographers Boris Zengerov and Philippe LeRoi brought the audience of fifteen on stage with them and danced for an hour. We were able to see the joy and sweat as close as possible."

Who is the best director working today? "The Russian, Vassiliev." Do your research and get involved.



## NEW IN 2005

#3 Ray Lamontagne



Ray Lamontagne comes from a broken home in Maine, used to work in a shoe factory and has a shabby beard – with artistic credentials like these, the temptation to name-drop is simply overwhelming. Produced by Ethan Johns (Kings of Leon and Ryan Adams being previous conquests), last year's debut album *Trouble* saw Lamontagne being likened to Dylan, Van Morrison, [insert name of generic earnest singer-songwriter here]. But his lyrical honesty, melodically-rich songs and a standout voice (name-drop: Joe Cocker) make him most likely to be adopted by the broadsheets and Radio 2 as this year's Damien Rice. Of course, accessible records can quite easily be great records too: just grit your teeth when you hear him played over the sad bits of *The O.C.*

Hannah Stewart  
[www.raylamontagne.com](http://www.raylamontagne.com)

# Editing the eighties revival

## Editors

**The Portland – 29 Jan**  
**Review by Was Yaqoob**

As Editors stumble onstage, models of handsome-yet-tortured youth, it proves difficult to shake the worrying knowledge that this Birmingham-based four are already, according to the latest PR-fellatio fest, tipped for great things. In the current homegrown music scene, such excited rumblings do not bode well. Not meaning to emulate the nasal whine of righteous invective on the 'state of the indie', it doesn't take a budding Lester Bangs to realise British rock music is becoming dominated by a cynical tendency to recreate and repackage past glories.

So it has become a cliché to write off the likes of Razorlight as retrogressive turds polluting the proverbial indie toilet, tugging on the coat tails of the NME approved garage-rock phenomenon. But the alternative – the 80s revival bandwagon inadvertently set rolling by the successes of Interpol and Franz Ferdinand – is only slightly more promising. Those nasty, efficient men from labels like Parlophone have already started signing gleamy-eyed new wave pillagers such as the Departure, replete with surpluses of asymmetrical hair and deficits in creativity.

Luckily, judging from the set of emotive guitar pop they played to a packed Portland on Saturday, Editors seem able to transcend this strangling strait-jacket. With minimal procrastination they surged into opener

'Someone Says', a soaring maelstrom of machine-gun drums, melodic bass and piercing guitar. Considering the elbow-in-face intimacy of the venue, it would be a little too much to expect slam dancing from the audience.

But the momentum generated by lead guitarist Chris Urbanowicz and singer Tom Smith certainly encouraged the crowd to move their feet rather than merely maintain clammy grips on their pints.

Set highlight 'Camera' provided another incentive to tap toes. Russell Leetch's propulsive bass and Ed Lay's shimmering hi-hats throbbed out an edgy backing for Smith's impassioned vocals before the mesmerising interplay of two sparring guitars in the chorus released in a euphoric, breathless rush. Debut single 'Bullets' is similarly excellent, a taut yet anthemic piece redolent of early U2 (before Bono's smug visage began to induce vomit).

So Editors possess vivid stage presence, memorable songs, and an earnest tone lacking in their scenester fellows. However, as elegant closer 'Open Your Arms' suggests, with its similarities to late Joy Division, the albatross of comparisons with new-wave staples weighs heavily on their wiry frames. Lacking the distinctive irony of say, Franz Ferdinand, it is tempting to conclude that Editors cling too firmly to their influences to succeed.

The ubiquitous reference point immediately brought to mind by Smith's jerky stage presence and mournful baritone is Ian Curtis. Though perhaps more respectable than the Duran

Duran comparisons garnered by the all-style no-content stance of the Departure, the temptation to instantly equate somewhat deadpan vocals and gloomy sonics with Joy Division is a little hasty. As their site suggests with its unabashed references to the formative influences of early REM, Echo and the Bunnymen and yes, Joy Division, the band proudly wear their influences on appropriately sombre sleeves. If you wished, you could point to more obscure 80s inspirations like the Chameleons and the Psychedelic Furs. And you could go even further, engaging in the musical equivalent of trainspotting, and rant about their creative debt to a seminal post-punk band that played one gig, in a shed, fifteen years ago.

But that would be silly. Editors are a band to watch, not because of their ability to regurgitate a tasteful and oh-so 'in' record collection, but because, like Interpol, even in this embryonic state, they have the potential to forge something new and beautiful out of their unmistakeable influences. Regrettably, this would still be a qualified victory – this is not the sort of innovation needed to break the retro cycle of British indie. But it's a whole lot better than the kick in the teeth to creative progress provided by the likes of retro whores Razorlight.

[www.editorsofficial.com](http://www.editorsofficial.com)



Kyla Bowen-La Grange

Chris Urbanowicz: one day all guitarists will look like Mani

# Boozehound rock

## Piss Up Look Sharp

**The Union – 28 Jan**  
**Review by Stuart Fox**

Piss Up Look Sharp was back at the Union on Friday, bringing its selection of 'grimey indie and alco-pop' as the soundtrack to £1-a-pint related fun. Indeed, this promising combination drew a sizeable crowd, reflecting both the obvious attraction of the concept and the night's established following.

The long, narrow venue meant the DJs were quite marginalised at the end, facing a dance floor illuminated by several disco lights. On the wall above was a large banner reading 'Boozehound

4 Eva', written in a self-consciously scruffy hand which typified the ethos of the night: ostentatious amateurishness.

Whilst this worked well with the cheap bar and kitsch decorations, it was sometimes less successful in terms of musical policy. The night was obviously aiming to be eclectic, playing songs from ABBA to the More Fire Crew back through The Pixies and Brit-Pop favourites Suede and Oasis. But this eclecticism sometimes resulted in segues which seemed to clear the dance floor, not aided by some woeful mixing and an erratic soundsystem which occasionally shut down on

one side completely.

These problems tarnished what otherwise could have been a very good evening. Certainly it's pleasing to see the continuance of this self-styled 'indie' night, especially given the puzzling dominance of D'n'B and Hip Hop events, and the foundations of the night are solid, with cheap booze and fun atmosphere. These positive factors made the complacent musical difficulties even more disappointing, and remain a problem which should be resolved for this event to realise its impressive potential.

**P.U.L.S. returns on 8th February at Po Na Na**



**Roots Manuva**  
*Awfully Deep*

2001's *Run Come Save Me* saw Roots Manuva hailed as the shining light of UK Hip-Hop, but fame and the pressure it brought clearly sat uncomfortably with him. Its follow-up is both exactly what we could have expected, yet also not what one would expect. Instead of the brash, self-assured posturing one has come to expect from successful rap artists, this album is, as the title suggests, rather more subtle and complex. We are shown a man with obvious troubles, plagued by doubt and the pressure of hype. It seems Roots has overcome much, delivering a defiant portrait of himself. On 'Colossal Insight' he explains "I don't give a damn about UK rap/I'm a UK black making UK tracks", encapsulating the whole album; an obviously talented and unique artist overcoming his demons and expectations to make the record he wants.

David King

*Awfully Deep* is released on February 7th through Big Dada

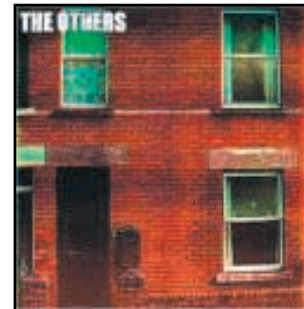


**Feeder**  
*Pushing The Senses*

Three years after the suicide of drummer Jon Lee, Grant Nicholas' Feeder have yet to let go of his memory. Whilst a worthy, emotive tribute in some ways, the lyrical content of *Pushing the Senses* is indie miserablism at its most excruciating – "Pain on pain, don't come back here again" – is but one of the stilted gems on offer. It is sad to reflect that this is a band entering its second decade of existence having yet to master the use of a simple effect (yes, that's still the echo from 'Buck Rogers'), never mind the art needful to write an original song. Neither has clumsily mixing various other influences with their own mundanity helped matters much. New single *Tumble and Fall* may as well be a reserved Granddaddy while 'Bitter Glass' is just a U2 knock off. Uninspired.

Krzysztof Honowski

*Pushing The Senses* is released on February 7th through Echo.



**The Others**  
*The Others*

There are simply no words to describe the undiluted, stultifying rage sent rushing through every inch of my being at the slightest overhearing of any 'sound' committed to disc by this appalling bunch of oxygen thieves. It brings me close to tears to think that this album is soon to be made available to the general public, and might be purchased accidentally, even out of curiosity, by some poor, well-intentioned soul, completely oblivious to the destitute mess their life will become should they have the misfortune to bear witness to songs like 'Lackey' or 'Psychovision'.

Some bands divide opinion; never has the free-thinking world seem so united than in their certainty that The Others are the single worst thing to happen to popular music in living memory. It's enough to preserve my faith in humanity. Just.

Charlotte Hodgkinson

*The Others* is released on February 7th through Poptones





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CUVAS

visual  
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CATHERINE YASS 25th January, 8pm

COMPUTER ART-

a discussion with CACHE+ICA: 7th February

MIROSLAW BALK: February tba, 8pm

GERALD LAING

18th February, King's College, 8pm

TOBIAS REHBERGER: 22nd February, 8pm

QUENTIN BLAKE:

1st March, 8pm (@Cambridge Union)

JANE & LOUISE WILSON: 14th March, 8pm

ANTHONY D'OFFAY & SADIE COLES

date tba

STEVEN GONTARSKI: 3rd March, 8pm

MIKE LEIGH: date tba

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## What to Watch



### A COMEDY OF ERRORS

Arts Theatre, 7.45pm, 8th - 12th Feb.

*"I to the world am like a drop of water  
That in the ocean seeks another drop"*

Following Marlowe's Twelfth Night, Two sets of identical twins, separated in a shipwreck at birth, unwittingly cross paths in the magical city of Ephesus.



### WETMARSH COLLEGE or DR. MIDDLETON

7.45pm, ADC, 8th - 12th Feb

Brand new operetta, a 'rapturous' reception in May Week last year, this is the first full-length performance of the 'Gilbertian libretto'



### VICTIMESE

Bateman Auditorium, Caius, 8pm, 8th - 12th Feb  
Heywood and Shadwell

*"I was thinking, Eve, that you need to touch bottom - just so you know you can do it...so you know that you're not actually as deep as you think you are."*

Helen Oyeyemi's latest offering to the Cambridge stage Snapped up by Methuen, be there for the premiere.

### GET INVOLVED

Fancy writing for the Theatre section of Varsity? Do. You can write reviews or submit original work: write to theatre@varsity.co.uk

# The glamour girls shaking it up

## Shakers Re-stirred

Reviewed by: Tess Riley  
Corpus Playroom,  
1st - 5th Feb

"Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Shakers. That trendy bar in the main street where the neon light shines out into the night, tempting passers-by. That place where dreams come true..."

With this the audience is launched into the '80s world of Carol, Adele, Nicky and Mel, four cocktail waitresses whose lives, loves and secret desires are played out in front of us for the next irresistible ninety minutes.

The pinker than pink costumes, the energetic music, the simple but effective minimalist set, and most of all, the extremely strong female cast, were a joy. This show, directed by Hannah Tongue, should be classed among legendary Cambridge performances.

And what more befits a legendary performance than a legendary speech to celebrate it? With that, ladies, gentlemen, diners alike, I give you my Hamlet reworked while you peruse your menu:

## To serve or not to serve...

To serve, or not to serve: that is the question:  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer

The jeers and pinches of lecherous gentlemen,  
Or to take arms against a sea of customers,

And by opposing, offend them.

To dry: to sweep;

No more; and by resigning say we end

The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks

That serving cocktails are heir to. 'Tis a consumption;

The aim being to get drunk. To work, to sweep;

To sweep: perchance to scream: ay, there's the washing-up tub;

For in that sweep of dirt what screams may come

When we have suffered daily this immortal toil.

The manager must give us pause: give us some respect!

Working here is the calamity of our lives;

For we would like more tips and leisure time,

To discard our aprons and show that we too feel

The pangs of despised love, despite

the daily chores,  
The insolence of Andy King and the looks of hate  
From Table 24, who says his pizza's out of date.

So in this play our toils we'll relate;  
The ones from work and the lives beneath.

We polish and sweat, it's a weary life,

But that the dread of something away from work,

The undiscovered abortion, the single mum,

The one who'll travel, but must dance for cash,

Even if it means giving lads a flash,  
And the waitress who dreams of a better life,

Working in London away from dirty knife(s);

So here, dear audience, come to delight

At Shakers Bar with its neon lights,

An enterprise welcoming all alike,  
It's the current fashion for all to attend,

For a hot calzone; it's all the trend!  
The friendly bar, open Jan to December,

Say "please" with your order; they feel too remember.



Sarah Marsb

## Footlight's Smoker

Reviewed by: Miriam Gillinson

ADC, 1st Feb, 11pm

When Smoker sketches started getting bizarre at the beginning of the year, I raised my £2.20 glass of ADC wine to those brave fools. They made a refreshing change from the 'you're handicapped/you're gay/you're my mum/ya mum' jokes that had lazily entertained the drunken masses for so long. It's gone too far now.

The height of surrealism came last night, with a sketch about a sandwich-sandwich, a big cock and not a lot else. This sketch lost

the audience completely, with leaks posing as phones, hats posing as cocks, and many guys posing as comedians, who just weren't. I'm all in favour of pushing comedy to its limits, but you've got to take the audience along with you, or you're missing the point.

Sarah Solemani and Matt Harvey got the tone just right. Granted, it was a rather worn out sketch involving a girl and her supposedly gay friend, but Sarah's stage presence and sense of fun kept the sketch lively and, most importantly, entertaining.

Genuine entertainment was sorely lacking last night. There is too much respect involved in Smokers these days. Cambridge

students smugly recognise the intelligence behind the sketches, but there's no fun in it anymore. What's happened to the interaction that used to work so

## You don't have to be clever to be funny

well between the cocky actors, and the drunken, excitable audience? More stand-up would be a welcome relief, but it seems people are scared to take that risk anymore.

Jessica Brookes was brave with her monologue, and carried us with her for the most part. It fell flat in certain places, but so too did most of

the sketches, which were almost all far too long.

Whoever is in charge of the Smokers needs to be far harsher with their editing - it would make a tighter, sharper and all round funnier show. Nadia Kamil and Luke Roberts had brilliant chemistry and a witty script.

People sometimes forget that's all you need. They sparked off each other effortlessly, and their decision to locate the person they were auditioning in the audience, meant that we could finally get involved with the comedy.

Joe Thomas and Sam Kitchener deserve a mention for their Agamemnon / Odysseus sketch, which opened with Agamemnon losing miserably at

Snap. Pick a good concept, and the comedy comes easily.

Agamemnon's retort to Odysseus' suggestion to carve a wooden horse: 'Nah, it won't work, it's gay', though pretty basic, worked brilliantly within the sketch's classical background. There were a lot of good ideas last night, but the discussions afterwards were spent trying to figure out what the hell was going on, as opposed to what was actually funny.

The act that stole the show was Oli Robinson on his guitar. It was a simple premise and the loudest laughs came at the line, 'Scientists are eeeeeevil.' You don't have to be clever to be funny. You just have to know what you're talking about, and who you're talking to.

# Giving new life to a Russian classic

## The Master and Margarita

Reviewed by: Alice Harper  
ADC, 7.30pm, 8th - 12th Feb.

Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* is difficult to place. What is, in essence, a magic-realist novel - giving a nod to the absurd, a wink to the surreal and a smile to the political - it sashays through these genres, as Nadia Kamil (Hella, the foxy assistant of Satan) moves across the stage.

Director Sophie Middlemiss' greatest challenge is taking the audience with her through these complexities with the help of the dramatic narrative. 'This is our world', says Margarita to

her lover, the Master, in his 1930s Moscow apartment. In a play whose first scene depicts Pontius Pilate or, rather, an actor playing Pontius Pilate interrogating Jesus, played by the Master, in a scene which is being directed by a director who emerges from the front row of the auditorium, it is not often that you get such help.

Dramatising the morning on the fourteenth of the Spring month of Nisan in the first century AD, to 1930s Moscow and an a temporal hell is an ambitious undertaking, particularly on a student stage, with a budget to match. Luckily, Middlemiss has ample help from a remarkably talented cast.

The Procurator of Judea (Tom Secretan) is cold and removed,

speaking through gritted teeth from a raised platform - and a distant historical time. Brooke Morriswood's emotionally wrought portrayal of the Master's creative imagination paves the way for the redemptive conclusion of the play. A flamboyant and masterful magician, Simon Evans as the devil, Woland, is in total command of the stage, his hellish world and the audience's amusement.

An effortlessly delicate performance from Sam Yates, as Ivan, state-poet-turned-disciple of the Master, cuts through this absurdity with a considered study of a nervous young man.

Julia Farley's set design tries valiantly to complement these performances. Red, white and black are used throughout the

set and costumes to unite these disparate narrative elements. There is an overwhelming sense that the company has shoved two fingers up at the conventions of the ADC stage, making the space their own with crisp and striking lighting, as well as cleverly places screens, platforms and ladders to delineate the different worlds.

Ultimately, though, this is a work which plays too many intellectual games to be a total success within the limitations of amateur dramatics. The bread and butter narrative is lost in the whirl of words and questions. But this is a quibble; perhaps even an intellectual one. The energy and ambition of the production makes it a master of Bulgakov's creation.



Laura Greenfield



## Testimonies

Lucy Barwell

ADC, 11pm, 9th - 12th Feb

I have always admired Robin, for both his political and theatrical endeavours. But, as I entered the auditorium of the ADC, about to watch my friend stand on stage and talk about himself for an hour, I must admit I was dubious. As he came on stage, nerv-

ous, and humbly fumbling the collection of monologues that make up this LGBT awareness event, I prepared myself.

What I encountered for the next hour, was nothing like I have ever experienced before, not a self-indulgent performance, but a moving, yet humorous, testimony to being alive.

We were asked to listen, as a comforting and accepting ear, to one man talk about his life: his

loves, ambitions, successes and failures, in a poetic stream of conscience that used dream logic to express those experiences and feelings as best as words can. As he explains to us apologetically, "there's no proof reading life".

The inspiration to stage this experience came from a friend of Robin's who had written a monologue for a similar event in America. "In a university this big, such a wide drama community should be able to give some space to the LGBT community to find themselves". Indeed, I would say, this kind of community theatre can work for everyone. It is a purging of one's emotions and experiences, sifting through your head to find out who you really are and asking the audience to help in a world where stories need to "be shared...when we really need to hear them, hear them out, and also to tell them".

As well as Robin's monologue, which will be repeated on Friday, Saturday's performance will consist of ten more monologues written by the gay community and performed by Cambridge actors. Ranging from comedy to poetry, they promise to be heart warming and liberating to watch, challenging their audience not to judge, but to listen and accept. As Robin explains, "knowing there was a story to write and share has lifted me and moved me further than I thought I would ever feel. So I am grateful for stories...". I challenge you not to want to write your own by the end of the evening.

## Black Saint and Sinner Lady

Clare Geraghty

Corpus Playroom 9.30pm

David Hall wrote and directed this week's late show offering from the Corpus Playrooms. His play tells the story of a 'sinner lady' (read prostitute) and one night in her chaotic existence. The ingredients were all there for a fine production; a small, gritty, intimate space, an interesting narrative, an exploration of the interaction between love and desire; sex and relationships; love, dependence and psychotic attachment.

But, and this is a big but folks, none of the pieces of the play hung together and one had a continual feeling of unease and incredulity watching this clumsy, somewhat baffling and, in places, cringe worthy piece. I wanted to like it, I really did, it seems churlish to be entirely critical when the script was written in the 'free' time we all have between supervisions and trips to Cindy's, but there seemed to be few positive qualities. The acting was extremely unconvincing; one was never given the opportunity to believe in any of their relationships, they could almost have been strangers who met on the street outside and were asked to reel off forty five minutes of dialogue.

The trio of actors were only redeemed by their Sinner Lady, Jenny Clack, who gave a lot more than her male counterparts and



Chris Willet

provided some genuinely heart-felt moments in an otherwise remarkably stilted production. She brought a thought provoking naiveté to her portrayal and managed to drag the production along with her.

We are undoubtedly lucky that Cambridge students are regularly given the opportunity to get their writing on the stage. This brings with it however, the danger that,

much as happened with this production, a fabulous idea will become lost in lacklustre writing and weak acting. The play's undoubtedly philosophical grounding was interesting but could not make this one enjoyable. Hall's writing is undeniably sharp and provocative; if only there hadn't been an array of flaws both in his conception and particularly in its realisation.

Lucy Barwell



Robin Sivapalan stars as himself in an impressive new monologue

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# Mathematics in Stainless-Steel

Can Geometry ever be unpredictable, asks **Johanna Zetterström-Sharp**

Having heard of Mary Martin's love for proportional systems and mathematical sequences, I have to admit I managed to enter the exhibition with rather a closed mind. I am not a big fan of geometric minimalism, thus for me the cubist movement has never managed to inspire a great deal of enthusiasm. Despite this, Martins work did indeed interest me as what I expected to be a fairly monotonous sequence of inflexibly placed geometric lines turned out to hold an unanticipated amount of chaotic energy.

As one enters the gallery there is a series of relief's constructed in plaster, painted wood and rather surprisingly

Perspex. The roughly moulded cubes and diagonally halved rectangles, painted in monochrome hues of black, white and grey are our first glance at Martins ability to capture movement. A theme which runs throughout the exhibition is the way in which the individual pieces are susceptible to a great deal of change as one strolls past and the angle of presentation alters, enhanced by the expertly placed lighting. This first relief series displays this well, in particular 'White relief with Black' (1954) in which a black glossy square of Perspex reflects the white rough plaster shapes surrounding it and almost quivers with a seem-

ingly imprisoned energy.

This is cleverly followed through in the second room as the materials Martin has taken advantage of increase in their reflective qualities. 'Expanding Permutation 1-10' (1965) and 'Compound Rhythms with Blue' (1966) were I feel the strongest pieces in the exhibition as both skillfully managed to create a sense of controlled chaos. Despite being purely constructed by a number dimensionally equal diagonally sliced cuboids, the pieces harness an unpredictable display of geometric madness. This is highlighted by the stainless steel finish which adds dimension through creating unanticipated angles and positive and negative spaces within the piece.

The exhibition takes an unpredictable turn as one follows it through from this room into the next space with a stark transition from light flickering aluminium to a more natural

medium of wood, both painted and exposed, and dull plastic. As it does so the pieces lose their energy, but gain a modest sense of wisdom. Their simplicity is comforting, and the warm hues of browns, reds, ochre's and greens along with the organic patterning of the wood creates a n

interesting juxtaposition with the rigidity of the straight lines.

It was however after this point that my tolerance for geometry failed as the subtle stored energy of Martins earlier work was lost in an expanse of neon Perspex. Although the pieces in the

'Perspex Group' (1967-69) do house all the ingenious reflective

express the unpredictability so inherent in the creation of energy through mathematically perfect shapes.

All in all I was unexpectedly impressed by the way Martin subjected her shapes to such strict proportional rules, and indeed arranged her pieces with such regulation creating in her own words 'structural super-patterns' yet still maintained a sense of frivolous disorder. I suggest that this

exhibition is definitely worth attending even if cubism and geometric minimalism is not your thing as it certainly sheds a new light on how chaotic movement can indeed evolve out of regulation.

Mary Martin at Kettles Yard

# Facing the almighty: seeing is believing?

It was once, but not anymore, says **James Dacre**

In an age where cityscapes, bloated models and vitriolated animals capture the artist's eye more frequently than the communion chalice, God is rarely available for depiction. For the religious, his portrait is reductive, heretical or theologically impossible. For the profanist, the secularist and the sociologist, it is often a Myra-Hindley of children's hands; depicted polemically and hatefully. Indeed, God himself, *per se*, has rarely ever been the spokesman for Christian art. Centuries on from centrepiece beards and burning bushes, it is hardly a surprise that the contemporary artist steers well clear of their maker.

And so it was with a lingering

footprint that a show disingenuously titled *100 Artists See God*, left the ICA a fortnight ago. God was a pebble, a urinal, numerous neons, more epigrams. a pair of empty mirrors, a crucified frog. He was the imaginations and discriminations of Damien Hirst, Roy Lichtenstein, Gerhard Richter, Ed Ruscha, Andreas Gursky and 95 others. He was nothing but attempts at controversy; demonstrations of artistic immaturity.

In 1842, the *Societe Libre des Beaux-Arts* published a damning report on the Salon of that year, describing the work of the artists exhibiting as inappropriate as examples of religious art. It read that "A mystical composition is one located entirely within reli-

gious tradition and the true spirit of Christianity. It expresses a symbol and not a material action; it is the interpretation of an idea and not the reproduction of fact. In the painting of history, everything ought to be true and complete, ought to be represented with scrupulous concern for the authentic account." How they must turn in their graves.

It is certainly true that regardless of whether we believe in a deity, we all live in a world that is profoundly influenced by images of one. Cambridge and its near 300 places of worship has more than many. And our college's various propensities towards acquiring modern religious art are more enthusiastic than you would

guess. Many of Paolozzi's sculpted figures fill Jesus College, depicting an Incarnation between man and machine. Craigie Aitchison's *Crucifixion* (pictured) was hung perfectly in context in King's College Chapel.

This ivory tower is quite a testament to the fact that thinkers, however progressive, still think about God. And so often it is that the unlikely focus on the religious. "I'm not a religious person, but I'm a faithful person. I believe in images," said Jean-Luc Goddard when asked if his work was in any way religious. Andy Warhol grew up in a Byzantine Catholic family in Pittsburgh and was a devoutly religious, regular church-goer. Whilst it is still fashionable to look at the world through feminist, Marxist or postmodernist spectacles, it is rarely acceptable to do so through spiritual glasses. A work of art is one of the few things that can never be fully articulated, but that lies at the ground of our being and demands utterance. Richard Wagner presumed that the artist will supplant the priest in modern culture. Meg Cranston and John Baldessari, the curators of the exhibition, probably generated more media interest than the Archbishop of Canterbury this Christmas. Now, few of these artworks were produced with religious conversion in mind. Yet, many a religious person is still intent of advertising their work through the modern form of media that is the artwork. Art can become "church" to generations of believers without one. It can be through signs and symbols that religious belief is perpetuated, reminding believers of their history, homeland and heritage. An

early twentieth-century critic barked that "It is necessary to repeat, along with everyone else, that faith has departed from religious art...today human consciousness is occupied by other thoughts. The immense progress of modern science has invaded everyone's brains, and immaterial dogmas find few adepts." *100 Artists See God*, certainly manages to demonstrate thinking, but thinking about everything but

**"obsessed with spectacle, allure, celebrity and manipulation"**

God. Very rarely is God the starting point of a modern artwork; the approach is more a "bottom-up," one referring to the spiritual only by title or innuendo. The contemporary artwork is unavoidably entangled also in the high culture of fashion, the mass culture of tourism, to the economic culture of commercialism and to specific sectors of reform such as politics, media and education. Contemporary artists cannot ignore the fact that they make art that is predominantly visual and which is obsessed with spectacle, allure, celebrity and manipulation. Gallery spaces really have become modern Cathedrals, inviting an audience to worship artwork preaching upon a particular movement or theme.

The artists exhibiting at the Saatchi Museum are not necessarily YBA's and those at the Freud museum not necessarily Freudians, but their work becomes associated with these ideas because of the context in which it is placed, and with which

the observer is encouraged to view it. Visitors swamp London's Tate Modern as they do Florence's Duomo or Rome's Sistine Chapel, often not knowing what show is on display inside this colossal, semi-religious space. What is worshiped here is the contemporary and the New Age, concentrated with power, cultural and otherwise

The curators at the ICA wanted the show to be more about representation than belief. It was, but only due to the laziness of many of the contributors, for many a submission was not new work, responsive to the title set by Baldessari and Cranston, but rather tired drawl related to the theme and summoned from the loft. Because in a pluralistic world where God is anything and everything, so to is his portrait. And in a multicultural mess, he can be found almost anywhere, under many names and guises. So, the show is "part backlash against religious fundamentalism," the curators tell me. A sticker reads "God less America," an advert warns "beware of God," a gourmet burger platter shares its name with our Creator. To produce good religious art was once the crowning achievement of an artist's career, it was to enter a mythical tradition and become part of an iconographic heritage. To practice religious art now is "to be controversial," either through renouncing religion or embracing it. It is, the curators say, "hard to take seriously."

Manet was once heard shrieking "There is one thing I've always had an ambition to do. I would like to paint a Crucifixion!" And so a trip to the ICA saw 100 similar indulgences.



Craigie Aitchison's *Crucifixion* was hung in King's College Chapel after the artist won the Jerwood Prize



# Ain't there no black in the Union Jack?

Emma Paterson gets up close and political with Black British writer-director Amma Asante

We meet in Soho House, a members-only club in the heart of London. Its exclusionary character makes it as much an emblem of impenetrability as the largely white, male-dominated film industry. Amma Asante, making her debut as both writer and director with her film *A Way of Life*

"issues of race are so dirtied with issues of poverty"

of *Life* - with confidence and gusto, no less - has entered both. It seems pertinent, then, that one of the first things she says to me once we've sat down is, 'My father always taught me not to

look at obstacles, but to look at challenges, and to look at them as something exciting to work through.' Clearly, as the first black woman to write and direct a feature film, Asante has followed her father's advice. It's a modern fairytale come true. Did she ever expect the critical recognition and success?

I've had beyond my wildest dreams in terms of the critical response to the film. Perhaps I should have had more faith in the story that I had to tell. Indeed, she should. *A Way of Life* earned her the UK Film Talent Award at the London Film Festival last November, a South Bank Award last week, and is now nominated for a BAFTA Award. It is a constantly engag-

ing and fascinating first picture, a story of racism as told by a black woman, but it's never one-sided, polemical or didactic. The racists are as three-dimensional and human as those they persecute, their prejudice explained and interpreted - though never justified. Before demonising racist anger, Asante implores us to look hard at how it may be caused by social deprivation.

Some might argue that in doing this the film effectively becomes a mouthpiece for the British National Party, but Asante comments, 'I was very aware as I began writing that it was a controversial perspective to take. But I was determined to allow the story to be told from this point of view. Issues of race are so dirtied with issues of poverty. We look for what is lacking in our lives and we look for someone to blame. How much is it truly about race, and how much is it about something else?'

Departing momentarily from the film's politics, Asante tells me about her personal initiation into the world of racism. Growing up in 1970s Streatham, London, she explains that hers was one of only two black families living on the street. At the end of this street stood a pub that was a meeting ground for what was then the National Front - now the British National Party.

'We used to get the lit matches through the letterbox; we had the graffiti; my dad's cars would be systematically destroyed. But this was normal, this was just how we understood Britain to be at that time, and the life that I have now was not something I had ever known. My father just

had a lot of dignity and was very, very strong, and able to exist in that environment.'

The father-daughter relationship is central to *A Way of Life's* narrative. Hassan and his teenage daughter, Julie, become the victims of aggressive racial hatred. This is evidently a story linked to personal sensitivities. Yet Asante resists making the father black, like her actual father. Instead, he's a Turkish Muslim, and can almost pass for white. I ask

Asante implores us to look hard at the causal link between social deprivation and racist anger

Asante whether or not this decision was a conscious one. 'During my late teens, I went out with a Turkish Cypriot born in London,' she tells me. 'He had fair, blonde hair, green eyes, and when I looked at him, I just saw another white person. But he had a very Muslim name, and so white people would look at him and perceive him to be like them, but hear his name and realise he wasn't. Then I would witness white-on-white racism. Prejudice is so very complex. It can exist between two sets of people that don't look that dissimilar to each other. It was important for me to cast somebody only shades different from those exhibiting the racist behaviour.'

It's getting dark outside. I quickly share with Asante a comment reportedly made by Barry Norman during an interview with Spike Lee. Norman criticised Lee for making films



Amma Asante goes forth and breaks those boundaries

only about racism, for only writing black characters. Is Asante at all worried about being accused of having a similarly limited focus?

'Real freedom for me as a writer, whatever colour I am, is to be able to write about the subjects I want to write about. If, as a woman, I only want to write films that have only female leads, or as a black filmmaker, I want to every now and then only have white characters, I should be able to, and so too should any other

filmmaker that maybe chooses to only write films that deal with the black experience. I think the black experience is an experience, and deserves to be up on the big screen. Do we criticise white writers that are only interested in writing about the white experience? And would we criticise a white writer that was very, very interested in writing about the black experience? We probably wouldn't. I love Barry Norman, but it's a foolish criticism.'

I'll take that as a no.



Asante's cast of unknowns opens our eyes to the prejudice and poverty at the heart of society

## A Way of Life

Arts Picturehouse,  
11-13 Feb

Reviewer: Emma Paterson

Teenage mother Leigh-Anne (Stephanie James) and her friends Robbie (Gary Sheppard), Gavin (Nathan Jones) and Stephen (Dean Wong), live on the margins of Welsh society. Facing poverty, they cling to the hope of a better future. As Leigh-Anne's fear of being separated from her baby daughter heightens, and her friends begin to lose sight of their dreams, Leigh-Anne's Turkish Muslim neighbour Hassan (Oliver Haden) becomes the target of their building anger and frustration. It is a story of social privation transformed to racial hatred, leading to horrific consequences.

Telling a story about the roots of racism is a hard task. Almost as hard as taking your audience into the mind of a paedophile and asking for their sympathy - or at least understanding. These grey areas, where moral issues are never crystal-clear, require such a delicacy and complexity of exposition that it is perhaps sometimes best just to leave them alone. Yet despite moments of over-theatricality and just a hint of melodrama, first time writer-director Amma Asante achieves a dramatic subtlety in this moral murkiness that really is pulled off. Anti-heroine Leigh-Anne is at once a cesspit of prejudice and a terrified, inexperienced mother, psychologically wounded by the abuse of her past, disabled by the poverty of her present. As much as we try to resist it, her predicament - and, indeed, James' per-

formance - consistently engender empathy where we would rather they incited hate. It is contradictions such as these that provoke us not to think we know but to consider and to debate, and that is exactly what a film about racism should do. Really, it is all it can do.

*A Way of Life* is a startlingly accomplished film debut. A cast of unknown, untrained actors, and a grim, Ken Loachian social realism afford the picture a gritty gutsiness which aptly reflects the ferocity of the subject matter. An original soundtrack by David Gray, though not a personal favourite, does well to capture the melancholy that lies at the heart of the narrative; and the script deals with issues of black and white with a sensitivity that never allows them to be on opposite sides of the coin. The critical acclaim it has received could not be more deserved.



Juliette Binoche and Daniel Day-Lewis light up the screen in Philip Kaufman's classic

## The Unbearable Lightness of Being

Reviewer: Jamie Corby

The love stories we are treated to in cinema often bear little resemblance to those experienced in real life. Philip Kaufman's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, however, despite its sumptuous atmosphere, provides us with a realistic balance of love's pleasure and pain and produces a touchingly beautiful love story. It is a picture that is steeped in passion and draped with eroticism, yet its exposure of the sorrow that lies between moments of happiness ensures that the film always sits faithful to life. But, as the title suggests, rather than the heavy-handed tragedy often depicted in cinematic

love stories, there is lightness in this grief. A noisy piglet has a wedding party crying with laughter, shattering the weight of Tomas' (Daniel Day-Lewis) symbolic surrender.

We follow playboy doctor Tomas' journey through life, as he seeks sex, stumbles into love, and is left with an immovable triangle of passion at the centre of his world. The ravishing Sabina (Lena Olin) is the only woman who understands him, but it is Teresa (Juliette Binoche), with her child-like innocence, whom he stands by, unable to bear the pain of leaving her.

The lead performances are perfectly executed, with all three producing star turns. Day-Lewis, often touted as the greatest actor of his generation, is intense and passionate, a true master of his art. Here, he balances Tomas' strength and

fragility, a coward and yet a lover, and plays him with an achingly melancholic edge. Binoche burns with emotion, her eyes always alight and stung by tears, and Olin is incredibly seductive as Sabina, breathing a feeling of eroticism into each of her scenes.

The delicate lyricism of the novel by Milan Kundera on which the film is based is acutely reproduced, and complimented by exquisite photography and a subtle soundtrack of strings. The backdrop is 1960s Prague, with the oppression of the Communist occupation hanging heavy over the story. Hope is perpetually quashed and rekindled before finally burning strong, and it is love that breathes colour into the day's dark shapes, brightening the gloomy daylight. *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* provides immense pleasure.



# The Premiership is nothing without the lower divisions

**Ben Myers** explains the importance of the neglected Football League

Freddie Shepherd, chairman of Newcastle United, was recently quoted as saying that Premiership clubs striving for success had no time to worry about lower division outfits. Whilst one supposes that Freddie Shepherd can do exactly what he likes with his time, the pertinent question is whether or not he should care.

You see, with tens of 'lesser' clubs going into administration in the last 5 years, and with Burnley, Leeds and several other clubs currently not owning a ground - a huge source of income and of course a massive liability in terms of renting back - not to mention the small fact that Wimbledon FC no longer exist, one begins to see that the current plight of the Football League could affect Freddie Shepherd very directly indeed.

Peter Kenyon, when chief executive of Manchester United, estimated that less than half of today's league teams would survive the game's current financial crisis. If he is right, and he may well be, clubs like Newcastle are going to find it increasingly difficult to find home-grown players with enough quality to maintain Freddie's des-

## Scuffles and horrific late challenges are commonplace

perate wish to win something. Consequently, Freddie and others will have to buy more talent from abroad, which can only be to the detriment of young hopefuls across the country and to English football as a whole.

I support Queens Park

Rangers, and in the past nine seasons we have been relegated twice, been into administration, flirted with extinction twice, lost a playoff final, and...oh yes, got promoted gloriously last season to The Championship. We currently owe money to a Panama-based loan company, which by itself doesn't sound good, but sounds even more spectacularly bad when you realise we owe £10million with interest payments of 10% per annum.

The sad truth however is that whilst we're no Chelsea, our situation (at least at present) isn't even the worst. Bournemouth, Grimsby and Wrexham, to name just a few, are examples of teams that could cease to exist in the next few years, and hardly anyone knows about it. As recently as last week, Cambridge United's owner claimed the club would run out of

money within a month unless there were fresh investments, despite having sold their stadium to cover the season's costs. Fans are now attempting to raise the £2million required to buy it back and save the club.

At this point supporters of top-half Premiership teams are wondering, "Why exactly should I be bothered?" and it is my job to convince you that you should be.

Of the current teams in the top flight, only Manchester United make a regular, significant profit. The teams' collective debt rose 50% on last year's less than healthy £416.2million, Fulham being the club worst in the red with a debt estimated around £108million. Of the last twelve clubs to be relegated, ten have failed to return, and amongst them Coventry have debts of around £40million, with Derby, Leeds, Sheffield Wednesday and West Ham all in equally precarious positions.

The real issue here is the delusion that Premiership clubs make money. Clubs gamble on success but end up coming out with enormous losses and unsustainable debts. The Football League is just where the losers are all collecting together; the winners are the investors who leave the mess, and the game, behind.

And believe me, the Football League is a lot more important than it may seem. After all, where better place to blood young stars of the game? David Beckham had a loan spell at Preston North End before becoming a United regular, whilst Jermain Defoe made a

name for himself during his year at AFC Bournemouth.

The Football League also keeps the Premiership interesting. So far no fewer than 38 teams have featured over 12 seasons, but if football continues in its current fashion with the majority of money being handed to those who don't need it, then we may see a day when most teams simply couldn't afford to stay in the top tier. Clubs in the past have gambled in vain on staying up and then been ruined financially by the drop. If newly promoted sides cannot compete anymore, then the Premiership League table can only get more predictable.

## Being a supporter of a lower league team is more fun

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Football League is fantastic entertainment. Being a supporter of a lower league team is more fun than supporting a Premiership team.

The real issue here is the delusion that Premiership clubs make money

## The real issue here is the delusion that Premiership clubs make money

There, I said it. Which fans of the elite division are currently enjoying themselves? Chelsea are clearly having the time of their lives. Everton are punching above their weight so some cause for a smile or two. West Brom are just

happy to make up the numbers.

Who else? Not Arsenal fans - they are upset because they are going to fail to hold onto the title again. Not Man Utd fans - winning the league is the only possible satisfying outcome of a season for them. And as for the rest? They are all just bored of finishing in the same position year after year. You see, nothing interesting ever happens.

In The Championship on the other hand, only ten points separates fifth from seventeenth, and realistically any of those teams could still end up in a play-off spot. Besides, as a fan of football I can watch just as many televised matches as anybody else, but as a fan of my team I have the bonus of being able to afford to see them live.

Football League attendances are higher than ever, and there is no question that atmospheres at some of the nation's smaller grounds are far superior to those in the Premier League, bar perhaps Portsmouth and the Geordies. Anyone can beat anyone, scuffles and horrific late challenges are commonplace, as is the sight of naked, beer-swollen bellies, rippling to the resonance of a hugely oversized drum, despite the inevitability of rain or a ground frost.

I cannot lie and say I don't hope for promotion back to the top one day, but for now I am content to scrap it out with the other paupers. Problem is, unless people like Freddie start to take notice soon, my dream, as well as the club I adore, could vanish altogether.

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# Blues singing as Aussies falter

Rugby Union  
 CAMBRIDGE 25  
 AUSSIE UNIS 5

Mike Henson

IN HIS first game as club captain, Cambridge centre Ed Carter was given every chance to settle into his new role with some familiar opposition in the shape of a team he once represented.

Despite the 'sledding' that he received from some of the Antipodean supporters on the touchline, it was clear that his alma mater could have used his talents in their back division. With the exception of winger Fainifo, the green and gold waves of attack lacked the penetration to seriously endanger a Blues victory and winning start for the new skipper. For the Aussies however, having been whitewashed on these shores, it will be a long trip back home in more ways than one.

Victory for Cambridge was ensured by a powerful forward performance that gradually battered and bruised the tourists into submission. Gilbert, Gladstone and Spillane forced their way through the fringes and the pack as a whole had their opponents reeling in the



The Blues destroy the RAF with a crushing 81 - 13 win having beaten the aussies on the weekend

scrum. This combined with some supremely disciplined backs defence was necessary to keep at bay the forceful, if somewhat guileless, attacks of the Australians early on in a tight first half.

The first try came with half an hour already up on the clock. Akinluyi set off on a long looping run, eventually finding space away from the forward battle. Williams and Toy in sup-

port between them hoofed the ball over the remnants of the defences for the latter to latch onto and score. This combined with Ufton earlier penalty gave the home side a hard-fought ten-point lead. It couldn't last the half however. A quick line-out gamble by Ufton resulted in him being caught and the Australians seized possession. With the rest of the Blues forlornly attempting to regain their

defensive organisation, Radnedge went over in the corner for the visitors and cut the lead to 10-5 at the break.

The second half saw Cambridge frustrated for the vast majority. Whilst they held the upper hand in territory and fashioned a number of chances for themselves that elusive score wouldn't come. Charlie Desmond came closest to producing it, fumbling a bobbling

ball with the line just a few agonising inches away. Soon after, following good work by Akinluyi and Worsley, he broke out of defence outpacing his opposite number. Unfortunately his step inside the full-back allowed Jakeman the opportunity to recover the ground and haul him down just short of the whitewash.

The introduction of Joe Ansbro on 67 minutes gave the side the injection of pace and purpose necessary to close the game out. He hit the line with confidence twice before taking an inside pass at furious speed and racing away under the posts. The fresher's debut at this level highlighted a hugely exciting prospect. The final try came from the other end of the age spectrum.

Veteran of two Varsity matches, Duncan Blaikie finishing off a fine move that swept up and across the pitch, the game finally broken down from the attritional confrontation that it had been in the first half. With the visitors' fatigue added to by a realisation that they were to head back home without a victory, Desmond was only denied the score he deserved by the referee's whistle. As he finally crossed the line the official simultaneously pulled him back for an earlier transgression and signalled the end of the game.

## Sport In Brief

### FOOTBALL

Cambridge followed last week's loss at Lincoln with an encouraging 2-1 win against Amateur Football Association with goals coming from Jonny Hughes and Danny Griffiths.

### CROSS COUNTRY

Last Saturday the regional cross-country championships took place, and Blues runner Owain Bristow achieved a top-20 ranking in the Southern juniormen's race in London, Emma Pooley came 12th in the senior women's race, which was won by ex-Cambridge Julia Bleasdale. Huw Lobb (also ex-Cambridge) won the men's senior title.

### RUGBY

Second place in the college rugby league was sealed by Downing after a grinding 14-10 win over Jesus. Meanwhile St. John's powered on, scoring heavily against Trinity hall to win 83-14.

### AND FINALLY...

### HOCKEY

Cambridge's Hockey third team, Squanderers, beat Cambridge City 4-0 in an impressive display in which goals were scored by Rowlands 2, Jones and Coomber.

## Men's College Rugby League Division I

Place	Team	Pl	W	D	L	F	A	PD	Pts
1	St. John's	9	8	0	1	380	56	324	33
2	Downing	9	7	0	2	176	101	75	30
3	Jesus	10	6	0	4	187	120	67	28
4	Girton	8	4	0	4	98	139	-41	19
5	St. Catharine's	7	1	0	6	53	188	-135	10
6	Trinity Hall	9	0	0	9	58	353	-295	9

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Results: Jesus 10 - 14 Downing; St. John's 83 - 14 Trinity Hall

## Men's College Football League Division I

Place	Team	Pl	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Fitzwilliam	5	5	0	0	23	5	18	15
2	Trinity	6	5	0	1	14	9	5	15
3	Jesus	6	4	1	1	14	6	8	13
4	St. John's	6	3	1	2	12	7	5	10
5	Churchill	6	3	1	2	8	10	-2	10
6	St.Catherine's	6	2	0	4	6	12	-6	6
7	Darwin	5	1	2	2	9	7	2	5
8	Caius	6	1	1	4	6	16	-10	4
9	Downing	5	1	0	4	8	13	-5	3
10	Girton	6	1	0	5	6	20	-14	3

Results: Jesus 1 - 0 Caius; St.Catz 2 - 1 St.John's; Churchill 4- 0 Girton

# Hockey showdown

## Ladies' Hockey

CAMBRIDGE 0  
 SEVENOAKS 3

Clare Skirrow

SINCE THE Christmas break, Cambridge University Ladies Blues Hockey team have lost three of their four matches. With only a month until the Varsity match on March 1st one would expect the squad to be a little alarmed, especially following their 2-1 defeat to Oxford last week. However, the team appear quietly confident that with their intensive training regime, they can win the Varsity match for the second year running.

On Saturday the Blues faced Sevenoaks at home. With their opponents currently second in the East Premier league, it was never going to be an easy game. The pace was quick from the start and Cambridge rapidly found themselves under pressure. After ten minutes, the Sevenoaks right wing broke through the defence, slipping the ball to the penalty spot where the waiting centre forward swept the ball past keeper, Charmaine Chua.

The Blues restarted quickly with passion. A new formation connecting the midfield with the forwards allowed the team to attack more forcefully and in greater numbers. The opponents were stunned by the swift close range passing and dynamic play covering the entire pitch. At left inner Tunnicliffe sent a penetrating ball to



Chua in goal made some great saves

Jen Lees whose devastating run to the baseline resulted in a pass across the D, begging for a touch to send it towards goal. However, this was not to be and the Blues failed to convert their opportunity.

Shortly before the half time whistle the students were forced to defend a series of short corners placing the defence under immense pressure. The crunching tackles and composure of Player of the Match, Helen Wheeler and the rest of the defence failed to keep the ball out of the net and the Blues went into their half time team talk 2-0 down.

Cambridge started the second half with renewed vigour. A free hit in the attacking twenty-five saw Kendall play the ball to Skirrow in plenty of space enabling her to drive towards goal. Though this failed to produce the much needed goal, it started a period of prolonged pressure.

Cambridge eventually won a penalty corner but the Sevenoaks' keeper saved the strike on the line.

Despite a majority of possession and some brilliant passing play, the score remained a frustrating 2-0. Every scoring opportunity saw the ball sent just wide of the posts. Unfortunately, the prolonged attack left the defence exposed high up the field and late in the second half, Sevenoaks counter-attacked culminating in their third and final goal.

The Blues may not have experienced the best results in the last few weeks but they can be hopeful that with time this will improve. Elsewhere in the club, the Second and Third teams are enjoying huge success with flurries of goals and regular victories. This is incredibly promising with their Varsity matches looming on the 14th February at the Wilberforce Road Sports complex.

Courtesy of CUHC



## Cambridge prove too good for Aussies

Australian Universities fail to impress at Grange Road
 page 27



# Ruthless Fitz put four past Catz in lively Cuppers clash

**Cup Football**  
**FITZ** 4  
**ST CATZ** 0  
**Rab Joyce**

WITH a new term can come new hope in College football. A brief look through the history of the first division will confirm that teams leading comfortably at Christmas, dominating the Michaelmas term, can collapse and fall away, finishing without any silverware when the prospects had looked so good. One could have forgiven Fitz, therefore, for being a little apprehensive when they took on St Catz, the team who led the way in College football at this time last season, in Cuppers on Sunday. Especially so, given the difficulty Fitz have had when playing at home to Catz in recent times.

It quickly became apparent, however, that the position Fitz have found themselves in is no fluke. In fact, Fitz never looked like losing, and had it not been for fresher goalkeeper Ed Bonner, Catz could quite easily have suffered a similar level of embarrassment as Caius, Churchill and Selwyn have done against the Oxford Road outfit in recent months. Brendan Threlfall, the spearhead of Fitz's ruthless attack, has quickly made a name for himself on the College scene, his pace and awareness a constant menace to opposition defences. There can be no truer reflection of this than the fact he scored all of Fitz's four goals on Sunday, making it nineteen in seven games for the season. Even the least competent of mathematicians could tell you that he is owed a lot of match-balls. His first came after only five minutes, nipping in behind

to calmly round Bonner and roll the ball into the empty goal. Nor did he have to wait long for his second, pouncing on a long clearance that had bounced between a hesitating defender and goalkeeper.

Catz were almost given a route back into the game when a well judged ball to the far post found Storey, who sliced tamely wide when well placed to score. His complaints that he had been put off by centre back Forster's call of offside failed to detract from the importance of the miss. Threlfall duly inflicted a painful punishment, adding his third by tapping in Danny Griffiths' neat chip towards goal. His fourth was the best of all, creating an angle for himself by drawing Bonner away from goal, and neatly rolling past him when it looked as though the chance may have gone. And all this before half-time.

The second half was more about consolidation for Fitz as players began to pick up tired knocks, with Catz enjoying the majority of the possession. Captain James Bewley, playing at the heart of the Fitz midfield, was able to quell the potential threat of Dave Mills, who was restricted to long range efforts throughout. At the other end, Bonner was again called upon to save well from Threlfall, whilst veteran substitute Gallagher, whose stay on the pitch lasted only five minutes before he comically hobbled off, had a header cleared off the line.

Late on, lively fresher Mark Teal was unlucky not to be awarded a penalty as he appeared to be brought down by three Catz defenders simultaneously as his makeshift attempt at goal trickled agonisingly wide of the far post. The game as a



Trinity scraped past a Downing side that almost earned a point but for a last minute winner which gave Miles Away his hat-trick

contest had long ended by this stage, however, despite the fact that Fitz continued to look menacing in attack.

Defensively too, Fitz seem excellent, having conceded only five goals in five games in the league, the best defensive record of the first division teams. After adding the second of two cuppers clean

### 2005 Cup draw

Girton	P	
Jesus	P	
Robinson	P	
Emma	P	
Fitz	4	Fitz
St Catz	0	
Churchill	P	
St John's	P	
Trinity	1	Trinity
Sidney	0	
Long Rd	P	
Pembroke	P	
Clare	2*	Clare
Homerton	2	
Hughes Hall	0	
Christs	1	Christs

sheets on Sunday, goalkeeper Whale and his tried and tested back four of Hardy, Henderson, Littlefair and Forster don't look like conceding and must be brimming with confidence. 'We play as a unit,' said Henderson after the game. 'We know exactly what

each other is going to do, and we have absolute faith that we will deal with whatever the opposition can throw at us'. Indeed, Catz had to wait until five minutes from time to force their first shot on target, Mills forcing a comfortable save from Whale.

This was a very competent and professional performance from Fitz, much to the delight of Bewley, who was quick to praise players and fans. 'The support is incredible,' he said, 'and it makes it that little bit harder for teams who have to play us here'. Of his team, he his clearly proud, and rightly so. Their next Cuppers match, potentially against St Johns, could be the game of the season.

The draw sparked controversy as Trinity were the only side from the top division to be picked in the bottom half of the draw. Rumours of draw fixing and bribery have now been dismissed by the Cuppers secretary, Dave Sher who answered, "The draw is random. Half the fun of a cup competition is everyone has a chance to win it". He later added, "With the constant change of players year on year at each college (as some leave and others join), often teams doing badly in a league above will be much worse than teams doing well in a league below."

## Trinity triumph

**Andrew Hall**

IN A match important to both the title race and relegation battle, Trinity came out the deserved victors after being frustrated by Downing. The result leaves Trinity with a shot at the league title while Downing will have to put a few results together to avoid the drop.

Downing took the lead with their first meaningful venture into Trinity's half after 5 minutes when a through ball evaded full-back Tawain-Termsep and keeper Scott rushed out of his box to try and clear the ball. He succeeded in taking the ball away from Mattelellis initially but as he rushed back to his goal, he could do nothing to stop a chip from the Downing forward whistling over his head.

The second half continued in the same form as the rest of the match with Trinity having most of the attacking play, and it paid off when captain Andy Hall made a bursting run to the sideline and produced a perfect cross for Away to head in from a yard out. With their spirits raised Trinity pushed forward and looked for a second, and they were gifted it when a corner

from Stocker was poked goalwards by Away only for the keeper to push it back to him for another tap in.

Trinity then sat back on their lead and Downing capitalised with their best spell of the match, worrying the Trinity full backs with their pace and almost getting in down the left wing on several occasions.

Trinity did not take the warning seriously and another move down the left opened up a chance for the Downing winger to shoot. His shot was pushed away by Scott but in a resulting four player melee, the ball popped out to a Downing forward who put the ball into the empty net.

Downing appeared happy with a point and tried to play the game out but with 10 minutes left could not hold on, as Away completed his hat-trick from point blank range off a corner with 2 minutes to go and Trinity held on to win the three points.

The league now looks to be a two horse race, with Trinity behind on goal difference, while goal difference is also the only thing keeping Downing from the foot of the table.

Lucy Barwell