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Martha Elwell looks at the ongoing issues surrounding welfare and mental health provision in Cambridge.



Comment

Marianne Brooker argues against the government's recent proposals to privatise our student debt.



Vulture

Sabina Dewfield takes a look at some of the student charities currently running campaigns in Cambridge.



Sport

Varsity speaks to student Sarah Leiter, who is currently training with the GB Goalball team for the next Paralympic games.



Deloitte employees took up a large number of seats in the Union's debating chamber at week four's debate on the European Union

The Union by Deloitte

Deloitte has been announced as the new sponsor of the Cambridge Union Society

Martha Elwell
NEWS EDITOR

The Cambridge Union Society has entered into a sponsorship deal with professional services firm Deloitte.

Joanna Mobed, President of the Cambridge Union, and Vice-President Alex Porter said in a joint statement to *Varsity*: "The Cambridge Union Society is very happy to be starting a three-year collaboration with Deloitte, through which Deloitte will be providing the Union with a range of services, including the technical expertise that has already allowed us to overhaul our website and expand our wireless capabilities.

"Additionally, recent improvements to the building, including the installation of a disabled toilet and a new speakers room for smaller events, have only been possible due to such sponsorship."

In recent years the Union has consistently reported bad financial returns.

In the Union's financial report for the twelve months leading up to June 2012, there was a reported £169,105 net loss. This was the fourth year that the Union had made an overall loss.

The 2012 report concluded that despite "record membership numbers, higher sponsorship, better investment returns, and a greater contribution from the charity's trading arm" the Union remained unable to cope with the high costs involved in running the organisation.

The statement from the Union added: "The Union's partnership with Deloitte will ensure that membership price increases are kept at bay, as well as allowing us to continue to subsidise membership to Newton Trust Bursary holders."

It was pointed out that the Union currently charges £185 for life membership compared to the Oxford Union's price of £236, and Newton Trust Bursary holders receive life membership for £95. The Union said

that "support from Deloitte will help the Union to expand on our access and debating work with schools throughout the UK."

But some Union members have raised concerns about the possible negative effects of the Deloitte sponsorship agreement. Writing to *Varsity*, Union member Jack Pulman-Slater expressed his dismay at the presence of Deloitte employees at week four's European Union debate (see page 4). At the debate there was a lack of seating for Union members because of the many seats reserved for Deloitte employees, and there are some reports of disruptive behaviour on their part.

Responding to these complaints, Mobed and Porter said in their statement: "The Union would like to apologise for the lack of seats reserved for members at the Week 4 Debate. This was a one-off event organised with the local branch of Deloitte, and will not be a recurring aspect of the new partnership."

Further concerns have been raised about how the affiliation with Deloitte might affect the Union's ability to uphold its identity as a society for the promotion of free speech. One Union member who wished to remain anonymous said: "I don't see how this [the sponsorship affiliation] can't fundamentally change the nature of the Cambridge Union."

"In any kind of corporate deal of this sort there are tacit understandings about what can and can't be said about the other party. That just doesn't bode well for a centuries-old debating society whose tagline has the words 'free speech' in it."

The Union responded: "Deloitte will not be choosing the speakers or debate motions and the Union will remain a society dedicated to free speech, which prioritises its members' interests."

"We believe the partnership will allow us to do that through maintaining membership costs and continuing our

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Interview: Josh MacAlister launches graduate social work scheme Frontline (p. 8)

Why the press love to hate Oxbridge

If you searched for the words Cambridge, or in fact Oxbridge, on any of the major newspaper websites this week, the first story you were likely to find was one about a certain other student paper's derriere-based antics. Other stories this week included the 25th anniversary of Magdalene accepting female students (the last Oxbridge college to do so). Was this story more newsworthy? Infinitely. Did it get anywhere near the same exposure? Of course not.

The reason some stories from Cambridge take hold in the national press over others is nearly always to do with preconceived ideas about what Oxbridge is like, which dominate the nation's consciousness.

The two universities are typically portrayed one of two ways: either as intimidating institutions for the privileged, out of touch with modern society, or as places where common students run wild, holding obscene naked pranks and bringing the name of their prestigious university (and moral decency)

into disrepute.

While these two views are equally misguided, they nevertheless persist as some of the most commonly held views of Oxbridge. Why Oxbridge is attacked for its traditions one minute and praised for them the next is a topic worthy of its own PhD.

However, at a basic level it seems to stem from the public's discomfort with such obvious establishments of traditional elitism while also feeling incredibly protective of them as a proud part of our national history.

In reality Cambridge is neither as obscene nor as privileged as the media would suggest. Instead, the University is currently having to evolve at a dramatic rate, particularly when it comes to how the institution is funded.

Just this week new figures showed how Oxford and Cambridge still dominate all other UK universities when it comes to funding, and as the government looks at how much money they put

towards higher education these independent sources of income will become increasingly important if Cambridge is to survive.

One Cambridge institution that knows all too well what it is like to be forced to evolve is the Cambridge Union who announced this week a new sponsorship partnership with Deloitte. After several years of losses, that the Union's finances needed some rejuvenating is hardly novel.

That the Union has chosen to answer this problem with corporate sponsorship raises interesting questions about the way colleges, departments and the University as a whole may be forced to adapt in the future. For some people the change towards independent funding and sponsorship is indicative of the state of higher education in the UK.

However, faced with diminishing government input and attractive new sources of commercial income, it is hardly fair to blame the University for seeking to make the most out of what they do have.



Write to us

letters@varsity.co.uk

ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN AT MAGDALENE

Last night we celebrated 25 years of women being admitted into Magdalene. Last night, a discussion group was also held on the issue of whether Magdalene should have a Women's Officer with voting rights on the JCR. Has the legacy of the pioneers of '88 worn off? Is this really something that even merits a debate?

Perhaps most women of Magdalene at this moment are not oppressed. Some will be, in their romantic relationships, in family contexts, when they do work experience. But perhaps most will not. And that is great. A women's officer would be there for those who do not feel oppressed – to empower them as agents of future change – and also for those who do feel oppressed (having personally experienced sexism, assault etc.).

What this all comes down to is some people feeling that women already have equality, what more do we want?

I personally want to see the following statistics change:

- Up to 3 million women and girls across the UK experience rape, domestic violence, stalking, or other violence each year (UK Feminista)

- 50 per cent of students identified "prevailing sexism, 'laddism' and a culture of harassment" at their universities. (NUS report on Lad Culture)

- The full time gender pay gap is 10%, and the average part-time pay gap is 34.5%. (UK Feminista)

- Women are outnumbered 5 to 1 by men in the cabinet. (UK Feminista)

Although these issues aren't pertinent to the day-to-day lives of most women in Magdalene, they are a reality for many women in the world, a world which we will be entering, and although we ourselves might not face barriers, surely we should be equipped to help those that do, rather than ignoring the issue because we ourselves are unaffected.

We have come a long way but we have not come all the way. It is often said, with regard to psychological interventions, that the aim of therapy is to not be in therapy any more.

In the same way, the aim of having a Women's Officer would be to eventually not need a Women's Officer any more. Whilst these statistics still exist, there is no question that a separate voice needs to exist on the JCR.

– Annie Raff,
Magdalene College

Want to get involved with Varsity this term?
Drop in to our section meetings this week to find out how!

News

Thursday 21st, 4pm at the Varsity Office

Drinks with the Comment Team
Sunday 17th, 7:30pm at the Maypole

Or send our section editors an email at
[section]@varsity.co.uk

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Magdalene celebrates 25 years of accepting female students

Christina Sweeney-Baird
NEWS EDITOR

Earlier this week Magdalene College celebrated the 25th anniversary of the first women being admitted to the college. Magdalene was the last Cambridge, and Oxbridge, college to admit women. The last all male Oxford college, Oriel, admitted women for the first time in 1985.

The College held a dinner to mark the anniversary, which was attended by former Magdalene students such as broadcaster Katie Derham and actress Clemency Burton-Hill.

When women were first admitted to the college there was huge consternation from many fellows and much of the student body. Magdalene students wore black armbands to protest and flew the college flag at half mast. Magdalene students also reportedly marched around Cambridge carrying a coffin decrying the expected demise of the college and poured vast amounts of the college's port into the River Cam.

The college's academic results swiftly began to improve and it rose up the Tompkins table as women were admitted, having fallen desperately behind the other colleges throughout the 1980s. As a college with a disproportionately high



It has been 25 years since Magdalene admitted its first women

number of arts students, Magdalene frequently has more female than male students.

Ali Meghji, the Magdalene JCR President, said: "[The] celebrations are a fitting way to mark the anniversary of something that happened far too late. Nevertheless, it's great to see how much progress has been made over the last 25 years with a more or less equal proportion of men and women across the student body."

Questions have been raised recently about the representation of women's issues at Magdalene, with the JCR discussing a proposal to add a women's officer to the JCR Committee. At an open meeting on Monday, students voted against this proposal. A second proposal for a voted women's officer on the welfare and equal opportunities sub-committee passed.

Speaking about the women's officer debate, Meghji added: "The idea

behind this change is to have a more encompassing welfare and equal opportunities committee set up, with both a women's welfare officer who can offer individual counselling on personal issues, and a political women's officer who can lead discussion groups, workshops and campaigns on issues relating to gender inequality both within the University environment and also more generally after university life.

"It's great to see how much progress has been made over the last 25 years"

"There are also plans for the JCR President and Vice-President to have a closer affiliation with the sub-committee so that no issues of agency need arise.

"Other presidents have expressed that fears of a political women's officer on the JCR Committee being superfluous are unfounded, and there is hope that the importance of a political women's officer will be realised this year leading to the reconsideration that they should constitute a JCR Committee position."

1869

First women's college, Girton, is founded

1948

Women allowed to be full members of the University

1972

Clare, Churchill and King's admit women

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Week in China

Rear of the Year competition causes controversy, yet again

The Tab's annual "Rear of the Year" competition has once again prompted outrage from the CUSU Women's Campaign, who have called its immediate removal and have demanded a public apology

Amy Hawkins
SENIOR NEWS EDITOR

The Cambridge online student newspaper *The Tab* has once again caused controversy by launching a "Rear of the Year" competition, in which students can vote for their favourite derriere.

The article, published on Monday, has received national media attention, with the photographs being republished in newspapers including the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror*. The CUSU Women's Campaign has condemned the feature, calling it "immature sensationalisation."

"The Rear Of The Year Awards are intended to be a bit of fun. I do not believe them to be sexist"

This is the second year that *The Tab* has run such a competition. The article features five men and five women posing with their backs to the camera and naked from the waist down, in various situations.

One man, 'Thomas', is pictured in a University library, while another, named as 'Dave', is knocking on the door of Christ's College. The women featured include 'Bella', who "once read an entire CUSU bulletin," in a laundry room, and 'Amber' on a lawn holding a 'Please keep off the grass' sign.

Each picture is accompanied with the student's name, college, subject and a fun fact, nearly all of which would

seem to have been made up.

Within hours of the piece appearing online, it was picked up by national media outlets and was the subject of a lengthy debate on the CUSU Women's Campaign Facebook group. Many members of the group were outraged at the piece, with one commenter calling it "disgusting."

However many also warned against "shaming" the participants, particularly the women. Defenders of the piece have pointed out that the article includes the same amount of female and male nudity, and therefore should not be considered sexist.

Speaking to *Varsity*, Co-Editor of *The Tab* James Mitchell said: "The Rear Of The Year Awards are intended to be a bit of fun. I do not believe them to be sexist for various reasons, but primarily because *The Tab* paid equal attention to both genders and supports freedom of choice."

"I agree there is an interesting debate to be had about objectification however and we would welcome that debate. *The Tab* is, and remains, an open forum. I would urge the Women's Campaign to join us in having that discussion rather than complaining to the press."

An emergency open meeting was held by the Women's Campaign Executive on Tuesday just over 24 hours after the "Rear of the Year" piece was published. An email to the CUSU Women's mailing list announcing the meeting was sent out with just 35 minutes notice.

The members of the Women's Executive present at the meeting discussed how best to communicate their belief that the competition is sexist.

CUSU Women's Officer Lauren

Steele said: "The Women's Campaign does not take issue with the individuals who chose to be involved, but rather with the apparently never-ending need of media organisations such as *The Tab* to objectify women in this way."

"The Women's Campaign believes that confidence in nudity is something to be celebrated and encouraged, but not by faceless images in a 'newspaper'."

"We also condemn the fact that these images are presented as a poll, where readers are asked to rate bodies in a way which pits the women involved against each other. It is a well known fact that the prevalence of eating disorders and body image issues are directly related to the manner in which the media presents women's bodies."

She added: "Simply stating there are equal numbers of both genders involved does not negate our concerns."

However, in defence of her appearance in the article, the participant named as 'Bella' wrote in *The Tab*: "CUSU Women's Campaign saying that *The Tab* undoubtedly knew that the girls would be treated differently, suggests that the girls should be treated differently, and objectified."

"Surely, this is *The Tab* just treating the bums of all genders as equals. Giving both men and women the choice to display themselves on *The Tab*, to me, just demonstrates a forward-thinking attitude."

The competition was first run in early 2012, and only featured men. *The Tab* then followed this up with a similar competition for women, which gained far more media attention and crashed the website's server because of the number of hits it was receiving.



CUSU Women's Campaign ran last year's "I need feminism because..." event

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

charitable work and ensuring the maintenance of the building for future generations."

However, some members of the Union argue the worth of the new deal. Sachin Parathalingam, a first-year lawyer at King's who spoke in the EU debate attended by Deloitte employees, said: "Any large-scale organisation like the Union requires financial support to run its events. This is a natural phenomenon."

"I do not have a detailed understanding of the link with Deloitte, but as a Union member I am sure that such a link could help keep costs as minimal as possible."

"As for the EU debate, it was arguably one of the most popular debates of the year and so obviously many people did not get seats. I personally was not disturbed by the Deloitte presence. The front row seats were reserved for guests of the speakers as is customary at the Union."

This is the first time the Society has accepted corporate sponsorship for the Union organisation. It regularly accepts and seeks out sponsorship for individual debates and events.

At the time of going to print on Thursday evening, Deloitte representatives were unavailable for comment on this matter.

comment

Deloitte sponsorship is shameful, argues Jack Pulman-Slater

On the 31st of October the Cambridge Union hosted a debate on Britain's place in the EU. Before the main debate commenced, the emergency debate had been centred on how best to prepare for a zombie apocalypse. Little did we know this hypothetical scenario was about to become a reality as the chamber doors opened and Deloitte employees and corporate guests flooded the room.

Before the debate commenced, the President thanked those outside the chamber watching in the over-spill rooms who hadn't managed to take part in the discussion. The reason so many missed out was that half the benches in the chamber and a portion of the balcony seating were reserved for Deloitte's corporate guests. On the 31st we were presented with the new ugly and shameful face of the Union or, as it is now called, 'The Cambridge Union Society in collaboration with Deloitte'.

The proceedings were interrupted on numerous occasions by tipsy employees and guests of the professional services firm who chatted noisily over speeches in between gulps of wine and glances at their glossy-bound information booklets. The Union now has its sponsors to please, with paying students members forced out of the chamber or

given a back seat.

The Union has been strangely cagey about the precise details of their pact with Deloitte. The Union is about free speech, but it is no longer about transparency. Its student members deserve to know the precise details of the contract and what it will mean in terms of what the Union delivers.

This is about more than just a change of name and an extra bit of embroidery on the T-shirts of Union Committee members. The Union's website boasts that it "is more than just a private members' club." But on the 31st October it couldn't have felt more like a private members' club if it had tried.

There is an assumption that sponsorship deals such as this are always additive and positive. The Union will receive much needed funds to repair its building and Deloitte gets the status of having its name attached to that of our University. Everybody wins.

However, the Union is not completely unchanged by this misguided and fundamentally wrong decision. It is now a completely different creature.

How can it continue as a bastion of student free speech when an international professional services

firm is involved in its affairs? How can it be right that a student society allows corporate guests to dominate and disrupt its events, whilst paying student members are forced to miss out?

It is truly shaming that we have let part of the corporate world into our university's most distinctive and respected student society – a society which is also a registered charity. It is a tragedy that Deloitte's name appears next to our university's shield, and that its name and adverts now appear in the Union's Termcard.

There is an increasing trend for sponsorship in this country, but surely there must remain some things which are inherently unsellable. The Union should have been one of those things.

The Union is now no more special than the O2 Arena or the Emirates Air Line cable car – it's just another billboard for a large company. For a registered charity and student-run society to have started such a relationship with Deloitte is grossly inappropriate.

The Union was something special, something of which this University could be extremely proud. Now it is something which should repulse us. Whilst it exists "in collaboration with Deloitte" it is a great embarrassment to this University.

Police attempt to spy on students

Local activist asked to spy and inform on student political groups in Cambridge

Amy Hawkins
SENIOR NEWS EDITOR

Police approached an activist based in Cambridge and asked him to spy on student political groups, the *Guardian* has reported.

The activist, who is involved with various student groups, did not wish to be identified and is referred to in the report as John Armstrong. He is not a student at the University but has lived in the area for many years and has lots of friends who are students. After being approached by an officer, Armstrong secretly recorded their second meeting and passed the video footage on to the *Guardian*.

The officer, who has been given the pseudonym Peter Smith, is part of a covert unit that monitors political activism. Smith expressed concerns in the video about the impact of student political activism on the wider community.

The groups that Smith says are of specific interest include the Cambridge branches of English Defence League, Unite Against Fascism, UK Uncut and "student union type stuff".

He is filmed asking Armstrong to name students that will be involved in any potential protests, and to inform him of how many people will be attending and what vehicles they will be travelling in.

Rachel Wenstone, the NUS Deputy President called the revelations "an absolute scandal" and said: "To group the activities of hardworking students'

unions within the same realm as those of the EDL is grossly offensive."

CUSU expressed similar concerns about the revelations: "We are alarmed by news of police surveillance on Cambridge student activists. CUSU believes that all individuals have the right to protest peacefully."

"CUSU has always constructively engaged with the police when planning or supporting protests and demonstrations. As such, CUSU finds it absurd that our members should be the focus of these investigations."

When Armstrong mentions his involvement in the occupation of the University Old Schools Site, which was a protest in 2010 against the raising of tuition fees, Smith said that this is the kind of thing he is interested in.

He emphasised to Armstrong his desire to gauge the "feeling" of protests from a student perspective. The 2010 occupation was organised by Cambridge Defend Education, a campaign group that opposes cuts to education funding.

He offered to cover the activist's expenses, but told him that "it is not about rewarding you financially". He advises Armstrong to "try not to think too deeply about it...if you think too much about it you'll start tying yourself up in knots."

When contacted by the *Guardian*, a spokesperson for Cambridgeshire Police said: "Officers use covert tactics to gather intelligence, in accordance with the law, to assist in the prevention



CDE's recent protest in Cambridge about the problem of student debt

and detection of criminal activity."

However the Cambridge Universities Labour Club (CULC) questioned the legitimacy of the police's concerns. In a statement that called today's news "deeply concerning", CULC stated: "Cambridgeshire Police's initial suggestion that this kind of monitoring is in the interests of national security simply isn't credible."

"If the police actually have a genuine concern about a political group they should be upfront about it and not resort to creating a network of informants to fish for information."

In response to these revelations, Cambridge Defend Education released

the following statement: "Cambridge Defend Education is not surprised to find itself the subject of police surveillance. As we have seen, the police will go to any lengths to gain 'intelligence' on activist groups...It is telling that the police regard their activities as completely legitimate and legal".

"This constitutes part of a wider attempt by the police, university management and the government to criminalise and suppress dissent within universities across the country."

"We refuse to be intimidated by these coercive and underhand tactics, and will continue to resist – in our universities and on the streets."

News from the Dark Blues

Ben Goldstein
THE OXFORD STUDENT

In a story that made 99% of the university want to inter themselves in a large coffin, the Pembroke rugby team's emails were found encouraging members to "pick" a female first year to bring to their social and put a "substance of [their] choice" in their chosen fresher's drink. The Social Secretary resigned and rusticated and the rugby team have been relegated immediately – the response, at least, was harsh and swift.

If that story wasn't vomit-inducing enough, students at St Hilda's discovered that their college bar has the lowest possible food hygiene standards. That's lower than the Van of Death and the Van of Life (probably – mainly just wanted to get my Cambridge knowledge in).

At least there was no actual bodily excretion at Hilda's. Freshers at University have been scolded for spitting at bar staff, and generally being astonishingly rude to the paid employees. It's all 'banter', though, yeah? Yeah?

No. Surprisingly, the saving grace in this well of tears is the student union elections. Not because of anything interesting in the manifestos, but because of the presence of joke candidate Louis Trup. His policies include a monorail to far-away colleges, the transformation of the RadCam into a club and double beds for all. Finally, something we can all get behind that isn't outrage, disgust or condemnation.

DESTINATIONS

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INDUSTRY	IMPACT	OW	FASTER
GLOBAL	ASSIGNMENTS	OW	FASTER
SENIOR	CLIENT CONTACT	OW	FASTER
CAREER	DEVELOPMENT	OW	FASTER
MAKE	PARTNER	OW	FASTER

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Oxbridge names still the same

Study shows traditional Oxbridge surnames have endured for centuries

James Sutton
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Research conducted by Dr Neil Cummins of LSE and Professor Gregory Clark at the University of California, Davis has revealed that English surnames have changed relatively little in the last 800 years.

Surnames such as Baskerville, Darcy, Mandeville, Montgomery, Neville, Percy, Punchard and Talbot have remained associated with wealth, power and the upper classes since the Norman Conquest of 1066.

“Students with surnames such as Darcy, Percy and Montgomery have been found at Oxbridge throughout the last 27 generations”

The study goes on to compare the frequency of these ‘elite surnames’ in matriculation lists from Oxford and Cambridge in the period 1800 to 1829, to those found in the lists from 1980 to 2009. The results showed that “all these surname groups have a statistically significantly higher than average representation among Oxbridge students. Social status persists strongly.”

This is not to say that an ‘elite surname’ is a passport through the Oxbridge admissions process. However, there is a noteworthy trend. Students

with surnames such as Darcy, Percy and Montgomery have been found at Oxbridge throughout the last 27 generations, originating from the vast development in surnames sparked by the influx of the French language from 1066 onwards.

From 1900 to 1913, nine of the most exclusive public schools, including Eton, Harrow and Rugby, provided 28 per cent of the Oxbridge intake. The Oxford entry exam, until 1940, included a compulsory Latin test. Barriers such as this obstructed working class students from the Oxbridge admissions process and thereby fostered the culture of the Oxbridge surname.

It was only in the 1980s that large scale efforts to equalise opportunities in the admissions process gained pace. Even now Cambridge and Oxford spend large amounts on access.

Despite this, the prevalence of these surnames persists today. Dr Cummins and Professor Clark concluded that the ratio of representation of these surnames, where 1 would represent a level of representation in line with the wider population, currently stands at 1.75 at Oxford and Cambridge.

They have attributed this to the way in which children generally inherit both their surname and their social status from their parents, meaning that the ‘elite surnames’ have remained closely associated with the upper classes.

Dr Cummins added: “Between 1800 and 2011 there have been substantial institutional changes in England, but no gain in rates of social mobility for society as a whole.” On the whole, surnames have remained static and particularly so at Oxford and Cambridge.



Cambridge: full of Darcys

Popular names

- Baskerville
- Darcy
- Mandeville
- Montgomery
- Neville
- Percy
- Punchard
- Talbot
- Berkeley
- Pakenham

Unpopular names

- Boorman
- Cholmondley
- Defoe
- Delmer
- Goodhill
- Ledwell
- Rowthorn
- Sidwells
- Tonbridge
- Trevellyan



Cambridge Spy Rumour has it...

One impassioned Cambridge couple spent the night doing a lot more than weeping under the willow tree outside King’s...

An unfortunate Corpuscle knocked himself out in the bar toilets and evidently dreamt of his natural habitat as he woke up soaking wet. Sea water? If only...

Some Trinity freshers have been engaging in polygamous bonding, even though at least one of them has a girlfriend...

The nearest and dearest of one ‘mature’ student has been banned from another college after mistaking their gutters for a urinal...

Miss V x

An Egyptian abroad

New research has shed light on the not always pleasant experience of Lewis Awad, the Egyptian writer, who studied at King’s College in the late 1930s

Eddie Reynolds
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Recent research into the life and times of Lewis Awad, an Egyptian intellectual and writer, has given rare insight into what it was like to study in Cambridge as a foreign student in the 1930s and early 1940s.

Raphael Cormack, who is currently studying for a PhD at Edinburgh University and is also the son of Professor of Classics at Cambridge Mary Beard, published an article on his blog *Curiosities* earlier this week detailing his findings.

Lewis Awad travelled from Cairo University to Cambridge to study at King’s College, matriculating in 1938. Extracts from Awad’s memoirs make it clear that being an Egyptian in Cambridge was not always easy.

Despite Awad’s initial excitement at the prospect of studying for a PhD in England, Cambridge was not all that he had hoped for. For reasons unknown, he left the University early in the summer of 1940 with his PhD incomplete.

An excerpt from Awad’s *Memoirs of a Scholarship Student* shows that his initial reaction was a mixture of terror and amusement: terror upon realising

that “these people aren’t as feckless as I thought they were” when handed copies of the College and University Statutes and amusement upon realising that many of the rules contained in these statutes were ridiculous.

Awad recounted: “It said you should never ogle the daughter of your landlord; ogle the neighbour’s daughter instead... It had a section too telling you the kind of students you should steal bikes from and the kind you shouldn’t.” Evidently he was in the company of “complicated people.”

Reading Awad’s *Memoirs of a Scholarship Student* also shows the curiosity that English people had for Awad’s exotic provenance. Awad was often bombarded with questions from his host family and fellow students alike. Questions such as, “Do you bathe in milk in Egypt?” and “Do you sit under palm trees, open your mouth and let the dates fall in?” gave rise to feelings that Awad’s friend Ahmed Abbas Salah described as “a contradiction between a progressive intellectual outlook and conventionally racist behaviour.”

That being said, although the English and Egyptians rarely mixed, Awad explains that Mrs Mercer, the mother of his host family, was very pleased to have an Egyptian staying with them,



A long way from home: Cairo University

especially given that he attended a dance with one of his English friend’s sisters on his final night in Cambridge.

These examples demonstrate that racism in 1930s Cambridge was not as blatant as many would assume. While Cormack does not claim that 1930s Britain was a society free of racism, relations between Egyptians and English people were on the whole civil.

The best example of this from Awad’s

memoirs comes from an extract describing the boat he travelled on from England to Cape Town in the 1940: “You could see everyone singing and everyone dancing... You could see one Egyptian holding two glasses of whiskey at the same time, one in the left and one in the right and two Englishmen bending down to drink from them. You could see an Egyptian riding on an Englishman’s shoulders.”

Ethical investment barometer

"The College seeks to ensure that investments are not made in companies whose practices it believes to be in conflict with the charitable purposes of the College or likely to alienate a sizeable proportion of the members or benefactors of the College". The College therefore explicitly deems investments in Royal Dutch Shell, Gazprom, BHP Billiton etc to not be at alienating to its members.

PETERHOUSE

"In common with many investors the College owns these investments through an index tracking fund which invests in all major companies worldwide."

TRINITY

"Fellows, as Trustees... must put to one side their own personal interests and views and seek the best financial return for the College" i.e. their investment policy explicitly bans potential ethical considerations in favour of maximising return. However, invests in Royal Dutch Shell and Lockheed Martin, both ethically very questionable companies.

MURRAY EDWARDS

"In principle we avoid investments in areas which are contrary to the College's charitable purposes" - however the College has investments in the secretive Cambridge University Fund, which is as yet obscured from the public domain.

NEWNHAM

The college explicitly bans investments in the arms trade, but not tobacco or mining companies.

SELWYN

"The portfolio ... excludes undertakings with material holdings (above 10%) in the tobacco and armaments industries"

LUCY CAVENDISH



ADVERTISEMENT

Laser eye surgery risks blasted

New three-minute treatment revolutionises laser-eye surgery

A simple new three minute treatment using eye drops and UV light after Lasik eye surgery spells the end to the procedure's most common complications. These include regression (where the original condition comes back), and potentially sight-threatening ones such as infections, corneal sagging or bulging (corneal ectasia) and ingrowth of surface cells (epithelial ingrowth). Lasik Xtra treatment, currently only available at the London Eye Hospital™ (www.londoneyehospital.com), entirely eliminates the risks of these problems by strengthening the cornea, which is the transparent front layer of the eye covering the iris and pupil. James Stacey, a chartered surveyor from Putney, is the UK's first patient to enjoy its benefits.

James, who is 32, underwent the ground-breaking treatment at the London Eye Hospital™: "I had been considering laser surgery for the past few years, and had recently done more research because my contact lenses were becoming more uncomfortable. I had read about the potential risks of laser treatment, such as regression and infection meaning the possibility of requiring re-treatment.



After reading about LASIK Xtra and having a consultation at London Eye Hospital™ I felt reassured that this treatment would reduce the risks that I was concerned about. I was very excited about the prospect of not having to wear contact lenses or glasses again! Of course I was a little nervous about being the first Lasik Xtra patient, however the staff gave me all the information I needed so I knew it was very safe, which was reassuring. My eyes felt great just a few hours after the operation and I now have perfect vision. I am really pleased that I had this treatment at the London Eye Hospital™. Lasik Xtra gave me confidence that the positive effects of the procedure on my eyesight would last longer. It is great to know that I will never have to put in another pair of contact lenses again!"

Lasik Xtra cross-links the fibres within the cornea, making them thicker and substantially stronger. Eye drops are applied after laser treatment, which are then 'activated' through UV light. This procedure, offered now as standard at the London Eye Hospital™ after all laser eye surgery treatments, adds only 3 minutes to the process, negating the risk of infection and the three most common complications linked to this procedure; corneal ectasia, regression of sight and epithelial ingrowth. Without this pioneering treatment, patients are at more of a risk and tend to need

future treatment to cope with corneal weakness and may even require a corneal transplant.

According to Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Bobby Qureshi, who performed the first Lasik Xtra procedure in the UK it eliminates the chances of LASIK laser eye treatment-related complications: "Lasik Xtra is the biggest thing in laser surgery in the last twenty years; everybody should be having this instead of standard laser eye surgery. The procedure ensures that the risk of developing complications from LASIK treatment is virtually reduced to zero. With standard laser treatments, patients are at risk of corneal ectasia, in which the lasered, weakened cornea gives way to pressure, causing bulging; as well as epithelial ingrowth, where the cells from the surface layer of the eye begin to grow underneath the corneal flap. There is also a possibility (up to 25% in some studies) of regression, ie, one or two years down the line the prescription begins to manifest again. This results in the patient again having to resort to wearing glasses, lenses or return for further treatment. Every person having Lasik treatment should have Lasik Xtra, it is the safest LASIK laser eye surgery in the world – and we're proud to be the first offering this safeguard to our patients in the UK."

Meet the London Eye Hospital team in Cambridge

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Make social work work better

Amy Hawkins talks to Frontline founder Josh MacAlister on how to change to world of social work

Amy Hawkins
SENIOR NEWS EDITOR

Nationwide, 38 per cent of young people go into higher education. For children who have been in care, the figure is six per cent. This is just one of a roster of statistics that highlight the disadvantages faced by young people in care, disadvantages that Josh MacAlister, founder of Frontline, is determined to turn around.

Launched this year, Frontline is a new graduate training programme, aimed at training bright university leavers for the challenging career of social work. Based on the model of Teach First, Frontline recruits go through a rigorous two-year on-the-job training programme, which earns them a professional qualification and a Master's degree.

"Our mission is to transform the lives of vulnerable children"

Teach First was launched in 2002 and is now the UK's largest graduate employer. MacAlister hopes to mirror this success: "Our ambition is in the next ten years, social work is seen as one of the top graduate career destinations"

However he also concedes that social work is very different from teaching in that "the risk is greater". The challenge, he tells me, is that "social work is either not understood by people...[or] there is a negative public perception of it."

Overcoming the somewhat unglamorous image of social work is one of Frontline's key challenges. In order to tackle this, MacAlister is seeking to recruit bright graduates from top universities, such as Cambridge, rather than people who have undergone traditional vocational training to enter the field.



Josh MacAlister had the idea for Frontline while working with Teach First

MacAlister makes "no apology" that social work is an "academically demanding job". Great social workers, he argues, have "intellectual curiosity at what is going in peoples homes and families." These are the people who are willing and able "to stand up in court and be cross-examined for three hours by barristers and are able to...[communicate] in ways that people can understand."

However, MacAlister emphasises that academic ability alone is not enough to be a great social worker.

The focus on academia has rustled a few feathers in the world of social work, particularly amongst academic experts in the field. A joint report published earlier this year from the University Council Social Work Education Committee and Association of Professors of Social

Work called the programme "narrow" because of its specific focus on child protection. This means that "students know next to nothing about issues such as adoption, fostering, youth offending, mental health, disability and aging."

"The potential for mis-assessing risk and factors impacting on children and families makes this scheme a high risk policy," the report argued.

However MacAlister freely concedes that the reaction to Frontline has been mixed: "There have been people critical of our focus on academic ability, but I can't think of any other profession in the country where its okay to say you do not need the best and brightest. So to the critics of Frontline, I would say you shouldn't settle for anything less than people who have the academic ability and the personal qualities".

He also notes that the main professional bodies in the field, the College of Social Work and the British Association of Social Work have both "cautiously welcomed" Frontline.

Regardless of criticism, Frontline is making a name for itself at recruitment fairs up and down the country. "What we've managed to do...is get social work into the conversation. People are considering it in a way that they might not have done 12 months ago".

A key to Frontline's success has been its influential and cross-party support. Labour Party peer Lord Adonis, who was raised in care, has backed the project from its outset, after meeting MacAlister at an event in 2010. More recently, Education Minister Michael Gove provided start-up funding to launch the programme.

MacAlister is emphatic that Frontline is not a party political organisation: "Frontline is absolutely cross party... We've had enthusiastic endorsement from the lead spokespeople for the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrats.

"The idea with Frontline is actually to build something that last beyond any

6%

Number of children in care who go into higher education

one party being in government."

With this in mind, MacAlister has also established a link with the Civil Service Fast Stream, for Frontline participants who decide they do not want to be involved in direct social work: "What we are saying, is that if people do leave Frontline after the two-year programme, we want them to remain committed to the mission. That's why, for example, we've got a partnership with the civil service fast stream, whereby people who do the two years on Frontline who may want to go into policy afterwards can do so.

"We should have more people in policy and in government making decisions who understand what it is like on the frontline."

Despite this emphasis on experience, MacAlister has never trained as a social worker. He was in his fourth year of teaching after joining Teach First, when his exposure to children in the care system made him start thinking about entering and transforming the field.

However the Teach First experience has stayed with him: "If we can help turn the herd in the way that Teach First has done...I think that [will do] a lot to make Britain a better place to live."

Frontline's mission is "to transform the lives of vulnerable children". It is early days, but many experts and experienced social workers will be watching closely to see how Frontline develops towards this aim. And MacAlister knows it.

Oxbridge ahead with private donations

Olivia Murphy
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

The number of private donations to UK universities is growing faster than in the US, a recent study has found.

Between 2005 and 2012 the amount raised by UK institutions more than doubled, while in the US it grew by less than 40 per cent. In 2012 Harvard and Stanford received 15 per cent of all philanthropic income that went to US private institutions, whereas the figure for Oxbridge in the UK was 45 per cent.

A report by Moody's Investors Service found that half of the £774 million given to UK institutions in

"Half of the £774 million given to UK institutions in 2011 and 2012 was given to Oxbridge"

2011 and 2012 was given to Oxbridge. If this continues it will lead to a very

significant disparity of wealth between Oxford and Cambridge and the rest of the UK's universities.

Much of this wealth has been driven by fundraising campaigns which have resulted in generous donations. For example, in September 2013 the Canadian billionaire John MacBain gave £75 million to Oxford. Cambridge also received £80 million from Lord Sainsbury for the Sainsbury Laboratory and £20 million from finance billionaire David Harding for the Cavendish laboratory as part of its 2005 campaign.

Cambridge has been extremely active in fundraising in the wake of its 800th anniversary campaign, launched in 2005. It was the most ambitious educational fundraising initiative in Europe and aimed to raise at least £1 billion.

The campaign actually raised £1.2 billion with 54,000 alumni contributing at least once to a college and 8,000 contributing at least once to the university.

Currently, amongst other initiatives, Cambridge's fundraising campaign is focusing on increasing the needs-based financial support for undergraduates, helping to fund the Cancer Research UK Cambridge Research Institute and funding an essential £3 million



Cambridge colleges are increasingly dependent on donations

programme to repair and refurbish King's College Chapel. King's launched an appeal in 2011 asking alumni to "step in where the state has stepped out."

Private funding is urgently needed by UK universities as recent changes in government support mean that next year leading universities will receive

around five per cent of their teaching funds and less than 25 per cent of their total income from government grants.

Universities are not state-funded public sector bodies, and although they are given some funding from the government, most are charitable institutions established by statute or royal

charter.

Increased funding will be needed as Oxbridge in particular competes to maintain its position with the top US universities. The Cambridge University Development Office said that "the need for philanthropic funding to sustain Cambridge's position as one of the best universities in the world has never been greater."

It seems that the last 50 years of increased state funding will now change, with a return to a heavy reliance on private funding looming and Oxbridge leading the way.

UK institutions have to find different ways of encouraging donations to their American counterparts as UK universities do not take into account the alma mater of applicants' parents. Many elite US institutions are heavily reliant on family traditions to encourage donations and are expected to give places in return for significant financial donations.

UK universities instead need to use their quality of research and future potential to encourage the kind of significant financial donations that are desperately needed for them to continue to thrive in the coming years.

VARSLTY

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Applications are now open for Varsity's Lent 2014 Editorial Team

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The missing product

Take four positive numbers (not necessarily integers): a, b, c and d. There are six ways to multiply pairs of them, yielding the products ab, ac, ad, bc, bd and cd.

If five of these products are 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, then what's the sixth product?

Hint: You don't need to work out what the actual numbers are but feel free to if you're looking for an additional challenge...

BCG

THE BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP

The Mays #22

Applications are open to edit the 2014 Mays Anthology, the collection of the best student writing and artwork from Cambridge and Oxford.

Interested candidates should email
mays@varsity.co.uk

The Mays, formerly the May Anthologies, are published annually by Varsity. The editor or editors will assemble a committee of students to invite fiction and non-fiction submissions of prose, poetry and drama, as well as illustration and photography. The committee also appoints guest editors from the literary world. The Mays is famous for having launched the career of Zadie Smith and previous guest editors have included Jarvis Cocker, Ted Hughes, Ian Patterson, amongst others.

Cambridge fellow feels the wrath of angry Cambridge pensioner

CAMBRIDGE A Sidney Sussex architecture fellow has encountered the dark side of the city's locals. Susan Currall, 75, was so fed up of cyclists "hurtling" towards her along a dual cycle and pedestrian path in Trumpinton, that she threw a bag of dog faeces over the University don as he passed her on his bike.

Cambridge magistrates ordered Currall to pay £25 to cover Michael Ramage's dry cleaning expenses.

Ramage called the experience "pretty unpleasant" but said that he had no plans to change his normal cycle route. Currall was also fined £100 in costs.

Alastair Campbell named Humanitas Visiting Professor in Media 2013

CAMBRIDGE Alastair Campbell addressed students and members of the public at two lectures this week, as part of his role as this year's Humanitas Visiting Professor in Media. His talks were entitled "Why journalism, and why it matters in a world in flux" and "Journalism and democracy: grounds for optimism in face of the future?"

At the lectures Campbell spoke about his own experiences in the world of media, first as a journalist for the Mirror group and later as Tony Blair's press secretary.

He also had some choice words for some of today's current newspapers, at one point saying: "I feel sorry for people who read the Daily Mail. I just think why don't you just do drugs?"

In his second lecture he covered topics including the Edward Snowden revelations as well as the new plans for press regulation.

Cambridge University Press's finances impress

CAMBRIDGE The Cambridge University Press has reported financial growth having just released its annual report for the 2013 fiscal year.

CUP had sales of £261.7 million with digital sales being heralded as a significant factor in the successful financial showing.

The CUP's report has been released just a month after damaging allegations from the campaign group Jhatkaa.org.

It argued that the CUP's joint lawsuit with Oxford University Press against Delhi University for copyright infringement will wreak havoc on the education of millions of Indian students who rely on photocopies for the educational resources they need.

When baked goods and Primark collide

CAMBRIDGE A Kingsmill delivery truck collided with a Primark shop canopy when turning onto Burleigh Street, leading to something of a cheap clothes sandwich.

The 20ft vehicle was eventually untangled by having its tyres deflated and being manoeuvred out. The shop front was left visibly damaged. Business continued as usual as shoppers were directed through a side entrance.

Felicity Price told the BBC: "People were saying the driver was trying to get to Sainsbury's, but that certainly isn't the right way to go about it."

Let's talk about Welfare

As the variability of students' experiences of the Cambridge welfare system is revealed, *Varsity* talks to JCR welfare officers about provisions for mental illnesses



A mental health street walk that took place in Cambridge

Martha Elwell
NEWS EDITOR

Speaking to *Varsity* this week, CUSU welfare officer Helen Hoogewerf-McComb revealed some early findings from the 'Students Deserve Better' survey. The survey, which received over one thousand respondents, aimed to collect students' views on the college welfare system in Cambridge.

Hoogewerf-McComb said: "The 'Students Deserve Better' survey highlighted the variability of service provided by college tutors. While many students reported receiving excellent support, some felt let down by their experiences."

The college-based system of welfare provision means that the responsibility for pastoral care lies predominantly

with the thirty-one individual colleges. Although there are many similarities between the various colleges' structures for welfare provision, the colleges ultimately decide on the personnel and training required of their pastoral staff.

For those with mental illness this often translates into massive disparity between students' experiences of the help they receive.

Rachel Stoplar, a welfare officer for Christ's College, said that the virtues of welfare provision in Cambridge "are underplayed." She added: "I would encourage some credit to go to the individual tutors and counsellors who work so hard to help people in this tough environment."

But many point to problems with the system. One JCR welfare officer who wished to remain anonymous said that

he does not think the college welfare system provides enough help for students suffering from a mental illness.

He pointed to deficiencies in training: "Tutors should be selected, have contracts, and have to attend training, including training giving them information on active listening and raising awareness of how to treat mental health problems and the services available."

Eddie Reynolds, men's welfare officer at Trinity, said: "I am not sure what, if any, welfare training the tutors get. Chaplains receive nothing directly from the college, but generally come having had basic listening and counselling skills training."

"The tutors have access to official on-

"While many students reported receiving excellent support, some felt let down by their experiences"

line guidelines as to how to act in certain situations - such as in the event of the death of a student - but from my personal experience they tend to report issues that are brought to them to [...] somebody more capable of dealing with the particular problem."

Hoogewerf-McComb added that there is "a need for improvement to reduce the risk of things going wrong, but also to improve confidence in a system which has such potential to help."

"Few universities can boast the

number of pastoral staff that Cambridge has, or the level of direct contact these staff have with their students."

Some suggest that the problem is not so much with the quality and quantity of help available, but rather a lack of awareness about the available support.

Robin Osborne, Senior Tutor at King's College, said: "The main issue as I see it is not getting appropriate help for those who recognise that they have a problem, it is getting people to recognise the problem and nature of the problem in the first place."

There is still a stigma attached to mental illness, which might prohibit students from seeking help.

Samantha Brown, the women's welfare officer at Girton, said, "There is definitely still a stigma towards mental illness, particularly with the male student population. I am aware of some male students who have kept their situations regarding mental health pretty quiet, in the sense that they don't want anything on their record."

"Our college nurses, however, are fully trained in sexual and mental health... and would probably be the best people to see if suffering from mental health [issues]. It's just that often most people aren't aware of what they can offer."

What is clear is the complexity of identifying deficiencies in a system that varies so markedly between thirty-one institutions. It is hard to know where to begin to enact change, but - as the work of CUSU and organisations like Cambridge Speaks Its Mind show - a start has been made.

Mary Harvey talks about her experience of dealing with mental illness in Cambridge, and what she thinks of the current welfare system

After experiencing a series of unprovoked functional neurological attacks in Easter term last year, I encountered both the adequacies and inadequacies of the welfare system in the University as a whole, and also at a college level.

The in-college tutorial system provided some immediate relief after first being hospitalised, particularly in regard to relieving pressures on academic deadlines. As my condition deteriorated and hospitalisations began to increase, my college tutor became more immediately involved: visiting in hospital and preparing for the eventuality of not taking exams.

However, for an extended period of time there were miscommunications between different areas of the University and college system. While the tutorial system was aware of the situation at hand, many out-of-college supervisors had not been fully informed and continued to set essays and send supervision reports.

While this may seem a mundane and easily-fixed problem, I strongly believe that there should be a system in place which allows for tutors to contact a student's supervisors to relieve the pressure on the student in cases of acute mental or physical illness.

As I fell ill during Easter term, my tutor filed an application for a DDH (Deemed to have Deserved Honours) which meant I would not have to sit any of my exams. My tutor seemed

somewhat unaware of the process which had to be undertaken, meaning I was often told at the last minute that they needed a certain form signed, a GP letter or a letter from the consultant.

While this paperwork is necessary to take to the University Council, the process of attaining it overlooks the welfare of the student. I found I was left unsure of the situation and received ambiguous answers when I asked my tutor about the application. It was not actually confirmed until two weeks before the start of Michaelmas that I had been granted the exemption from exams.

It soon became evident, however, that while my college tutor was able to correct paperwork, he was thoroughly underprepared to deal with both the physical and psychological fallout associated with a serious illness and extended hospital stay.

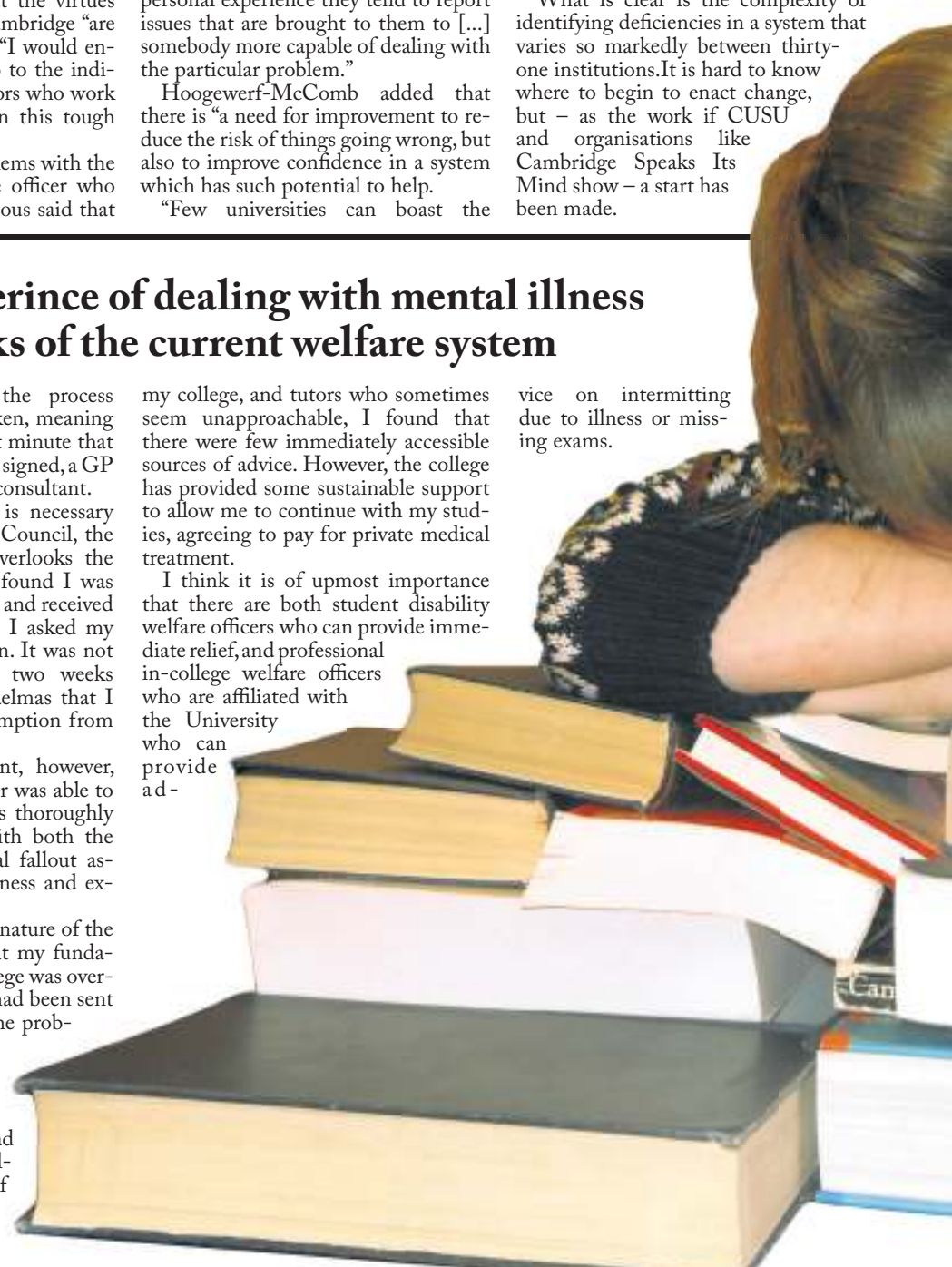
The overly bureaucratic nature of the tutorial system meant that my fundamental welfare within college was overlooked. If the paperwork had been sent off, it was assumed that the problem had been solved.

While it is true that there are welfare provisions in college such as the college nurse and counsellor, the accessibility and professionalism of these provisions are questionable. With no disability welfare officer in

my college, and tutors who sometimes seem unapproachable, I found that there were few immediately accessible sources of advice. However, the college has provided some sustainable support to allow me to continue with my studies, agreeing to pay for private medical treatment.

I think it is of upmost importance that there are both student disability welfare officers who can provide immediate relief, and professional in-college welfare officers who are affiliated with the University who can provide ad-

vice on intermitting due to illness or missing exams.



Cambridge is speaking its mind

Martha Elwell talks to the founder of the Facebook group that is hoping to raise awareness of the systemic welfare problems many students face in the University

Borrowing the format of the hugely successful Everyday Sexism Project, Cambridge Speaks Its Mind is a “new information sharing project,” that publishes the testimonies of students about their experiences of the University welfare system.

The project was born out of various discussions with students and alumni. The founder of the group tells me: “What we were struck by was that we all came from different colleges and very different courses, but there was quite a lot of common experience – mostly seeming to be around ignorance or in some cases what you can only really call malice on the part of welfare providers in colleges.”

The purpose of setting up the website was to find out how widespread the problems with welfare provision in Cambridge were and also to give people a place to discuss their experiences in an anonymous and safe way without fear of criticism from their colleges.

He tells me: “The feedback we’ve gotten from students has been phenomenal. It’s been quite harrowing reading some of their testimonies. But a lot of people have said that they feel it’s great that they have that space to talk about some of the issues.”

Through the project he has come to see the actions of some of those involved in substandard welfare provision in colleges as “a strange intersection between ignorance and malice.”

He tells me: “Mostly the problem seems to be ignorance.

But in some cases you find yourself reading the testimonies and tearing your hair out, thinking how do these people exist?”

Cambridge Speaks Its Mind has now been sent just under one hundred testimonies. The founder says that several noticeable patterns have emerged: “If I were to identify a repeat issue it would be a lack of understanding of mental health, and just very different approaches to intermission/degrading.”

In cases of intermission “it doesn’t seem like there’s any kind of consistency. We’ve had people who have had support and have actually been alright; others have effectively been booted out of their college and received some quite horrendous treatment.”

He says that the number of testimonies relating to rape or sexual assault has surprised him: “I’m aware that there’s a higher rate of sexual assault amongst student populations than amongst other sections of the population. But it seems that it’s a much bigger problem than Cambridge is willing to admit to.”

The most troubling of the testimonies he has read so far was from a victim of sexual assault: “The student had gone to seek support from their tutor and they’d been told that ‘boys will be boys.’”

He tells me: “We have noticed that there are certain colleges where there seem to be quite systemic problems.” Editors of the page are able to see students’ colleges when testimonies are sent in, but these are not published for reasons of confidentiality. The group is currently deciding what to do with this information.”

The long-term hope for the project is that it will raise awareness about the deficiencies in welfare provision, pushing JCRs and MCRs to call for real lasting change.

He argues that the collegiate system has often proved an obstacle: “It’s thirty-one little battles that need to go



The group’s logo is modelled on a 2005 Franz Ferdinand album cover

on rather than one big one.” And any change implemented at the University-wide level needs to trickle down to the colleges before students feel its benefits.

He also believes that limited resources have stunted CUSU’s extensive efforts: “CUSU is chronically underfunded and it can only do so much with the little resources it has. It’s the most poorly funded students’ union in the Russell Group.”

For the founder of Cambridge Speaks Its Mind, the biggest driver of change will be expanded awareness.

“People just aren’t aware of the problems,” he says.

“If people aren’t aware of the problems, they won’t do anything about them. Look what’s happened recently with the college investments: before, most people were vaguely aware that Cambridge colleges invested in some dodgy stuff.”

“Now there’s been all of this recent work and excellent journalism exposing that people are quite pissed off about it. They’re pushing their colleges for change. If that was happening with welfare that would be great.”

Exploring Grey Matters

Josh Simons discusses a new production that hopes to tackle the stigma that surrounds mental illness

You may feel it’s one of those things experienced by others, but never people you know. Or you may have watched a close friend battle with one, but never quite got it. You might have been told you have one, but despised the label. You may even feel ‘mental illnesses’ are handed out too easily to those who just feel sad. All these are perspectives Ifey – my co-director – and I have heard as part of our project

entitled *Grey Matters*.

Like so many neglected subjects, the vocabulary used in the discourse around mental health is woefully inadequate: ‘he feels down today’, ‘she’s gone a bit nuts’, ‘I reckon he should see someone’. Frustration with these euphemisms and with the surface level conversation that takes place around mental health was what gave birth to *Grey Matters*.

We began by listening to others directly involved. Every person directly or indirectly involved with mental illness has a very different story to tell: they see things, feel things, and express things in very different ways. This is not surprising – to understand any human being, you have to try to enter and understand their mind.

The emotions expressed in the interviews were so varied; we had to come up with a form of presentation that allowed the audience to see the world through all these lenses.

And these are our lenses: every audience member will see six rooms, each based on a separate idea and interview. One will be a short piece of drama, another bustling to the brim with art installations and another piece

of verbatim.

Why did we do it this way? Suppose you’ve acquired yourself a new crystal ball. If you stand in one place and look into the ball, you get one way of interpreting things. If you walk round to the side a bit, you see something quite different, but related. If you did this six times, from six different angles, you’d understand things better than you ever could by standing in one spot. This is our aim in *Grey Matters*.

By now your eyes may well have glazed over. It is never easy to read about mental health. But *Grey Matters* will not let you flounder: you will be immersed in six different worlds.

You will not be bombarded by statistics, you will not be forced to think anything, but you will not leave without having heard the truth and complexity of six different stories.

You will not sleepwalk through *Grey Matters*. We hope though, that it does something more: starts a conversation.

Grey Matters will be performed in Week 6 Lent Term. In the meantime, if you would like to submit artwork as part of the project, please email md585

November is once again embraced by Cam men

CAMBRIDGE Cambridge students and residents alike are once again throwing themselves fully into raising money through Movember.

The Tally Ho pub in Cambridge has renamed itself Tally Mo to encourage participation in the event. An enormous moustache sign now hangs proudly above the pub’s sign.

Amanda Langley, the manager of the Tally Mo, told *Cambridge News*: “The guys don’t know anyone affected by prostate or testicular cancer but at the pub we always try and do our bit for charity.”

“Everyone who has been in really loves it. They think it’s fantastic and looks good as well.”

Bar staff at the pub will donate their tips from November to the cause.

Cambridge man dies after accidentally consuming crystal meth

CAMBRIDGE Romano Dias, 55, died after drinking what he believed to be a fruit-based drink. The bottle in fact contained liquid crystal meth, a drug rarely found in the UK.

The bottle was given to him by his daughter, who found the wrongly addressed package on her doorstep three years ago. She held onto the package for six months in the hope that it would be collected, and then eventually gave the ‘drink’ to her father.

The coroner of the case recorded a verdict of ‘accidental death’. Any packaging had long been destroyed, making the senders of the package nearly impossible to track down.

University Arms revamp finally given the go ahead

CAMBRIDGE The University Arms Hotel, a venue frequently used by Cambridge societies for events, has finally been given approval for a massive revamp of its building. The multimillion-pound development means that the much maligned 1960s facade of the hotel will give way to a neo-classical style more in line with the rest of the town centre. The architect of the project, John Simpson, told *Cambridge News*: “The University Arms deserves to be seen as it once was – the oldest and best hotel in this city of global prestige and heritage. Our plans will restore that leading reputation.” The building work and increased capacity to the hotel will create around 100 jobs as well as adding 71 rooms to the capacity of the hotel, making it one of the largest hotels in the city and likely increasing its popularity for events.

Cambridge Research team find pin codes insecure

CAMBRIDGE A team of scientists at the University have discovered that the pin code for a soft touch smart phone can be cracked using the phone’s own camera and microphone.

The team used a program to assess users’ faces as they typed in their pin codes. Both the Google Nexus-S and the Samsung Galaxy were tested.

The program had a 50 per cent success rate after five attempts for 4-number pin codes whilst 8-number pin codes had a 60 per cent success rate after 10 attempts.

Suggested solutions that were offered to better secure your phone included a randomised number set.

Former terrorist seeks parliamentary seat

Hannah Wilkinson and Louis Degenhardt talk to Maajid Nawaz, a former terrorist recruiter who spent four years in prison in Egypt, before dedicating his life to tackling extremism around the world

Forget Russell Brand and his shaggy-haired revolutionary ramblings. If you want to know about political disaffection, talk to director of the Quilliam Foundation, Maajid Nawaz.

"I've been there and I've done that, and I took it a lot more seriously than he does," says the reformed extremist. "I actually recruited army officers, I attempted to overthrow governments and was imprisoned for it."

Before becoming the director of a counter-extremism think tank and a Liberal Democrat parliamentary candidate, Nawaz was an international recruiter for Islamist revolutionary group Hizb ut-Tahrir.

Rather than duelling in a comfy television studio with Jeremy Paxman, the young Nawaz took his revolutionary rhetoric to Denmark and Pakistan and finally to Egypt, where he was incarcerated as a political prisoner for nearly five years by the Mubarak regime.

Nawaz is all too familiar with the

minority" claiming a monopoly on public morality. Both organisations seek to challenge extremist thought, and he sees initiating this debate as a first step to addressing the problem.

Nawaz hopes to represent these same causes as Liberal Democrat MP for Hampstead and Kilburn come 2015, should his campaign be successful. "I joined the Lib Dems...because of its civil liberties track record; it was the only party that opposed the Iraq war. It values human rights and a respect for individual liberty."

He talks about the need for Britain to "heal," and sees his act of standing as part of the reconciliation process. He would be the first parliamentarian to speak fluent Arabic, and is the first self-described former Islamist to stand for parliament in any Western democracy.

Whilst locked up in Egypt, Nawaz's case was picked up by Amnesty International who adopted him as a prisoner of conscience, so he acknowledges the argument that human rights doctrine might amount to more than Western neo-colonialism.

During his five year ordeal, Nawaz continued exploring his faith under Islamic scholars also imprisoned by Mubarak. His studies led him to divorce the extreme, politicised Islam with which he had been indoctrinated from a more personal religion, which allows Muslims not only to live with faith at the centre of their life, but also to reclaim notions of democracy, pluralism and human rights.

These may be values central to Nawaz's ideology, but are also, he claims, values perfectly natural to Islam.

"What we're attempting to do is to get Muslims to re-interpret not the ir-religion but their relationship with the religion, to say that you don't have to go for it for every single thing." He urges Islamic scholars and liberals not to fear coming across as 'preachy': "it needs to become taboo to say bigoted Islamist things."

"I actually recruited army officers, I attempted to overthrow governments and was imprisoned for it"

mindset of the disaffected youth. He now values democracy as a system of government and worries that the Brand-esque approach to politics will have greater consequences than the comedian imagines. "When you disengage from a democracy, in the Islamist context, it leads to Islamist extremism, in the non-Muslim context it leads to fascism," he warns.

Nawaz founded the Quilliam Foundation in the UK and Khudi in Pakistan – a grassroots movement set up to challenge that extremist "organised



Maajid Nawaz: "We're trying to de-politicise democratic advocacy"

"We're trying to de-politicise democratic advocacy. Detach it from the West. So that whole answer about how it's not inconsistent with Muslim tradition to call for pluralism, and to call for separation of church and state, rather, that is the tradition, to re-claim those ideas."

In the same vein, he is pleased that his recent assistance helping Tommy Robinson leave the English Defence League (EDL) has hampered the effectiveness of the far-right's anti-democratic, mob mentality. He even half-jokes at one point in his speech that "there'd be a place for Tommy Robinson in the Conservative Party" – at least then there would be room for dialogue.

It is discussion that he sees as vital for society. An idea, he argues, cannot be defeated through assassinating individuals or banning organisations, but only through addressing it directly.

Despite receiving death threats from Hizb ut-Tahrir, Nawaz has been one of the most passionate defenders of its right to exist. That's why he is going around the country with Tommy Robinson speaking to Muslim and EDL groups, in an attempt to find some common ground.

It's not difficult to see how Nawaz might have been a successful recruiter for Hizb ut-Tahrir. Cool and charismatic, if Nawaz had made the Liberal Democrat's public apology for tuition fees, students might have accepted it.

Nawaz refuses to compromise on his principles. He has been critical of both right and left, arguing that while the right-wing "democracy at the barrel of a gun approach" is dangerous, the left have refused to acknowledge the complex roots of Islamic extremism, denying that "there are people out there who use the ideology cynically."

Not afraid of picking battles, Nawaz has criticised elements of the press for fundamentally agreeing with the EDL, but also sees Unite Against Fascism as part of the problem. He claims that anti-fascist campaigners revel in their conflict with the EDL and depend on its survival to justify their activism.

Going forward, Nawaz will need all the charisma he can muster.

Rich still dominate university

Chloe Clifford-Astbury
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Last month a conference was held at the London School of Economics to mark the 50th anniversary of the Robbins report. The report was commissioned by the British Conservative government in 1961 and published two years later.

It included recommendations that would increase the number of students involved in higher education, and argued that "increased attention should be given to the problems of introducing young men and women from families with scanty educational background to the atmosphere of higher education".

As a result of reforms and expansion implemented following the report's publication, the number of full-time university students rose from 197,000 in 1967 to 217,000 in 1973.

However Anna Vignoles, Professor of Education at the University of Cambridge, argued that, though the

number of poorer students in higher education has increased over the past 50 years, it has not had the levelling effect on British society that had been expected by the Robbins report.

Vignoles also pointed out that, though the number of university students with backgrounds in manual occupations has been increasing steadily for decades, the number of students from families with a long-established tradition of attending university is also on the rise, and as a result poorer students continue to be under-represented. Family background, argued Vignoles, is still the key determinant of educational achievement.

She cited a 2013 paper published by the Royal Statistical Society on the participation of state school students in Higher Education. More than half of students in the least deprived group enter university upon finishing A-levels, but less than a fifth of students from the most deprived backgrounds participate in higher education.

One area in which there has been



Students from poorer backgrounds remain under-represented at university

an improvement has been the participation of women in higher education. At the time the report was published, only five per cent of Britons went to university, and less than a quarter were women.

Nowadays, over half of students in higher education are female and nearly 50 per cent of all students stay in some kind of education after the age of 18.

The Robbins report saw higher education as a means of achieving social

mobility, but Vignoles argued that this has proven to be false. She also noted that the gap in achievement emerges much earlier – tackling the widening gap in higher education participation would require investment in education at a younger age.

The Robbins report also made a specific call for a "greater equality of opportunity to enter Oxford and Cambridge." The Royal Statistical Society has studied the participation of state school students in "high status" universities. Just under a quarter of students from the least deprived quintile attend Oxbridge compared to around three per cent from the most deprived backgrounds.

Last May, the University of Cambridge announced that the number of private school students claiming places at the University was at a 30-year low, with around a third of students being independently educated.

The University related this to reforms made in an attempt to recruit more pupils from under-represented groups.

Let me be your supernova (baby)

Toby McMaster
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

The famous Hubble Space Telescope has captured the images of two supernovae, the second event in the same galaxy in as many years.

Stars are powered by nuclear fusion of small atoms to produce larger ones, releasing large amounts of energy. When a star can no longer carry out nuclear fusion, it 'dies'. Supernovae are gigantic stellar explosions which can be produced in one of two ways: the 'reigniting' of an old star which restarts nuclear fusion, or the death and collapse of a massive star.

Both of the two supernovae observed by Hubble are of the latter type, having been produced by giant stars which lost their outer layers of hydrogen and collapsed in on themselves.

The snappily named SN 2012im and SN 2013ek both occurred in the equally catchy NGC 6984 galaxy. This was a surprise, and some scientists have reasoned that the 2013 supernova was merely a repeated flare up of that spotted in 2012.

However it has since been confirmed that the two were separate events, something incredibly unlikely if they were entirely independent. Our own

galaxy, the Milky Way, has not played host to a single supernova for around 140 years. Scientists now believe the two supernovae in NGC 6984 are likely to be related to each other in some unknown way.

Supernovae are both the universe's most destructive and creative phenomena, reaching around one hundred billion degrees and producing a shockwave travelling at ten per cent of the speed of light, forcing nearby gas molecules together.

These molecules can then begin to coalesce via nuclear fusion and thereby create a new star. There is a certain beauty in this cosmic symmetry

Not only can supernovae grant life to new stars, but the human race itself, and indeed all life on Earth, is also a product of these stellar explosions. It takes the truly incredible temperatures generated inside of massive stars to create elements such as iron, which are flung across the universe when the star dies. It is these elements which make up the core of our planet. Without supernovae, we wouldn't have a home.

All in all, if you're a star reaching the end of the road, creating a few more of your own kind and knocking together some planets as a bonus isn't such a bad way to go.



The last supernova in the Milky Way was around 140 years ago



Fact OR Fiction?

Ciara Loughrey

People have always been interested in time travel, from ancient myths to the new series of *Doctor Who*. Whilst the model used in much of science fiction (the huge machine beeping and whirring us back to the stone-age) is not realistic, physics suggests that time travel of a certain kind may be possible.

According to Einstein's theory of General Relativity, we can jump forwards in time simply by travelling close to the speed of light. If someone could attain a high enough speed then they would leap hundreds of years into the future, whilst only travelling for a short time. Alas, rockets capable of such speeds do not currently exist, but you can experience time travel on a minute scale simply by climbing a tall building. As you are further from a source of gravity, time will run slightly faster at the top than the bottom.

It is said that looking to the stars is like looking back in time, but going into the past is a more controversial topic than to-the-future time travel. Wormholes offer the most promise. These would act as tunnels through space, allowing us to enter in one time and emerge at an earlier one.

Unfortunately there is no evidence that these structures actually exist, and even if they did, they would be unlikely to be large enough to allow a human traveller through. Nonetheless, it is exciting to know that physical theories allow for the prospect of time travel.

Student project aims to plant new seeds



Planet looks at the way that plant science may help solve our food crisis

Nick Dinan
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

Plants are not a niche subject of scientific enquiry. However, having been integral to human society from the dawn of civilisation, it's easy to take them for granted. Given the challenges we face today - food scarcity, overpopulation, resource distribution, amongst others - perhaps we should pay more attention.

The solutions to all these problems potentially lie in the manipulation of plant life. This will not be news to most Cambridge students, although it is unfortunate that many controversialists outside academia - often holding uninformed opinions - are attempting to block scientific progress in this field.

'Planet' is a new, student-run platform for the discussion of the role of plants in society. It hopes to look at the reverberations of past and current agricultural events, as well as the trajectories they may follow in the future. Consider

the following themes: the impact of agriculture on women and states; how plants shape tribal society and culture; the implications of new biological discoveries on us as human beings; and the hypothetical risks of uncontrollable crop disease.

Planet is not just a megaphone for scientists, nor does it aim to serve as a conduit for environmental and genetic propaganda. It's a project aimed at delivering both opinion and fact in order to help students form and express their views. Do you think that there is a future without genetic modification? What is your ethical standpoint and where do you draw the line?

Together with student perspectives, Planet wants to draw attention to the urgent character of modern research into plant science. It believes that everyone has a responsibility to inform themselves about how our kind plans to sustain itself.

cambridgeplanet.wordpress.com

Think technology, think progress. As time moves forwards, tech gets better: faster, smaller, safer, or simply more beautiful. Rarely do we see devolution, because it seldom makes sense.

Concorde, however, is a curious example where we seem to have gone backwards. Ten years ago last month she flew her final transatlantic flight, a journey that drew the curtains on the supersonic era of air travel.

Concorde was, and still is, way ahead of its time. It took almost two decades to go from conception to her maiden commercial voyage in 1976, but those years brought a revolution in engineering and aeronautical science. It cruised through the stratosphere at twice the speed of sound. Despite being a commercial airliner, it could fly quicker than a B-2 Bomber.

The idea of flying from New York to London in a mere three and a half hours,

became a design icon of the 20th century. Its futuristic streamlined wings and quirky droop nose are classic examples of form and function combining harmoniously. A recent public poll run by the Design Museum in London resulted in Concorde being named Britain's favourite design icon, beating other quintessential British designs such as the Mini and the London Underground map.

At just under £4,000 for a one-way trip, few could actually afford the luxury of Mach 2. But for British Airways, Concorde was profitable for most of its 27-year operational history, generating about £30m profit a year.

However, at the start of the new millennium the public's mood changed. On 25th July 2000, Concorde suffered its first and only accident. Shortly after takeoff, Air France Flight 4590 from Paris

final blow, and in 2003, it ceased service.

Concorde was too risky. It's understandable that it came to an end. Nevertheless, it's hard to ignore the fact that its retirement feels like a regression. And, on a grander scale, Concorde was an embodiment of the technological zeitgeist of the mid-20th century. It was from an era that seemed more forward looking than we are today: lunar exploration, another thing of the past, was also in its prime. Concorde was costly and fraught with risk, but its creators envisioned a world where the impossible was achievable. It was the natural heir to pioneers like the Wright Brothers and Charles Lindbergh, and today's landscape looks

In defence of... Concorde

Thomas Evans

arriving before you took off, might now again seem like something lifted from a utopian sci-fi novel by H. G. Wells; it both baffles and saddens me slightly to think that this was once true.

Not only was it a marvel of engineering, but it also

caught fire and crashed into a hotel near the airport. All 100 passengers and cabin crew died.

The tragedy was the beginning of the end. The post-9/11 slump in air travel was the

shamefully bleak, polluted with "no-frills" airlines that are the antithesis of what air travel used to be.

Concorde was the apogee of commercial aeronautical technology, and its loss is a symptom of a society no longer striving to do the impossible.



Comment

Our student debt is not for sale

The government is reneging on its social and economic responsibility by selling off students' debts



Marianne Brooker

Unless we do something clever, creative and massive enough to change their minds, in 2015 the government will sell off all undergraduate student loan debt signed up for between 1998 and 2012. Conspicuously dubbed 'Project Hero', the plan was concocted by the Rothschild Group (yes, those key, knowledgeable stakeholders in higher education).

Rothschild's report, quietly commissioned by the government, was commendable in its thoroughness, going so far as to provide ministers with a script they might use when selling the sale to students. "Your sister pays nine grand a year, so you are positively lucky to only face worsening terms. Thank us later,"

they suggest.

Last week, as part of a wave of local and national 5th of November protests, Cambridge Defend Education held a demonstration on King's Parade, playing a game of 'Stuck in the Debt' with passers-by and holding a 'Debt-In'. But things can't end there. Student politics has been stuck in a trough since the many actions and occupations in 2010 failed to stop the government in its fee-raising tracks.

In the loan sell-off we find an important rallying point for student activism, something we might materially be able to stop, something that should provoke wide ranging and meaningful discussion about what it is we want our universities to be for and how our relationship with them should be structured.

Debt is an abstract and difficult thing to contend with, especially when we spend so much of our energy trying not to think about it. It's the great deferral of our time: sign now, get now, struggle later. Coalition rhetoric's safe house is "the mess left by our predecessors", the naivety of persistent borrowing. Yet for most students, this is the only means by which we can access higher education. We sign up, or we lose out: but now we seem to be pushed into both.

The sale of loan agreements to a private, unaccountable (add to that, possibly and probably irrelevant and uncaring) corporation could lead to a hike in interest rates, faster rates of repayment and a drop in the minimum

"Right now, if I leave university and don't find a good job then I don't start repaying my loan, so there's a financial imperative for the government to invest in graduate work."

salary threshold. Willetts has assured the NUS that he will mitigate against such side effects, but haven't we heard similar promises before? Are we going to fall for false consolations again?

Alex Hern of the *New Statesman* asserts that the move is "politically driven economic illiteracy." And he's right. This is a profoundly ideological step, and part of a much deeper marketisation agenda. Laying aside the contentious issue of shifting the HE funding

burden onto students who increasingly get far less contact time and see far more departments close, it is difficult to see financial sense here. Right now, when we repay loans, the interest goes back into the public purse; soon it will benefit the new landlords of our education. They could be anyone, they could do anything with our money.

They will buy the debt outright for a much smaller amount of money than the government would receive in the long term. Add to that Willetts's 'sweetener', the proposed 'synthetic hedge'. This allows the government to reappropriate more public money: 'Dear Big Business, please keep interest rates low for those pesky students; here's a big bag of money to make you feel better about that. Yours, The Government.'

This is a simple case of a government reneging on its social and economic responsibility. Where next? Right now, if I leave university and don't find a good job then I don't start repaying my loan, so there's a financial imperative for the government to invest in graduate work. In a jobs crisis, after selling off my debt, the government has even less impetus to help me find work. Am I to rely on a market that values my arts degree? On a government who might invest simply because it's the right

thing to do? No, I didn't think so.

As with the sale of Royal Mail, we hear that in 'times like these' we shouldn't be 'compulsively hoarding' public services. A claim which misunderstands the relationship between public good and public services.

These institutions are tools we create to help ourselves, they are ours. It is fiscal idiocy to sell the loan book, even if it does bag the desired ten billion. But more than that, it is dangerously placing aspects of our society we depend on most for progress in the hands of those whose prime concern is profit.

In the age of austerity the idea that profit might come before people seems an idealistic cliché. We've seen the banner, we've heard the chants, now go back to work. But it is absolutely central that we don't lose sight of this priority. Education is for people, for learning, not for Rothschild.

We need a national body that represents student interests effectively. We need a discussion that unites the sale of student debt with a housing crisis, a removal of access to state funded lawyers, the need for patients to pay for medicine the NHS deems too expensive.

Enough is enough. The sale calls for imminent, intelligent, inclusive mobilisation.

No interest in Islamic Finance?

Sukuk bonds sound like a more moral way of banking – but it's a rhetorical sham



Aliya Ram

The antagonism between the theory and practice of Islamic finance will lead to the disinterest of the West. How could a financial system regress to a set of principles whose modern manifestations are a complete farce? Take sukuk bonds, for example, which have been in the news ever since David Cameron announced in October that the UK was going to issue £200 million worth.

Sukuk bonds enable investors to borrow against their future income by buying an asset from an investor and then renting it to them for a pre-determined price and on the condition that they (the issuer) will later buy it back. The issuer still gets interest but the interest has been refigured as profit: loans have been disguised as the more rustic 'exchange of goods'.

A sentimental comment about sukuk bonds in the Arab News exposes the logical fallacy: "money ceases to be a commodity in itself and used as it ought to be – only as a medium". But we have to ask author of the piece

Alsir Sidhamed what, if not money, is being mediated when the purpose of a transaction is to give someone money they don't have. And is it really more moral if just anyone can do it that way?

The real absurdity of the sukuk charade lies in how public the sham is. Even many of the most devout Muslims do not practice Islamic finance because they can see that the project is more about hammy rhetoric than actual financial practice.

"Even the most devout Muslims can see that the project is about hammy rhetoric rather than financial practice"

The discussions about Islamic banking happen in negative terms: the debate, in the East at least, is precisely about rejecting the ways of the West. London will of course always cater to the preferences of investors with money, but it's impossible that Islamic finance will become still more institutionalised than that.

For one, there's no coherent moral landscape in the UK – and although there isn't in a country like Saudi Arabia either, the UK actively encourages polyphony and secular politics, rendering impossible the homogeneity

of a moralising financial industry.

The UK has lived that period of history already, and given our teleological conceptualisation of progress, it would be far too regressive to go back. No, if there's going to be a reaction to what has happened in the last five years, it will be in pursuit of a present we have never seen and that is as yet an ideal.

Cameron's £200 million sukuk issue is really just a token gesture. That Islamic banks are doing well is not indicative of anything significant. They are doing well because they are behaving just like normal banks, but are trading in an environment that is less financially toxic than that in Britain.

Much of the conversation about Islamic banking can be put down to the nationalistic politics that always follow a bad recession.

People reject individuation because it was alone that they suffered – and the charging of interest is saturated with the language of individuation. 'Interest' itself invites us to think about loans as the manifestation of a set of interests or advantages; 'usury', from the Latin word usura, essentially means to use, or exploit.

It would be too tragic to deal with the possibility that we are ourselves individuers, and so we project them onto the monstrous 'other': Jews, bankers, "capitalism" – as though capitalism isn't what happens each time our present self puts its own joy over the joy of our future self by spending into

an overdraft.

British governments encourage the construction of this 'other' because it disguises their own partiality, or interests, and allows them to adopt passive neoliberal attitudes to financial questions.

But British banks will never restructure along Islamic lines. For one thing, Islamic finance also relies on the visible presence of a failing 'other'. This is, currently, us: "some scholars argue that sukuk could be considered as one of the tools that should help in addressing some of the woes inflicted on capitalist societies as clearly exemplified in what happened to Greece, Spain, Ireland and to some extent Italy," writes Sidhamed.

More importantly, adopting Islamic finance would have enormous implications for the UK's global allegiances. We would alienate the US and no doubt lose all our major American financiers. We wouldn't be able to justify the loss because we would still be doing the same kinds of banking, but now with more – and more unknown – procedural bureaucracies.

The failure of Islamic banks to delimit capitalism under transcendent Shari'ah values reveals an unpleasant truth about the Darwinism that structures our exchange relations.

The British financial sector will continue to change in the aftermath of the long recession, but the changes will involve reconstituting what we already have.



Stockwell Says

RICHARD STOCKWELL

£27,000 is an enormous sum to be lumping young graduates with. In most cases, it will stay with them until the remainder is finally written off thirty years later. The majority political opinion in favour of trebled fees is not doing great things for intergenerational justice.

But at least repayment is postponed to the distant future where you are working and earning £21,000 a year. When tuition fees were in the news, one of my supervisors dismissed everybody's outrage with the challenge that "if you really love this subject, you'll never have to worry about paying it back."

Concerns over living costs during your course are not postponed in nearly the same way. For many students, there is insufficient support available. Things are fine for those from very wealthy backgrounds, so long as they are not too far estranged from their parents. Things are also fine for those from low income households who are entitled to a maintenance grant and a Cambridge bursary (the generosity of which is matched at most other universities). Maxing out your student loan as well, and you have about £10,000 a year to live on.

Things are not fine for those in the middle. The maintenance grant tapers away to cease completely at a household income of just over £40,000. The Student Finance England handbook for this academic year lists the maintenance loan as "up to £5,500." But this tapers away to £3,575 above a household income of £62,500. The handbook offers some advice on what your maintenance loan is for: "help with your living costs (for example, food, books, travel and other expenses) while you're studying." It fails to mention accommodation, despite that being the biggest cost. My sense of humour isn't dark enough to find that funny.

This leaves many students with a substantial shortfall. Cambridge University estimates, based on a thirty week academic year, that Cambridge students will incur living costs of £7,850 per year. (The caption adds, with wonderful Cantabrigian succinctness, the rider that "this will depend on your lifestyle.") The University dictates that the difference cannot be made up by term-time employment – and rightly so, if you are to stand any chance of keeping up.

That leaves family. The student finance system expects moderately well-off families to support their children through university. The disregard for particular family circumstances is alarming. The financial support your parents can afford will be completely different if you are one of four children of a family living in London, compared with if you are an only child living in the north. Despite efforts to ensure that nobody is debarred from a university education due to background, this may be happening – just not in the income brackets people would at first suspect.

The City: a four-letter word?

The time has come for us to rethink our bitter feelings towards financial workers



Sam Matthews

The City is a dirty word in Cambridge. Those who apply to the financial services industry fill out their application forms surreptitiously. Those who have been accepted talk self-deprecatingly of a few years of making money before doing something "worthwhile."

This depiction is damaging and self-perpetuating. It not only denies the good work that has been achieved in the finance sector in the wake of the financial crisis, but it undermines badly-needed further reform. It puts off those graduates most able and most needed by the sector to provide a change in direction.

The reputation of the financial services industry has taken a deserved battering in the media. The culpability of the financial institutions in exacerbating the crisis through irresponsible lending, the excesses of a bonus culture and the arrogance and unrepentance of many bankers have come at a time of falling incomes, and increasing

concerns over social mobility.

However, much has changed in five years, and to equate the worst excesses of the financial crisis with many of today's junior bankers is a false parallel.

I spent a spring week at a major investment bank and the idea that money comes easily is a myth. While salaries are high, they are more than matched by the intense workload and the gruelling hours. The thin staffing and comparative lack of bureaucracy requires exceptionally hard work, focus and commitment to stay afloat, let alone to succeed.

A senior banker noted that this was a profession into which you enter in a relationship and leave single. "You'd better like your colleagues," he said, "because you will spend more time at your desks than with your family."

Moreover, although incidents of the Bollinger and braces caricature do still occur they are in the minority. There were stories of traders on the trading floors wearing white socks to indicate to dealers they might need a line of coke to see them through the day. There were car lots filled with high performance cars having a valet clean.

There were conversations lamenting the fall of many infamous executives who had doled out the highest bonuses, regardless of public or regulatory anger.

However, this is not representative of the majority of bankers who were in finance as much for the exhilaration and competition in the markets, the

opportunities to work on the edge of technology, as they were for their salary and lifestyle.

While things have changed, finance is in need of further reform. Fundamental problems over the size and structure of banks, the continued use of leveraged financial instruments and a culture in which risk is disproportionately rewarded continue to threaten economic and social stability.

As the UK Parliamentary

"Over 10 per cent of Cambridge graduates will go into financial services this year. Far from being brash, soulless sellouts the majority are conscientious and hardworking."

Commission on Banking Standards noted, reform of this scale will almost certainly require new people and these people are unlikely to be the typical candidates for careers in finance.

Banking, the Commission concluded, needs a more ethical and humane workforce. Unfortunately those are the persons who are most likely to be put off by current perceptions of the industry as the place of the soulless

and the sellouts.

This is particularly unfortunate given the financial industry's almost unrivalled ability to help individuals and society.

The City remains the UK's main engine for economic growth and redistribution. It represents between 8 per cent and 14 per cent of GDP depending on what companies you include in that figure. It pays around 12 per cent of the UK total tax intake, a larger sum than any other single sector. It provides funding for critical but risky ventures that few retail banks would touch. It channels clients as much to sectors such as carbon markets and clean energy investment as it does towards fossil fuels.

The vast majority of financial transactions are not tools for speculation between hedge funds but risk mitigation tools for everyday people and small businesses, which need to plan for the future.

Over 10 per cent of Cambridge graduates will go into financial services this year. Far from being brash, soulless sellouts the majority are conscientious and hardworking.

However, the industry needs more of these people and is likely to require far greater diversity in order to push through radical reforms into the future. For the current generation, doing something "worthwhile" should not be something that happens after a career in the City but something that happens during it.

Our debt is no Greek tragedy



Jonathon Hazell

The threat of rising interest rates is a Greek tragedy we must avoid." This was the title of a 2009 *Daily Telegraph* piece by George Osborne, pushing massive spending cuts as the only solution to a coming debt crisis. It's tempting to believe anyone who still makes it is either deliberately disingenuous, or hasn't been paying attention.

The line of reasoning goes as follows: Britain's high and rising public debt causes investors to take fright and sell government bonds because the UK might default on those bonds.

Interest rates then spike up because as less people want to hold UK debt, the government has to pay them more for the privilege, so that the cost of borrowing becomes more expensive and things become very, very bad for everyone.

This argument didn't make sense

back in 2009, and certainly doesn't make sense now. Ultimately this whole Britain-as-Greece argument is disturbing because it makes the austerity project of the last three years look deeply duplicitous.

If you go to any bond desk in the City that trades British sovereign debt, money managers care about one thing – what the Bank of England does or doesn't do. If Governor Mark Carney says interest rates should fall and looks like he believes it, they fall. End of story.

Why? Because the Bank directly controls the interest rate on short-term government debt, so it can vary it at will in line with any given objective. Interest rates on long-term government debt are governed by what markets expect to happen to short term rates, and so are subject to essentially the same considerations.

It doesn't matter if investors get scared and dump government bonds because this has no implication for interest rates – it is what the Bank of England wants to happen that counts.

If investors do suddenly decide to flee *en masse*, the Bank can simply use its various tools to bring interest rates back into line.

The simple point is that since countries like the UK have a free-floating currency, the Bank of England doesn't

have to vary interest rates to keep the exchange rate stable. Therefore it, as an independent central bank, can prevent a debt crisis by controlling the cost of government borrowing directly. Investors understand this, and so don't flee British government debt in the first place.

Greece and the other troubled Eurozone countries are in a totally different situation. They don't have their own currency, and have a single central bank, the ECB, which tries to juggle the needs of 17 different member states. This is a central bank dominated by Germany, which apparently isn't bothered by letting the interest rates of other nations spiral out of control. Investors, knowing this, made it happen during the financial crisis.

On these grounds, the case of Britain and those of the Eurozone countries are not remotely comparable – and basic intuition suggests steep interest rate rises are only possible in the latter.

Britain was never going to enter a sovereign debt crisis. It has everything to do with an independent central bank, and nothing to do with the size of government debt.

How well does this explanation stand up given the events of the last few years? Almost perfectly. The US, Japan and the UK are the three major

economies with supposed debt troubles not in the Eurozone.

The UK released a plan in 2010 to cut back a lot of spending and raise a little bit of tax money. The US did nothing meaningful about its debt until 2012, and has spent much of the time before and since pretending to be about to default on its bonds.

Japan's debt patterns are, to put it bluntly, screwed – Japan's debt passed 200 per cent of GDP earlier this year and is rising fast.

But the data shows that none of this matters for interest rates whatsoever. Rates have been low, stable and near-identical in all three countries regardless of whatever their political leaders' actions. These countries have had vastly different responses to their debt, and markets don't care at all.

By the same token, the problems of spiking interest rates inside the Eurozone have nothing to do with the prudence or spending of the governments in charge.

Spain and Ireland both had debt of less than 50 per cent of GDP before the crisis and were still punished by markets. France and the holier-than-thou Germany had far higher debt in 2007, and are fine.

The takeaway is that problems with spiking interest rates amongst advanced countries are entirely restricted

to the Eurozone, where there is a single central bank, and have no obvious relation to the state of public finances.

So what we have, then, is a disturbingly mendacious line of reasoning. Back in 2010 the Conservative party made a perhaps superficially plausible argument about national debt that was wrong then and is doubly wrong now. They then – sort of – won a mandate to govern based on this, and used it to radically alter the size of the state. The likelihood that somehow this was all done in good faith beggars belief.

Britain has had a far higher proportion of austerity in the form of spending cuts than tax rises relative to any comparator nation. On this basis austerity is a way of reshaping the state in the Conservative image, flying under the false flag of debt crisis-prevention.

If the British public had knowingly and willingly voted for the major changes made under the coalition in how the government taxes, spends and borrows, this wouldn't be such a great problem.

Instead, they were essentially conned into it by the ridiculous story of Britain as the next Greece.

Jonathon is Director of Online Media for the Wilberforce Society, and writes about economics on their blog and on the online magazine Pieria.

Why we need a cost campaign



Sam Ruiz

Although the current tuition fee system is – in layman's terms – a bit of a mess, there's no doubt that what makes the most difference to university students while they're actually studying is living costs.

Your tuition fee loan never enters your bank account, and it never leaves it. Living costs, on the other hand, are what put students in financial difficulty.

Saving money on food in order to pay the rent; missing out on a friend's birthday because you've already used up your weekly budget; turning down volunteering opportunities for paid bar work because you need the money to get through next term: these are the sorts of sacrifices that students have to make to supplement what can be woefully inadequate maintenance loans.

It's at this point that we realise the hidden costs associated with life at university can really ruin someone's week. In 2012, the NUS launched its Come Clean on Hidden Course Costs campaign, intended to point out to universities that the costs associated with university life are not clearly signposted on websites or in prospectuses, and which aren't being covered by students' tuition fees.

The campaign threw up a huge variety of costs, from lab coats and field trips to professional association

membership and course textbooks.

By no means is Cambridge innocent in all this. The college system adds a whole separate layer of potential costs and expenses you weren't expecting: paying a deposit on arrival; buying a gown before matriculation; paying for a term's worth of meals up front; pay-

"The costs associated with university life are not clearly signposted on websites or in prospectuses"

ing for your internet usage at the end of term.

Even rent is hugely complicated by the disparity between colleges, as some are able to subsidise accommodation

fees significantly more than others.

The whole problem is only made worse by the fact that living costs are on the rise across the UK and for students all over the country.

Cambridge is becoming a progressively more expensive place to live, and college bursars and fellows making financial decisions need to put themselves in the shoes of their students when they decide how to raise costs.

A £5 increase in weekly rent might not seem like much, but for plenty of people that's a day's food budget and then some.

And what does all that add up to over the course of a year? A couple of hundred pounds can be the difference between going on a field trip and not going at all, or enough to fund a voluntary placement getting valuable work experience.

So what can students do about this? Unfortunately, we can't stop the cost

of living from rising. This is an issue which is too big for any one person, or any one JCR, to handle on their own.

Over the next year, CUSU will be collecting information across colleges and faculties to work out what the real cost of living in Cambridge is for students. For now, we can encourage the University and the colleges to be as transparent as possible about living costs, and to bear in mind the needs of students on very limited budgets.

If you've run into an unexpected and unavoidable cost which you think your faculty or college should know about, tell someone. Tell your JCR, or your faculty rep. If you come across information which is incomplete or misleading, tell someone what it should say instead.

This is an issue that matters, and you could be making a big difference for prospective students making their minds up.

Sidgwick Says

So...what's your take on 'Rear of the Year'?

GEORGE
HISTORY

Meh

What I found more shocking was the way the press reacted

ROXANA
LAW

It's just a bit of harmless banter

MATT
ARCHEOLOGY

Standards are drooping year on year

ED
HPS



Vulture

FEATURES ■ LIFESTYLE ■ FASHION ■ CULTURE ■ THEATRE ■ REVIEWS

Making Cam-paign-bridge

Student-run societies tell *Varsity* about what matters to them and why we should care too

The stars are up in the Grand Arcade, cascading fairy lights are illuminating the escalators of John Lewis, and the infrequently-explored third floor of Marks and Sparks has once again been transformed into a winter wonderland of 3-for-2 secret Santa gifts. It's here again, the most wonderful time of the year: Bridgemas. It is easy to get swept away by the highly-anticipated arrival of seasonal Starbucks favourites, or to get worried about

scoring Christmas Formal tickets, but too often we forget the true spirit of the season: *giving*.

For most of us, watching BBC's 'Children in Need' and buying a sweet Pudsey Bear will be the extent of our holiday charity. There are, however, many Cambridge students who volunteer their time throughout the year to the causes that are important to them: some are charitable, others political, social or environmental.

Over the course of this term there has been a lot of student press coverage of the Living Wage campaign and the Cambridge Defend Education protests, both of which are heavily supported by students.

Student charities are not often in the headlines, but are just as vital for inciting change as national organisations. Many of them have been quietly revolutionising our city, our students and our outlook for decades.



Ella Griffiths for The Cambridge Hub

Feeling overwhelmed by Cambridge's array of charities, societies and campaigns? That's where the Hub comes in. The Cambridge Hub is a student-run umbrella organisation that links Cambridge's vibrant network of ethical societies together. Whether it's helping you find a project that suits your interests, or providing training for your charity's committee, the Hub is the place to go for targeted advice. From social enterprise and international development, to environmental campaigning and local volunteering, the Hub can point you in the right direction.

If you want a map of the buzzing ethical scene, check out the nifty 'Ethical Guide to Cambridge' on the Cambridge Hub website. The Hub also hosts great events throughout the year: fantastic speakers, socials and work experience or volunteering opportunities. What's more, our Ethical Network unifies Cambridge's societies into a community of student initiatives. The Hub boosts publicity, collaborates with event planners and provides resources and training sessions for charities within this network.

But that's not all we do. The Hub's Series consists of weekly events with an array of exciting speakers. This term's line-up ranged from an electrifying performance of the *Asylum Monologues* to a talk about the West fuelling poverty in the developing world and a screening of *The UK Gold*. The Hub holds ethical careers events, such as career speed-dating, where you just might nab that perfect third sector internship. Finally, we are conference-keen: don't forget the Cambridge International Development Conference this December, or the Cambridge Climate & Sustainability Forum in January.

@Cambridge Hub

Rachael Hove for Giving What We Can

Giving What We Can is an organisation that searches for the most cost-effective charities, in terms of how effectively each donated pound will be spent in combating global poverty. Founded in 2009 by Toby Ord, GWWC encourages members to pledge ten per cent of their income to charity. Shockingly, its findings have revealed that giving to certain charities can be 1,000 times more cost effective than giving to many others, including those currently funded by the NHS. The findings have revealed Against Malaria Foundation, Schistosomiasis Control Initiative and Deworm the World to be particularly cost effective and so GWWC aims to promote these charities to people looking to donate, whether it is those pledging a portion of their income or acting as one-time donors.

The Cambridge chapter of Giving What We Can, led by third-year student Nick Robinson and his committee, organises events including guest speakers and fundraising events around Cambridge to raise awareness of GWWC and to normalise the idea of giving a portion of one's income to charity. So far this term speakers have included Frederick Mulder who spoke about his journey from an art dealer to a philanthropist. Coming up is the Giving Game whereby an anonymous donor agrees to give £10 per attendee at the event. The attendees listen to presentations about two cost-effective charities and ask questions about them and at the end vote for which one should receive the donation.

This is an important organisation around Cambridge because it can make giving to charity much easier for students, especially those who are sceptical about where their donations will end up. There are many charity fundraising events taking place around Cambridge and now people can choose charities to donate to, whether they are doing a sponsored run or growing a moustache for Movember, with cost-effectiveness at the forefront of their mind.

@GivingWhatWeCan



Illustrations by June Tong
Additional reporting by Sabina Dewfield



Sincere initiative or political gimmick?

Sachin Parathalingam asks why students become apathetic to political campaigning on graduating

It was only last week that academics and support staff at the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University went on strike at several lecture sites protesting against the failure to increase wages, something which, according to the Labour parliamentary candidate for Cambridge, Daniel Zeichner, was “an entirely reasonable demand”.

The protest, covered enthusiastically by the student press, drew significant student and trade union participation. Glyn Hawker from Unison told onlookers that “the University would not be open ever were it not for hardworking staff.” This was certainly a statement which provoked a warm, wholehearted response from many of the students present.

While such support is invaluable and undeniably positive, there is a critical disparity between student participation and the shocking lack thereof from the recently graduated.

Although Cambridge students may give an emphatic nod when questioned on the need to resolve key social issues – such as income inequality, access to education and minority rights – this activism is demonstrably short-lived and many long-term social campaigns are suffering when their main support comes from institutions with an annual turnover of a new, generally politically ignorant student body.

Consistency and sustained interest are of paramount importance for real and lasting social change.

How many Cambridge students actually go on to continue campaigns they were involved in at University, or perhaps even initiated? Is it through a growing sense of apathy or disillusionment that many relinquish their political voice? Is Russell Brand onto something?

I decided to speak to a variety of current and past Cambridge students to get a sense of the real motivation behind university student campaigning.

“Is it through a growing sense of apathy or disillusionment that many relinquish their political voice?”

During last week’s rally, Mordecai Paechter, a first-year student at King’s, made it clear that “the students will support the staff all the way.”

Yet, as it quickly became apparent to onlookers, Paechter was also using the stage to preach his own political ideology. A student present at the protest told me: “I felt at some times he was

drifting off the point – the need to increase wages – [and] was instead trying to convince the crowd of his own political beliefs.”

When I contacted Paechter, who is also an active member of the Marxist Society, he confidently told me that “I am going to speak for what I believe in. Sure I was there to represent CUSU and its motion, but at the same time this does not preclude me from identifying what is wrong with the system as a whole.”

When I asked him about the effectiveness, and perhaps even the motivations behind the majority of student campaigns, Paechter noted, “it’s not about the quantity of campaigns, but rather what we are campaigning about. The political organisations of the University need to give leadership to the issues that matter and explore the very heart of the problem.”

Is this representative of a wider trend, one where students hide behind campaigns in order to use it as a platform to disseminate individual political beliefs? And have we lost sight of their core meaning? As with all things human, everyone is different.

Most importantly, what comes across as shady manipulation is more often than not well-meaning. Whether Mordecai Paechter will continue his communist rallies after graduating remains to be seen.

I find myself wondering: why do students become so politically driven when at University? Is it the flurry of excitement of parent-free independence; a desire to espouse the philosophies so

“The political organisations of the University need to give leadership to the issues that matter and explore the very heart of the problem”

elegantly put forth by the artists, revolutionaries and thinkers we learn about in supervisions; or do we feel the impatient shadows of infamous student protesters impelling us to carry forth the tradition? Maybe we’re just generally frustrated.

“I used to get involved in several of the student campaigns, especially those related to women and inequality of access to education,” Amy Johnston, a former Cambridge student told me, “but at present I’ve lost all interest, and the pressures of work coupled with the need to excel in my profession mean that I have no time for any kind of activism.”

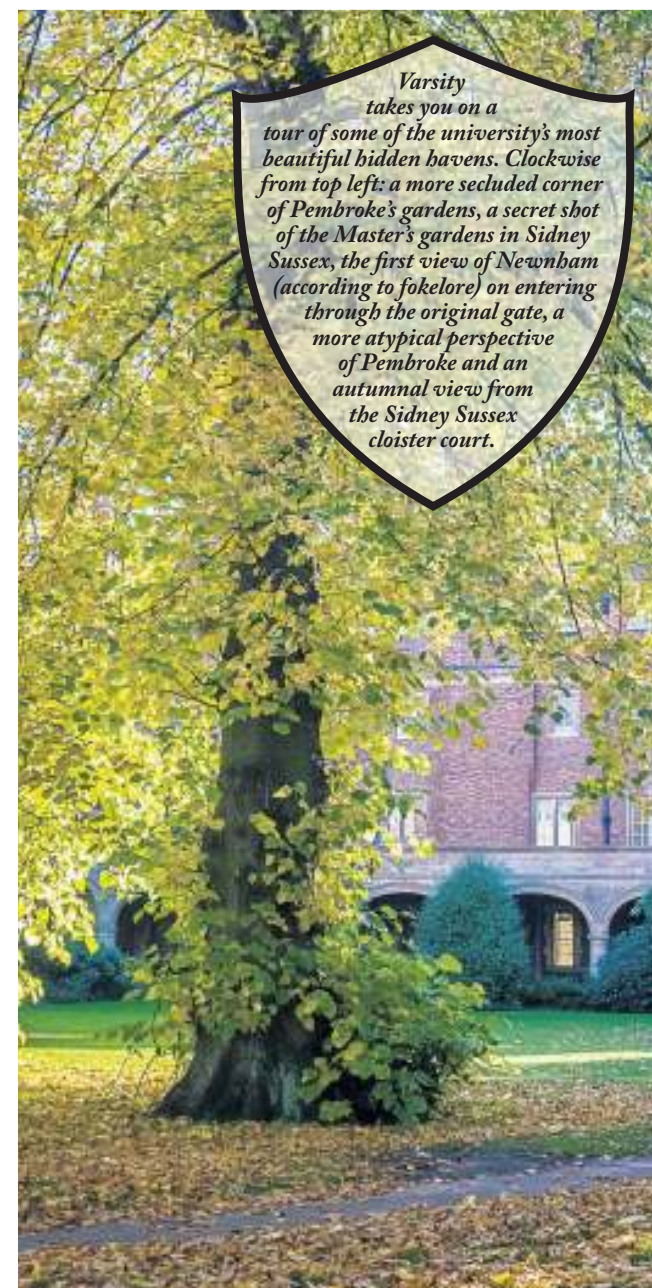
Amy also went on to say: “I think campaigning is a very ‘university thing’. You convince yourself into thinking you are doing something great and perhaps you are. Yet, ironically, by virtue of going to such a prestigious university as Cambridge the reality of post-university life is that you are sufficiently comfortable not to care.”

Of course, there are no definitive statistics to support her claim – except that, according to Admissions statistics, last year less than 6 per cent of Cambridge University graduates pursued a career in social, community or charity work – and neither is it possible to gather evidence on which students actually pursue the activist path, or whether this was reflected in their behaviour during university.

But undoubtedly the reality is that university campaigning is indeed a different exercise to the real world. The test of one’s passion for political and social issues is reflected in whether you can sustain it after graduating.

Ultimately, the motives behind student campaigning are not always clear cut or wholly sincere. But it is certainly important; the issues themselves would suffer for want of support. I suppose the choice rests on the premise that continuing to campaign will indeed raise awareness, regardless of whether its motives and longevity really are legitimate.

The secret life of Cambridge colleges



Varsity takes you on a tour of some of the university's most beautiful hidden havens. Clockwise from top left: a more secluded corner of Pembroke's gardens, a secret shot of the Master's gardens in Sidney Sussex, the first view of Newnham (according to folklore) on entering through the original gate, a more atypical perspective of Pembroke and an autumnal view from the Sidney Sussex cloister court.

"The sun is shining! My essays are done! I have so little work, I'm going to take a weekend off!" said no one ever (or the Land Ec down the corridor). The clocks have gone back, it's raining outside, and the John Lewis Christmas advert might as well be shovelling shit on a Welsh cattle farm for all the good it's doing spreading festive cheer. You can count the smiles you've seen this week on one finger. Let this be a warm, comforting hug for your ears.

Hold me.

CHURCH
The 2 Bears
DER ALTE
Kolsch
ROYALS
Lorde
THE POWER
Fryars
INSPECTOR NORSE
Tod Terje
LESSONS
SOHN
FINDER
Ninetoes

PLAYLIST OF THE WEEK BEATING THE BLUES

Cambridge English Dictionary

The definitive guide to the Cambridge language.

danger (adj.)

Pronunciation: / dem(d)ʒə/

1. prefix, typically added to a well-known Cambridge institution to express a deviation from typically student dominated atmosphere or clientele *the arrival of Saturday meant a decision between dangerspoons or dangercindies*

JCR (n.)

Pronunciation: / dʒeɪ-si-a:/

1. acronym, complete phrase 'junior common (ocasionally combination) room', a communal area set aside for undergraduate use, typically involving drinking *the ongoing initiations ensured the JCR maintained its usual state of chaos*

Stop, stare and savour

Helena Pike explains why we all need to slow down a bit

Last week, while wending my way back through King's after a particularly dismal trip to the UL (yes, I do have my bloody university card on me somewhere, but look at all my bloody books, obviously I'm a bloody student), I was so typically taken up in staring at my feet and scowling that I almost walked into several other students.

While this on its own is hardly a remarkable occasion (a general lack of spatial awareness coupled with an inability to concentrate on more than one thing at once, talking and walking in a straight line being a common issue), it did prompt me to stop, take a shivery breath and consider my surroundings, if only to see how best to avoid any further moving obstacles.

I won't claim a sudden epiphany in the middle of the court, but I did stay still long enough to notice a few things and quietly wax philosophical to myself about the nature of us all.

First, King's is really quite pretty. Who knew? All that stained glass they've got in the chapel – it kind of glows against all the grey clouds. And the river isn't half bad when it's sparkly and reflecting stuff, with all its bridges and punts (okay, maybe we could do

with fewer punts).

More noticeable and thought provoking (alright, that might be too strong a term) is that everyone else was also scowling at their shoes. All of them. King's is happily twinkling away and not one of them seems to have noticed.

While I'm definitely not in the position to preach, considering that my moment of truth came mere minutes before, it does seem like a shame. If I asked you to describe Cambridge, what comes to your mind? Tourists, punt toots and slow moving families with whole contingents of toddlers.

But maybe the people with all the fancy cameras and an inability to stay within the confines of the pavement have (dare I say it) clocked something that we haven't.

Cambridge isn't just cool. It's incredible – historically and architecturally. And I'm not just talking about all the casual Wren dotted about: parts of Fitzwilliam won a RIBA award in '96 and that guy who designed the suspiciously shaped UL is also the guy that did the Tate Modern. And this is before we've even got started on all the traditional older colleges.

But even the parts that haven't

received international acclaim (*The Daily Telegraph* voted Robinson one of the '50 most inspiring buildings in Britain' in 2008, I kid you not) are still worth more than a half-hearted eyeful.

Cambridge is full of endless nooks and arch-adorned crannies that stand silently by, ignored by all of us too preoccupied with our own impending essay crises to stop and consider. Sometimes I feel that everything here can just get a little bit too hectic, as I speed cycle from one supervision to the next.

I'm not saying that five minutes staring at traditional stuccowork will actually help you to understand theories of transnationalism and how they relate to early twentieth century Japanese colonial ambitions, but I certainly felt quite refreshed (and a little pleased with myself) after I'd potted back through town, mentally exclaiming at all this newly discovered wonder.

Maybe we all need to make an effort to expand our experience of Cambridge. So why don't we slow it down? Stop in the middle of the street, I dare you; all the tourists do it already. And it's about time we started getting in their way.

Wallowing: not just for Week 5

Saskia Walker tells us how to bust the blues which linger past the half-way mark

It's the end of week five. It's freezing. It's dark (why is it so dark?!). The non-sensical books are piling up, you're so tired you're wondering whether or not it's socially acceptable to have a power nap in Cindies, and Christmas feels like the tiniest glimmer on the horizon. In fact, it's probably so obscured by the cold and the dark that you can't actually see the jaunty little lights twinkling at all.

Bizarrely, the knowledge that we're over halfway through term, halfway to freedom – doesn't actually help all

that much. The minute you arrived you were warned: Week Five Blues have been etched on your conscience; you've been dreading them since you recovered from the whole peculiar 'week one starts on a Thursday' concept. The fact is – they're here.

What is it about week five and its surrounding days that is so chillingly hopeless? The simple fact of the matter is that we all feel like we've been here long enough already, we're tired of trying, and we might as well all chill out and either go out (hard), or go home.

Week five somehow makes everyone want to close up a little, to stop feeling the need to be everywhere in accordance with someone else's schedule, or to make the effort to seem happy or interesting or funny the entire time.

Having started the term optimistically, thinking you could get to grips with juggling work, friends, the 55 societies you opted to join at the freshers' fair, you begin to doubt whether you can really pull this off for another four weeks.

It's increasingly tempting to give

up and just break down. It's almost as though everyone whirls along, darting from one place to another, increasingly exhausted, until we just, simply, hit a wall. It's reached that point in term and something's got to give.

I propose that, rather than wallow in self-pity for the next month, we consider some tricks that might just – no promises, of course – beat the blues.

Instead of seeing everything like a nightmarish spiral into a black hole, see it more as the perfect crossroads.

Let's get keen.



How (not) to work

EMILY DEAN

Your desk is practically invisible beneath the piles of unfiled (or incomplete) work, bowls of cereal and discarded graze boxes (with all the seedy snacks left in – I know I was trying to be healthy but a few seeds just don't cut the mustard), and your bed has become a depository for this week's washing. This is not a productive work environment. So where can you go to find that happy place, where beautiful essays flow from your pen, and the gods themselves give you inspiration?

The first thought is the UL. Those dark towering stacks, low ceilings and barred windows may not scream divine intervention, but what they do say is: Work Ethic. It's not exactly welcoming, but if you're the kind of person who flourishes in dingy, oppressive environments, then the South Front may be just what you are looking for. For the bravest among us, the West Reading Room calls, beckoning you in with its enticing lofty ceilings and aura of panic. Here is the home of those in the last throes of essays and dissertations, and the pressure to actually do something productive is so weighty, that even considering going on Facebook in there feels like a cardinal sin.

But the UL is SO mainstream. Why not find an edgier place to push the boundaries of academia, somewhere off the beaten track?

You may well be tempted away from the conformist hordes in the hope of enhancing your connoisseurship of the numerous libraries of Cambridge. If high ceilings, very few books and tables large enough to traverse the Atlantic are your thing, then you will feel at home in the library of the Cambridge Union Society. It is untarnished by years of essay crises – being hidden away and undiscovered above the streets. You do need to be a member to use it, but if you need a space outside the phallic monstrosity of the UL, this is as good as any. There is room to breathe, no intimidating books, and, as I mentioned before, great tables. It is without doubt a pleasant place to while away the hours, philosophising on Heraclitus, or wondering how many trees it took to make a table that vast...

Alternatively, if your coffee addiction needs fuelling so often that proximity to caffeine is highest on your wish list, hiding out in the upstairs of an edgy, independent, organic coffee shop may just be the answer. Don your horn-rimmed glasses, snatch up a copy of Voltaire and curl up in a corner looking wistfully intellectual. Inspiration will definitely come, provided you're not too worried about becoming a jittery wreck, reduced to an hourly dependency on double-shot skinny Fairtrade caramel macchiatos.

Everyone is different – some barely slink from their rooms to explore the (not particularly) wide world of Cambridge – but there are so many more places to work than just sat, hermit-like at your desk at 2am. Go crazy, and try working somewhere else for a change.

1) Get toasty.

I hate the cold. It just makes me want to huddle up and hibernate until I can wear just one pair of socks and still feel my toes. In my case, it's the cold and the stacks of reading that make week five and the surrounding limbo the absolute, worst thing ever.

So, this is the perfect excuse to get on trend and get cosy. If you're not sorted already, toddle out to the shops for gloves, a woolly scarf, a hat (the sillier the better) and whatever other jazzy knitwear you can get your little hands on. If you're being really indulgent, how about one of those microwaveable bean bags, made all the more appealing as they tend to come in the form of a small, fluffy animal.

Once the cold's sorted, we might as well make the most of the next brilliant thing about Michaelmas: Bridgemas. For those unfamiliar with the term, think Christmas (decorations, lights, festive cheer) – a month early (or three in the case of John Lewis).

2) Get an advent calendar.

Ditch the library and spend a happy half hour in Sainsbury's musing over whether you'd rather Lindt or Malteser. Buy both. Why not have one in the morning, and one in the evening? Get crazy.

Word on the street – the trick is to start on the 9th November, and then you're set to coincide with the end of term. In fact, while on the Bridgemas theme, why not go all out and have some festive fun?

This is the ultimate fairy light moment, and the prime opportunity for doorways draped with tinsel, Christmas tunes tinkling (it's officially not unlucky in The Bubble) and popping on a Christmas classic whilst munching warm mince pies. If Sainsbury's is selling them, it's definitely not too early.

3) Get on out.

The next bridge to cross is that, by the wasteland that is the latter half of term (because, let's not kid ourselves, we've all got week five blues at the beginning of week four and three weeks later, somehow they're still hanging about), Cambridge is starting to feel a little repetitive. The key is simply to find new places, or to make new plans.

I don't mean abandoning The Bubble entirely – while a day in London or a weekend at home never goes amiss, I'm thinking rather of trying some place a little closer to college. Remember that buzzing pub you've been wandering past for weeks? Or the little café that girl who sits behind you in lectures keeps mentioning? Round up a couple of friends and head on over. This is the ideal moment for a little something different – imagination, variation and all that.

4) Get dabbling.

Let's take that a step further: if we can dare to venture out beyond pubs (though if you do manage to trek to Fen Ditton, The Plough is totally brilliant), clubs, pre-drinks and post-drinks, it makes sense to get out mentally and emotionally too.

Quite frankly, you're still feeling a bit trapped. Places are all very well – but what about people? It seems the time has passed for meeting anyone (freshers' week, lectures, societies, awkward numbers exchanged in the alley outside Life).

The key is to change things up. Think: that house party a friend of a friend invited you to, or the cocktails your friend from home's organising with people from her college. Maybe even brave the odd swap – you never know who you might meet.

Lucy's Cookbook

I don't know about you, but around about now I always start to miss home a little bit. Ok, a lot. Term is well under way, the work is getting you down, week five blues are setting in and all I want is a snuggle with my dog, while somebody cooks me a big, yummy dinner.

Unless you have time to go back home to visit and gorge yourself on Mama's roast, I can only help you with the dinner part (dog snuggles not included). But don't worry, you don't even need an oven! Just a free evening when you can take your time to cook. A big ask, I know, but it is such a satisfying feeling sitting down to something delicious that you made yourself. Also, it's a great break from work, requiring concentration of the practical kind, rather than all the intense intellectual activity Cambridge constantly asks of us. In other words: my brain gets tired, so I feed it chicken.



Lucy Roch



INGREDIENTS

- For 2 people, you will need*
- 2 pieces of chicken:** choose whichever part you like best – breast, thigh, whole leg (my favourite), the beauty of this dish is it always comes out incredibly moist!
 - 1 ½ - 2 onions, sliced**
 - 2-3 cloves garlic**
 - About 5 decent sized potatoes for the mash**
 - Butter and/or milk for the mash**
 - Spinach or other green vegetable**
 - Olive oil, black pepper, salt**

CHEAT'S CHICKEN

Thinly **slice** the garlic cloves, then **take** your chicken pieces and **score** them quite deeply with a knife. **Put** in a bowl, **douse** with olive oil, then **add** a sprinkle of salt, the garlic, and a good amount of black pepper. **Rub** it all in with your fingers, making sure to get it into the cuts on the chicken, and leave to marinate.

Put your pan on a medium heat. When hot, **place** your chicken pieces in the pan and **pour** all the olive oil and garlic in as well. **Cover** with a lid for 5 minutes before you **add** your onion slices (thick or thin as you like), which you want to slot around the chicken so they're getting some direct heat. **Cover** again and **cook** for about another 25-30 minutes (it should sizzle gently the whole time). **Do not turn the chicken!** We want it to **half-fry, half-steam**, which will slowly **cook** it through, imbuing it with all the surrounding flavours. If you want, you **turn** it right at the end just to make sure there's no pink. Do squash the onions around, though, so they all cook!

Eat, drink wine, and enjoy!

THE TRIMMINGS

While the chicken's cooking, **peel** and **chop** the potatoes into equal pieces. **Place** in a pan with some salt, cover with water, and put on to **boil**. Potatoes take about 20 minutes to **cook** once they are nearly boiling, but the only sure way of knowing whether they're cooked is by **breaking** one in half on a plate and **checking** its middle.

Next, **wash** your spinach (or veg). Spinach is the easiest thing because you can just **chuck** it in a colander and **pour** a couple of kettles of boiling water over it to **wilt** it: none of this faffing about with a saucepan. The stalls in market square do two big bunches for £1. Do the boiling water trick just when you're ready to serve your chicken (it can sit off the heat for a couple of minutes).

Your potatoes will also be **cooked** before your chicken is ready. **Drain** them, then **add** a big dollop of butter, some salt and black pepper and mash (with a fork if you don't have a masher). You can **add** a little milk to make it smoother and **mash** that in. **Leave** in the pan and **cover** until ready to **serve**.



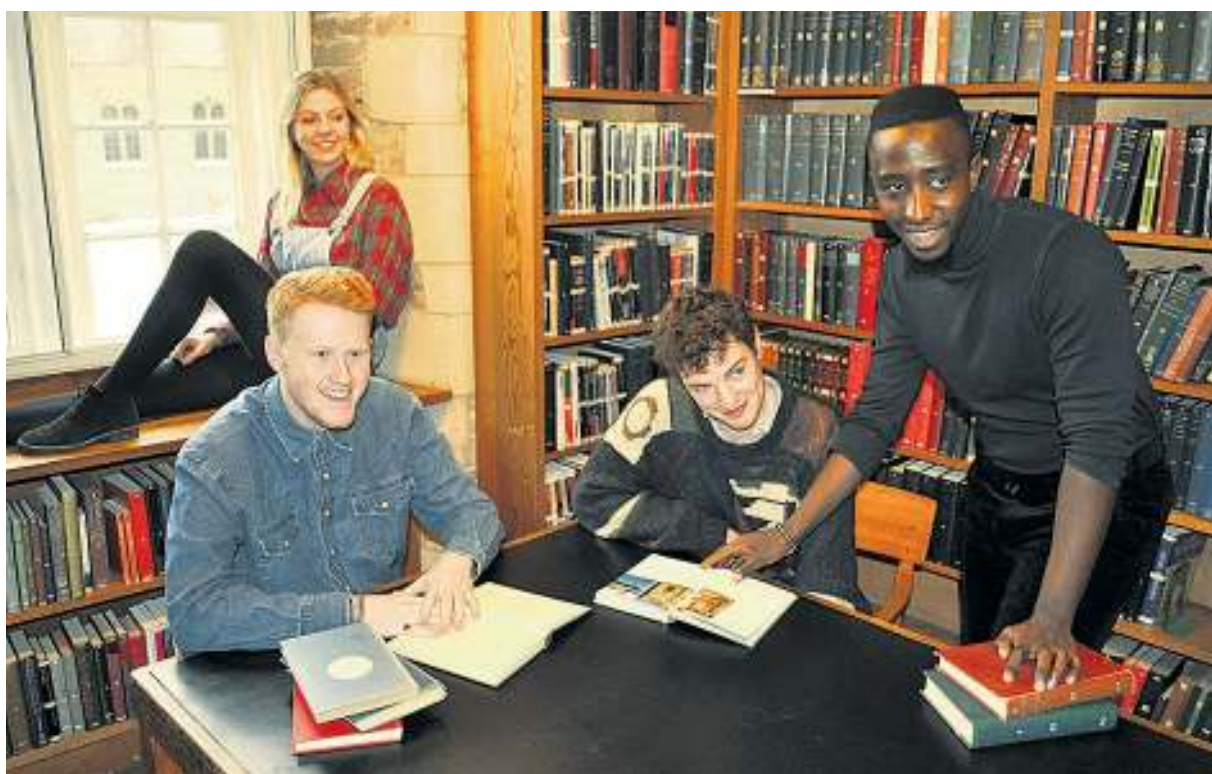
SHOOT DIARIES ETHICAL FASHION

We believe student fashion transcends time and trends. All the pieces used in the shoot are vintage clothes that have been recycled over time, but they still create new looks within our student environment today. Just like our Cambridge libraries, evolving relentlessly but still rooted in tradition, student fashion changes over time, but holds onto that long-established indistinguishable classic student charm.

Fast fashion dominates society, a money-making machine fuelled by the need for cheap clothing on demand. Ethical fashion now needs our attention. We have to be responsible about where we spend our money. Companies such as People Tree promote Fair Trade and environmentally sustainable fashion, countering exploitative sweatshops and child labour, pollution and global warming through their ethical clothes.

Another way to fight against fast fashion, on a student budget, is to explore vintage and charity shops. Why spend time and money searching for items at high street stores for a distinctive look, when you can mix and match unique items from the past that nobody else will be wearing. The volume of clothing that ends up in landfill is escalating. Another student out there may love those pieces in your wardrobe that just do not fit anymore. Why let these clothes go to waste and be replaced by unsustainable replicas churned out from fast fashion stores? *Lottie Franklin*





The VINTAGE STUDENT

There I was, deeply engrossed in my studies when I was disturbed by the sound of books crashing to the floor. I turned and locked eyes with an Adonis, a beauty. In Rihanna's own words...a vision of ecstasy. I swivelled back, making a concerted effort to look nonchalant as I refreshed Facebook. My eyes flickered up and I noticed that the Greek god had moved to sit opposite me. My heart raced. 'It's my skirt,' I thought. 'He must like the vintage look.' My heart-beat quickened as he edged closer, 'This is it,' I thought...until he plugged his laptop in. However much we try to deny it, Cambridge students treat the UL like an elongated catwalk. Hipsters flock in through the revolving doors all dressed in their meticulously planned 'just got out of bed' attire. A number of reliable sources have informed me that the UL, as the social hub of Cambridge, is the perfect place to find a romantic partner.

This might explain why some of Cambridge's best-dressed people are often lurking around the book stacks hoping to entice someone. Or is that just me? Unfortunately, at least in a silent library, appearances are everything – a way for one's personality to shine through. This strikes me with terror. In the mornings I am immobilised, staring into the depths of my wardrobe. Ordinarily I may have donned my Converse, but are those too casual? Will they present me as a commitment-phobe? I am organised and efficient but I fear a three-piece suit will not bode well with my peers. Glamorous? A ball gown? This conundrum fills me with great mental anguish. Everyone is judging me and so I condemn myself to the lonely book stacks, I shall find solace in my work.

Fashion in the UL all boils down to the social stratification of the tearoom. Seats are limited and where to sit often depends on first impressions. My advice would be to avoid those in loud spandex leggings – through careful analysis and deduction I have concluded that they are keen to chat (mainly about themselves). Seek geek chic if you are after some intellectual stimulation as you will be intimidated into cracking out *The Guardian*. If all you're after is a quick break between sessions of intensive Facebook stalking – where you can down your extortionately priced tea – then there are always some genuine pensioners whose personal space you can encroach upon. However vapid this topic may seem, it is of some considerable importance to students like me. Whilst you are all parading around with your first class degrees and perfectly functioning love lives, some of us need our fastidiously sculpted outfits to help us navigate through the UL with some modicum of self-esteem.

Often I feel as though the world is lucky I don't walk around in my pyjamas, and this week five, if I were not *Varsity* fashion editor then there is a strong chance you would have seen me sashaying around the UL tearoom with my pink plaid set. I feel as though perspective is needed: however hard term is going, comfort is attainable through other means. Plaid vintage shirts offer the same practicality and also social acceptability, so stick to the old and go vintage. Luckily, big baggy pensioner jumpers are considered edgy but are also ethical and inexpensive. Varsifashion's suggestion: boycott the high street and raid your granny's wardrobe.

Dahaba Ali Hussien

Susannah Evans, Favourite Frizell, Louis Bickler and James Heaven were photographed for *Varsity* by Daisy Schofield

Styling by Lottie Franklin and Dahaba Ali Hussien

Clothes from Jemporium Vintage and models' own.
♦ Tweed Jacket, £24 ♦ Lacy Vest, £12 ♦ Denim Dungarees, £25 ♦ Tartan Shirt, £17 ♦ Paisley Scarf, £7 ♦ Herringbone Blazer, £22 ♦ Denim Shirt, £18 ♦ Polka Dot Skirt, £14 ♦ Lacy Vest, £12 ♦



Wes-Mania

MAX KELSEY

For my money (admittedly that's not a lot) Wes Anderson is one of the best film-makers around.

It seems a good time to talk about him, what with three Wes-related news items cropping up in the past few weeks.

One was the release of the trailer for his upcoming flick *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. Immediately it's very Wes-ish, possessing fastidious symmetry and a distinctive palette and features the usual gang – Owen Wilson, Bill Murray et al. – with the tantalising additions of Ralph Fiennes and Saoirse Ronan in leading roles. The dialogue still has that idiosyncratic rhythm that has spawned a glut of poor indie imitators.

The characteristic anamorphic widescreen is gone. However the Academy ratio that replaces it, presumably to evoke the 1930s setting, looks so tight and controlled that it seems as natural for the meticulous Anderson as it does novel. Shockingly however, there doesn't appear to be a speck of Futura.

Interestingly it has also been announced that *The Grand Budapest Hotel* will open the 2014 Berlin Film Festival. This represents somewhat of a departure from the festival's current identity as a place for film-making of a more austere persuasion. That Anderson's latest was largely created in Saxony and Potsdam must surely have played a part in bringing this splash of comic colour to the German capital.

We've also recently seen the release of Matt Zoller Seitz's *The Wes Anderson Collection*. No need to shell out on the coffee table hardback though, head over to Seitz's blog for some magisterial video essays. They are wonderfully enlightening about the references in Anderson's films.

Did you ever notice how the opening scene of *Rushmore* is a mirror image of the classroom scene from Truffaut's *The 400 Blows*? No? Seitz did.

The last bit of news is that Anderson stalwart Kumar Pallana has died aged 94. The plate-spinning vaudevillian owned The Cosmic Cup, the coffee shop where Anderson and Owen Wilson conceived some of their best stuff, and brought his charming on-screen presence to roles such as Mr Littlejeans and Pagoda.

In remembrance, I suggest you find his instructional Facebook video on how to make the Chai and realise his importance to the singular Anderson style.

• **Whilst** on the subject of films you should watch, I can't stress enough how much you should go and see space sci-fi thriller *Gravity*.

The visuals are so game-changingly beautiful and spectacular that even film's primary 3D sceptic, critic Mark Kermode, has admitted that Cuarón's masterpiece justifies the extra dimension.

Day Trip - Part One

Varsity's Gonzo correspondent, **Jacob Waits**, fortified by enlightening amounts of alcohol, pursues his investigations on a deeply suspicious Greek island

I awoke and it occurred to me that nothing had changed. The world was still in the same abhorrent state of disrepair and, more importantly, the ceiling was still orbiting my head at the same hellish pace as when I plunged out of consciousness earlier this morning. Someone was shaking me awake. Perched precariously on my revolving ceiling was my co-author, Adamson, wringing me with merciless vigour and babbling incoherently.

"Get out of here, man!" I cried. "You only have one neck to break!"

But the reckless bastard ignored me. He proceeded to tip one side of my bed upwards, rudely ejecting me from my refuge. This had the effect of causing my hold on basic spatial practicalities, already much weakened, to collapse completely. I have no idea how long it took for me to muster the bravado to open my eyes and stand up straight, but judging from the increasing agitation of that wretched man, it could have been some time.

As he bundled me towards our tiny car, I began to discern human phrases within the confused mass of his ramblings. Gradually, I was able to piece together his intentions. There were a number of notable sites scattered across the island, which were going to have to feature in our report, and he insisted upon dragging his photographer and me to visit them before the 9pm deadline.

Before I could assemble my numerous objections to this absurd plan, he had somehow got me into the car and slammed the door. He entered the driver's seat and behind us in clambered the photographer – a bewilderingly cheerful

American girl by the name of Young.

As Adamson busied himself attempting to wring some life from the engine, I examined his ragged pupils. Their intensity suggested the presence of chemicals far more rarefied than ever occur naturally in the human body. Reassured, I leant down, extracted the plastic water bottle from the footwell and took a long draught. It did not contain water. I took another long draught. The contents appeared to be the same stuff as had first propelled the world into such dizzying motion last night and I had been assured by a reliable Albanian that they were almost 99% ethanol.

Though initially suspicious of such a bold claim, extensive experimentation had inclined me to believe him. I continued to sip from the bottle as Adamson finally revived the engine and hurled us down the perilous mountain track away from the house.

I had concluded by this stage that calming the earth's rotations was not the answer to my problems, indeed such a course of action would be dangerously selfish. Not only

I, but all of humanity was bound to suffer some kind of catastrophic dislocation should the place actually stop spinning. No, I had determined to contribute to the survival of our spineless race by encouraging this movement, and the contents of that bottle were going to help me do it.

After an indeterminate amount of time tearing along pitiful roads under

a pitiless sun, we arrived at our first destination: the remnants of a temple devoted to Aphrodite, goddess of self-delusion, cruelty and lust.

Why these attributes merited a place of worship, or an object of worship for that matter, continues to baffle me. Maybe this is the reason I shall never understand the improbable conjunction of bacteria we call humanity. Maybe not.

Young was positively delighted however, and ran towards the dilapidated array of stones with the air of a child running towards a theme park. Seeing only the gigantic smiling mouse, the child runs forward, elated, blind to the hopelessly depressed human being behind that suffocating facade. Adamson followed, a weary but complicit parent to this elongated toddler and I, with greater caution, brought up the rear.

My wariness was soon rewarded when we were assailed by an elderly local couple, clearly tasked with looking after this particular fragment of the island's inglorious past.

"Yasas!" the man cried. What kind of devilish warning was this? I grabbed the oblivious Adamson by his collar.

"I don't like this. What are they saying?"

"Hello, I imagine."

"But how can you be sure?"

The two faces, weather-beaten and salt-toughened, were smiling, but it was a smile no more convincing than that of the giant mouse. Here were a pair pushed by desperate straits to the very limits of reasonability. In such circumstances, the average human is capable of anything, and these two were no different. Flight was our only recourse.

"Where is the girl?"

Adamson gestured vaguely towards a pillar, around which Young was

animatedly leaping, snapping away delightedly. Poor fool. She was fit and healthy, however, and at a sprint could be expected to make it back here in five seconds or so. The old couple were unlikely to be able to apprehend us more rapidly than that. We might just make it out unmolested.

"I suggest a subtle retreat as far as the gate, followed by unchecked speed back to the car. Do you agree?"

Fortunately, the same chemicals responsible for Adamson's intensity that morning had also made him particularly persuadable. The mere tone of my voice was enough to convince him of the danger in which we had found ourselves and his usually obstinate nature collapsed in the face of superior perception and a headful of mind-melting drugs.

We began backing away slowly, and saw to our vindication the steady decomposition of those welcoming smiles.

"I knew it!" I hissed as we backed, grimacing, towards the gate. "A minute longer and they'd have had us."

"What about Young?" replied Adamson.

"Leave her to her fate, we can't go risking our necks for a girl who can't recognise a giant mouse when she sees one!"

"What?" Adamson spat, with unusual ferocity. Despite his malleability, he had evidently not yet grasped the essential problem of the place. But by that time we were almost at the gate, and the time for debating theoretical essentials was long passed.

"Run!" I yelled, and we turned on our heels and pelted towards the tiny car.



THE COFFEE TABLE BOOK CONNOISSEUR

Everyone loves stories that involve people and a hint of scandal.

This week my coffee table has been inundated with memoirs, some of which I must share with you all!



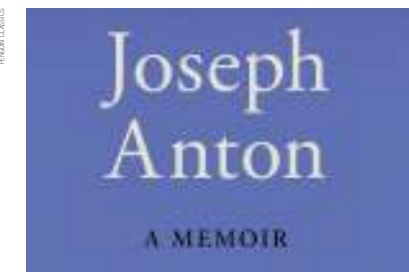
GRACE

Grace Coddington is the Creative Director at American *Vogue*. Born in Wales, she left aged 19 and travelled to London to become a model. *Grace* charts her life as a model and later as a fashion editor at British and American *Vogue*. Along with her accessible writing style, *Grace* is filled with great photographs and illustrations.



AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Autobiography by The Smith's frontman Morrissey was published last month. The Penguin Classics cover has attracted much attention, although the reception has been generally positive. Critics have noted the "beautifully measured prose style", while Colin Paterson on the Today programme suggested that it is "funnier than the Iliad."



JOSEPH ANTON

The declaration of a fatwa against Salman Rushdie for his book *The Satanic Verses* was a life changing event. Documenting his life underground, moving from different houses with the constant presence of armed police, Rushdie kept one thing constant, his alias, 'Joseph Anton', which titles this epic memoir of novelistic quality.

Surfing the Silicon Junkyard

Jonathan Coote asks whether the advent of online streaming is ruining our appreciation of music

The 'celestial jukebox' is here. Well, almost. The term – coined by Stanford professor of copyright law, Paul Goldstein, in 1994 – is commonly used to refer to streaming services that allow us to access inconceivable amounts of music at the click of a mouse.

The 'jukebox' is still in its fragmented form, before the market is monopolised by one company and so finding music inevitably involves trawling through various sites in the hope of finding the album you were looking for. 'Celestial' probably has more in common with the squabbling Olympian Pantheon than the centralised omnipotence of the Abrahamic God.

'Jukebox' is also misleading, as modern conceptions of streaming have embraced other media, something that could have profound implications on how we engage with music. Listening to music online takes away an important part of the ritual that we have so valued in our interactions with music. Music has lost its place in the heavens to become part of a fluid entertainment landscape.

In February 2013, Billboard's flagship 'Hot 100' chart began to include YouTube views in their calculations. Digital streaming was included on the charts as far back as 2007 and so it is unsurprising that Google's video service would add to the count. Over 6 billion hours of video are watched each month. A large proportion of that is musical, and Google Video must be



Does paying more for our music mean we make more of an effort with it?

the most important source of online musical access.

Will this mean that popular music becomes a tedious soundtrack stuck onto videos produced to create publicity for themselves? When MTV arrived in 1981, video supposedly 'killed the radio star' and so debates over video's role aren't new. The music video has become an important aspect of music's culture and its commerce, but it is worth noting that it was initially designed as a promotional tool for albums and singles.

When YouTube views can take songs to the top of the charts, it comes as no surprise that since February we have

had so many video-related controversies (think Robin Thicke and Miley Cyrus). One of the principle methods of valuing music's importance, the charts, have now declared that music is not something purchased but rather something accessed.

Our interactions with art are rooted in value and so when music is streamed rather than bought, our relationship with it changes. We value it based on use rather than exchange value. We have valued music so much in the West for hundreds of years because it tells us something about ourselves through our submission to it.

Like religion, music survives when

hidden just out of human understanding. C.S. Lewis described this value system in his *An Experiment in Criticism* when he wrote that to truly appreciate art you must "lay yourself open to what it... can do to you" instead of how you can make use of it.

The end of music's commodification has been heralded as a post-modern utopia, in which endless remixes can be accessed at all times, shattering antiquated notions of the musical work as static and unchanging.

On the other hand, we can see the change in music's role within the media landscape as something that gives us too much control. We lose our sense of relationship with music.

"Listening to music online takes away an important part of the ritual"

When we pay musicians (albeit indirectly) for their work, we become the paymaster. But we cannot escape the feeling that when we attribute value to something we also submit to its authority as something to be cherished. This creates a dialogue in which the work has a voice.

The British journalist Pete Paphides recently discussed this submission in an article on why we should buy Daft Punk's *Random Access Memories* on

vinyl before criticising it. He notes that "if you're wedded to a format that sets you back approximately £20 an album, it stands... that you'll work harder to justify the purchase."

Without the anticipation and fear of buying an album that you have never heard before, it can be easy to be dismissive before ever engaging with it. If I just listen to something on Spotify, I almost always forget what it is called and the tracks blur into one another. Instead of using a celestial jukebox, streaming services can too often be like surfing a silicon junkyard.

We listen because we can but we don't recognise that every time we listen to a piece of music we will have a different reaction; every time we can hear more. Like anything in life, there is more value in listening to a few things that you care about than trying to listen to everything just because you can.

Record companies and artists need to create innovative models of distribution that place the music first, and don't just tell everyone what I'm listening to on Facebook. The words freedom and choice are strewn like marketing confetti over every new platform but we should all be wary when we are told we are getting what we want.

Our connectivity provides incredible access that has made so many of us pluralists in our taste but too often we are left without the time to create a relationship with music. At the moment our best chance to hear the divine is still firmly rooted in the material.

The poetics of Skyping

Transatlantic reading series links Cambridge and New York



Marjam Idriss
CULTURE CORRESPONDENT

How would you run a reading series if the writers were situated on either side of the Atlantic? With a camera and what will hopefully remain a stable Wi-Fi connection, say organisers behind unAmerican Activities – a poetry reading series currently organising their fourth transatlantic poetry reading.

The format behind unAmerican Activities is very well crafted. Each reading features two established writers, giving them plenty of space to showcase the breadth of their work. Additionally, these writers are asked to read pieces that have inspired them in their career. Their work is accompanied by critical texts discussing the work presented, commissioned by the organisers.

Audience members are treated to a specially tailored pamphlet containing excerpts from the readings as well as critical essays. As unAmerican Activities are connected with independent publishers both in New York and Cambridge, these pamphlets are often beautifully produced. In a sense, the unAmerican Activities project gives the audience the opportunity to experience all aspects of literary production, from inspiration, through publication, ending in performance and criticism.

As the readings are streamed between the Judith E. Wilson Studio in Cambridge and Page22 in New York, the audience have the opportunity to discuss the performance with the parallel audiences via Skype during the interval. unAmerican Activities attempts to feature both established and up-and-coming writers, and have previously organised readings with Wendy Mulford, Abigail Child, Peter Larkin and Lanny Jordan Jackson.

unAmerican Activities hopes to provide a space for ground breaking contemporary poetry and while I'm sure many will worry about the

technological difficulties that might occur, this unusual format is sure to make an impression. Some of the readers have even taken advantage of this, and used the camera as a conscious part of the performance.

The next transatlantic reading will take place on Sunday 17th of November, with Allen Fisher reading in the Judith E. Wilson Studio alongside Steve McCaffery in New York.

McCaffery, although born in Sheffield, was part of the Canadian avant-garde scene in the 1970s and has since published a series of chapbooks and full-length collections. He has worked both with sound poetry and concrete poetry, and his work is described as "going beyond the sentence and the word."

Fisher, who will be reading in Cambridge is a painter, publisher, poet and performer. Based in London, Fisher is often associated with the British Poetry Revival movement of the 1960s and 70s. His latest publication is *Proposals*, a poem-image-commentary piece of which Ken Edwards has noted the aesthetic importance of facing the unknown and starting again. Both writers are experienced performers and will be reading primarily from recent and unpublished work.

unAmerican Activities might remind some of more sinister attention once lavished on creative texts, but the poetry reading series that shares its name merely attempts to break the bounds of geography.

Talking Points



The Katherine Mansfield society was set up in 2008 in a bid to encourage the reading of Mansfield both for enjoyment and for scholarly purposes. The 'Katherine Mansfield and her Circle' conference will be held at Birkbeck, London, on **Saturday 23rd November**, which will bring together modernist scholars to speak about Mansfield and her contemporaries. Topics of discussion include cosmetics, fashion and performance in modernist writing.

David Godwin

Since 2006 the University has hosted an annual **T.S. Eliot Lecture**, promoted by the T.S. Eliot Society in association with the Faculty of English. The fifth annual lecture will be given by the former Archbishop of Canterbury and Master of Magdalene Dr Rowan Williams at 7pm on **Tuesday 26th November** at Clare College. This year's title is 'Eliot's Christian Society and the Current Political Crisis'. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Bethan Kitchen



Playground

THEA HAWLIN

Shakespeare was not the first to say it but he said it well: "All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players." Yet when dramatists attempt to blur the lines between stage and contemporary life, literally staging reality, it remains for many a taboo. The stage is in many ways an expression of society, a blank canvas on which the stories we tell to each other are actualised. Current events feed into theatre; writers are shaped by the world around them, so why are people still so scared of the stage?

Shakespeare's early successes were history plays. Aeschylus in ancient Greece used his own involvement in the Persian war as creative fuel. It's normal now to relocate scripts from the Renaissance to the present: last week in Cambridge alone saw Faustus donning a Cambridge scarf and Bacchanalian antics appearing in the London riots. There's a reason that contemporary adaptations continually occur. The stories theatre tells remain relevant even today as plays quite literally speak out to people.

At this year's Edinburgh Fringe I was lucky to see *Nirbybah*, a play that not only talks about current events, but is itself formed by them. This was acted by a group of abused women who refused to remain silent, reacting against the Delhi gang rape in 2012, each with their own story to share. The play, for me, shattered any illusion that reality and the stage are disconnected.

I had never been in a theatre where an audience collectively cried, where the stage screamed out at the world not merely because it moved, but because the events it showed us were a reflection of a reality that stood before us.

At times no longer performance, it was instead as if we had stumbled into a confessional. From the safety of that space, the words spoken by women still bearing the scars of the events they recounted rang out with more power than any documentary or interview. The power of *Nirbybah* is that the line between reality and theatricality is at the thinnest point it's ever been.

Theatre has always been a form of instruction, from the mystery and morality plays to Dennis Kelly's Faustus-esque *George Mastromas* at the Royal Court this year. Staging current events is a notoriously tricky business, a reason why fiction often provides a welcome shield, where writers can tackle issues head on without technically talking about them at all. Yet many plays performed even here in Cambridge have openly depicted real events in contemporary society: political feuds, crime scenes, economic crashes, celebrity scandals, real life drama.

Nirbybah has taught me that theatre can be a form of protest that reaches beyond the stage. As well as being inspired by contemporary events, theatre can participate in them, acting as a forceful agent for change, where people can 'act' in more ways than one.

Standing up for the disabled

Chloe Clifford-Astbury talks to the three comedians behind *Comments Disabled*

Chris Page, Harry Wright and James Wilkinson are joining forces to present *Comments Disabled*, a one-night-only comedy event built around the theme of disability.

Well-established names in the Cambridge comedy scene, all three have been targeted by vitriolic commentators on *The Tab* website and the show is in some ways an opportunity to respond to them.

Professional comedian Dan McKee, who, like his fellow performers, includes his experience of disability in his stand-up material, will also join them in the line-up.

"We wanted to do a show together," says Page, "but I was thinking, how can we make this into something more?" The comics chose disability as a theme for their show, and not only because they live with disabilities of their own.

"The point of stand-up is taking the piss out of your betters, but somehow that's become distorted"

They feel it is an issue that is important to the stand-up scene, the student population and the city as a whole.

The show's first purpose is to entertain, but the organisers of *Comments Disabled* also feel the need to reassess disability's place in comedy. Page thinks that stand-up is rife with jokes at the expense of the disabled: "The point of stand-up is taking the piss out of your

bettors, but somehow that's become distorted and comedians are targeting the disadvantaged."

Wilkinson in particular has been known to turn this side of stand-up on its head, taking a dig at the audience's use of disabled facilities: "Now, I know none of you will ever have been inside a disabled toilet," begins one of his bits.

The three friends would like to see discrimination banished from the comedy scene, but they are far from advocating the use of kid gloves in handling the topic, and even further from wishing to silence comedians by being unduly sanctimonious: "You can joke about it but it isn't a joke."

Page, Wright and Wilkinson would like to see the stand-up scene as a whole become more inclusive. They have organised events where novice comedians can test their mettle outside of the more well-established but perhaps more intimidating forums.

"We've all done Footlights Smokers and enjoyed them," says Wright, "but it's nice to have other options and go your own way."

They are quick to praise the Cambridge comedy scene – "It says a lot about its strength that we can host a night like this" – but worry some students may not feel welcome in it.

"Comedy can be quite cliquey," acknowledges Wilkinson, "but we want to be saying to disabled students, or basically any student who isn't a white, middle-class, able-bodied male, that they can get into comedy."

Disability is also a significant welfare issue for the students of Cambridge. Page cites Facebook community Cambridge Speaks its Mind as evidence of this: "Of all the welfare

problems occurring within college, one of the ones that came up most often was with tutors and supervisors not understanding mental health issues."

Bringing the issue to a wider audience by raising it in a humorous light is one way of attempting to make staff more aware of disability. The hope is that staff and students will become more comfortable discussing it.

Page, Wright and Wilkinson are also taking the opportunity to raise cash for MIND, a mental health charity active in Cambridge and throughout the country. With the 'bedroom tax', cuts in social care and Work Capability Assessments and the demise of the Independent Living Fund, recent changes to benefits have been hard on the disabled. Organisations such as MIND are shouldering a heavier burden than ever.

As it becomes increasingly important to highlight the problems faced by disabled individuals, the time is ripe to open a conversation that will engage a wider audience in the subject. Though the tagline might seem odd at first glance, what better way to do this than with "a night of disability-themed comedy?"

"All profits will be going to MIND," concludes Wright, "so please can we sell out and actually make a profit?"

Comments Disabled will be on at the Corpus Playroom on 25 November at 9:30 pm



PEMBROKE PLAYERS

8

In the first few minutes of *8*, a reading of Dustin Lance Black's edited version of the Proposition 8 transcripts, it becomes clear which side of California's legal debate the players will favour, as a ridiculous anti-gay marriage measure is allowed to speak for itself.

Yet under the commanding gaze of Judge Walker, played with great presence by Freya Mead, a fascinating case develops. Marriage, raising children, and the meaning of love and normality are addressed and dissected, giving reasoned attention to a debate which is often overshadowed by dogma. Director John King assigns some actors and actresses cross-gender roles, which blurs lines of gender and sexuality to reflect the debate's complexity.

The occasionally convoluted course of the trial is effectively broken up with moving scenes involving the Perry family. Catherine Potterton is outstanding as Kris Perry, one of the two mothers. Joe Goodman and Jack Heywood carry the emotional weight of the other main couple with conviction, neatly offsetting the cold courtroom environment.

Aoife Kennan's portrayal of the traumatised Ryan Kendall, who has gone through 'sexual reorientation', is the most poignant cross-examination, as she conveys the horrors of her past with visible pain. Her interchange with lawyer David Boies, played superbly by Helena Blair, brings out a more nuanced side of her opponent, who moves with all the power the fiercely

intellectual role demands. Calum Docherty (as Theodore Olson) brings a captivating American flair to the stage, conveying a strong flavour of *8*'s original setting.

The script sometimes loses a sense of narrative progression, but it seems harsh to demand a conventional plot from a play based on legal transcripts, and it never stagnates due to the engaging nature of the individual battles.

The most fascinating of these involves Charles Cooper (played by Rebecca Hare), the lawyer against gay marriage, whose character is one of the most complex. Outstanding restraint and depth are shown by Hare in her role, contrasting with some slightly stereotypical portrayals of conservative activists as cold-blooded or fanatical.

Despite the Pembroke Players' decision to approach *8* as a reading rather than a 'play', it sometimes slips into the territory of a courtroom drama. And whilst some actors convey the nervous energy of the trial, others deliver their dialogue as conventional speeches, creating some tension on stage.

However, *8* brings a difficult legal debate to life, with moments as emotionally arresting as any conventional play could manage.

8 is not the easiest watch, but in the words of one character, "I'm glad I was there."

Rob Oldham

CUADC GREEK

Steven Berkoff's *Greek* transports the Oedipal into the "wastelands" of contemporary Tufnell Park, brimming with as much violence, upset and corruption as ancient Thebes. No matter how many toga-adorned travesties you've witnessed garnishing the railings of Cambridge, this production is thankfully stripped of white linen. Instead we are greeted by a set of black brick sprayed haphazardly with Greek graffiti tags; merely a nod to the ancients, and not a toga in sight.

This is Oedipus with a twist: think Sarah Kane meets Edward Bond. It's almost impossible to wriggle away from the stream of ingenious insults

that rule the play. However, the physicality of this performance often strikes with as much force and pathos as its verbal intensity.

Physical theatre pervades the performance: four bodies become one large sphinx that breathes in and out with ritualistic urgency; men and women

collapse into household items and split into many mirrored couples all eagerly waving their sons goodbye. These slick moments of unity inspire both cringes and gasps from the audience. As comedy

abounds, the bodies teeter between absurd action and woeful immobility.

Sam Fairbrother's Eddy makes an instant impression with his confident drawl, although at times it's hard to tell if his relaxed disinterest is good acting or if he's simply concentrating too much on getting the words out to care.

First night wobbles and line quivers abound, but these are minor stutters in the grand, writhing shape of this performance. At times it's hard to see how a character can deliver lines over the commotion of background bodies drowning the stage, relishing the commotion of everyday life.

Yet with Alasdair McNab's assertive father figure at the helm the hubbub of the stage fades away before us: each line delivered with ease and sincerity, he steals the stage.

Similarly Freya Aquarone as the robust yet wilting wife and mother captivates. She excels early on within the chorus, displaying a penchant for comedy before transforming first to angered widow, then to blushing bride, the automated woman of Eddy's dreams. Swept off her feet, the collision of lovers is handled beautifully. By the time their union is revealed as incest, mother and child, husband and wife collide again, this time walking back to back, a simple yet achingly powerful movement.

If you dislike this production it will furnish you with elaborate insults with which to ridicule it. Thankfully I found none were necessary. The script is impeccable, the cast strong, the staging innovative. Watch out Cambridge, there's some fresh talent brewing.

Thea Hawlin



From the auditorium to the chapel altar

Wen Li Toh takes a look at some shows staged in historic venues rather than theatre auditoriums

Atri Banerjee, Assistant Director of *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, which started its run on Tuesday, believes that “the show and its location go hand-in-hand”.

Dido, Queen of Carthage will be staged in the Emmanuel College Chapel as well as in the Senate House, two venues which Banerjee tells me were specifically chosen because the Marlowe Society “wanted the audience to see Dido’s court in its resplendent baroque splendour.”

They hoped that the lavish interiors of both buildings, combined with Purcell’s music, would “construct a heavy atmosphere” that would leave the audience feeling “intoxicated”.

“We wanted the audience to see Dido’s court in its resplendent baroque splendour”

Setting *Dido, Queen of Carthage* in two buildings as steeped in history as these also had the effect of transforming Aeneas and his army – dressed as modern soldiers – and the gods – donning black-tie outfits – not to mention the audience themselves, into anachronistic figures. This allows the audience “to see what happens when the two worlds, temporal and spatial, collide.”

Given the unconventional venues for the show, some additional considerations had to be made. In the Emmanuel Chapel, for instance, the actors had to be especially conscious

of how they orientated their bodies as they moved along an aisle flanked by a seated audience.

The difference in size between the intimate chapel and the much larger Senate House also had to be taken into account. Says Banerjee: “In the chapel, you’d walk three steps to get from point A to B, while in the Senate House, you’d need nine steps. It was almost like choreographing a dance!”

Dido, Queen of Carthage is one of several shows in Cambridge to have been staged in a chapel or church this term.

The Ghost Hunter, by London-based performance group Theatre of the Damned, is now on tour and will be on at the Leper Chapel of St Mary Magdalene tomorrow evening. The Leper Chapel, which was built around 1125 and once belonged to a leprosy hospital, is thought to be the oldest surviving building in Cambridge.

Stewart Pringle, the show’s writer, says that he first visited the chapel in 2008 when reading for a Master’s degree at Jesus College. The building immediately struck a chord with him. “I liked the idea that a group of people who were shunned still had a place for worship. It’s a beautiful building, with a huge amount of character.”

Pringle adds that the Leper Chapel is an apt venue for the play, given how the story, set in York, is “about why places become haunted. It contains negative memories of contagion... of The Black Death, a dark, sad period in British history.”

But the decision to go slightly off the beaten track does not always work to a show’s advantage. When *The Spanish Tragedy* was staged at King’s College Chapel last year, reviewer Fred

Maynard complained that the actors were dwarfed by the play’s formidable setting, adding that “many people further back couldn’t hear a thing: the echo of the Chapel, so good for choral music, swallows up anything but the most crisply pronounced verse into a melisma of sound.”

The Cambridge University Gilbert and Sullivan Society’s week five freshers’ show, *HMS Pinafore*, on until tomorrow in the Upper Hall of St. Andrews Street Baptist Church, initially faced a number of logistical challenges.

Producer Lucy Kessler, who says that the venue was chosen because of its central location and good acoustics, admits that the society has had to hire and install its own truss, scaffolding, lights and cables for the show. The absence of a backstage crew room also means that actors have to be escorted from a holding room upstairs whenever it was their turn to go on stage.

But these are challenges that Kessler, and the other shows’ producers, have risen to with gusto. As Pringle tells me: “*The Ghost Hunter* is a flexible piece, and quite informally staged. We will be responding to the building, rather than dragging the whole theatre production inside it.”

Site-specific theatre is usually a more prominent feature of Easter Term. While the wealth of outdoor and promenade Shakespearean productions taking place then are always fantastic, it’s good to see these ideas being expanded into other terms’ theatrical calendars.

Acoustic problems aside, let’s look beyond the usual auditoriums and remember the great potential of the fantastic architectural sites we’re lucky enough to have in Cambridge.



The interior of Emmanuel College Chapel where the play is being performed

10 Questions with Josie Wastell

Varsity speaks to the assistant director of *Confusions*, this year’s freshers’ mainshow at the ADC



A first-year at Christ’s, Josie Wastell is studying natural sciences. Her interests range across the different disciplines of theatre, from acting to technical, and she’s

keen to get involved with as many productions as she can. At school, she set up a musical theatre society where she directed, produced and acted in *A Very Potter Musical* and *A Very Potter Sequel*.

What’s been the best moment of working on *Confusions* so far?

Rehearsing a scene which involved a lot of shouting in my room because we couldn’t get any other rehearsal space... It’s in one of the older buildings in Christ’s: I’m sure the two professors living below me could hear every word of one character’s emotional breakdown!

Which play or film director do you most admire?

I love everything Peter Jackson did in bringing to life the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. The landscapes, the sets, the costumes, the artwork, the music... everything.

What interests you most about *Confusions* as a play?

Confusions has grown on me because of how [Alan] Ayckbourn manages to write situations that are dark and upsetting and simultaneously hilariously funny. It’s a challenge to get the actors to strike the balance between portraying a real character that the audience can sympathise with and still bringing out the comedy in the situation.

Which play would you most like to direct?

The Crucible by Arthur Miller. There’s something about the last scene in the prison that is incredibly powerful and moving which I would love to try and realise on stage.

What is the greatest misconception about Cambridge or Cambridge theatre you had before you came here?

That the theatre scene is full of arts students – I’m a NatSci and (thank God) I’m not the only one!

What’s your favourite place in Cambridge?

My room in Christ’s – it’s right at the top of one of the older buildings and it looks across two of the courts and into the Master’s Garden.

What’s been your most embarrassing moment in Cambridge so far?

Turning up to the first meeting with one of my DOSs at 9am still drunk from the night before. Bit of a cliché I know, but I’m still mortified.

Who is the most eccentric person you know?

I have a friend who is completely obsessed with vegetables and recently

bought a book called *Asparagus and Other Friends*. For her birthday this year I bought her some fennel.

Do you think loneliness and isolation are problems in Cambridge? Why or why not?

It’s easy, especially during this first term, to fall into the trap of thinking you’re alone when you’ve been writing an essay all day. But then you remember your neighbour is doing exactly the same and everyone else in your corridor, building and college probably is too. And then you can get up and knock on your neighbour’s door and have a cup of tea with them. I don’t think it’s a problem unless you ignore everyone in the same boat around you and let it become one.

Which character or scenario do you relate to most in *Confusions*?

There is one character who goes stir crazy after being alone in the house just talking to her three young children for weeks. She doesn’t get dressed, doesn’t leave the house and when her neighbours come round she starts treating them like children too. Not something I’ve ever experienced of course but it does remind me of myself during exam time...

MAD ABOUT MUSEUMS

AT THE
POLAR MUSEUM

LUCY MEEKLEY

The Polar Museum was founded in 1920 as a memorial to Captain Robert Falcon Scott. It showcases discoveries about the life and science of the Antarctic and Arctic regions, and the expeditions that made them possible.

We are reminded of the sacrifices of these explorers at every step around the museum. On the wall of the entrance hall is a harrowing quote from Scott's journals which reads "These rough notes and our dead bodies must tell the tale." However, it is also a celebration of their lives, achievements and their legacy.

In the entrance hall be careful not to miss the two wonderful ceiling domes painted by Macdonald Gill. Trickier to miss is the sledge made entirely from picture frames which fills one half of the lobby in honour of the museum's current temporary exhibition *Landscapes of Exploration*, which explores artistic interpretations of Antarctica.

Inside, several cases display objects from the lives of people living in the Arctic. I was particularly taken by the collection of animal figures which included an arctic crane, beautifully made using a Muskox horn, and an ivory scene of miniature animals, men and sledges. These serve to remind us that the Arctic is not the uncultivated wasteland it is often imagined to be.

The displays then shift their focus onto the explorers. One of the most impressive objects is a barrel organ (described as "the iPod of its day") taken by William Parry on his voyage to find the North West Passage, as a means of entertainment. There is an impressive assortment of scrimshaw from whaling fleets, who would carve images, such as ships and women, into the bones and teeth of whales.

The museum holds various objects which Scott took with him on his two major Antarctic voyages, including his personal camera. The pictures developed from the camera have only recently been received by the Scott Polar Research Institute. They offer a fascinating insight into the conditions and activities on their voyage.

The final room of the museum contains the aforementioned *Landscapes of Exploration* exhibition, which will be on display until 16th November. The work comes from the ten artists and one musician who undertook residencies in the Antarctic between 2001 and 2009 and explores themes such as discovery and isolation. The museum is also working on a poetry project drawing inspiration from the polar districts.

It is this desire to engage with, and engage others with, the museum which makes it so successful. It combines its roles as a research institution and museum brilliantly, constantly working on original ways to interpret and display the researchers' work.



music



LOS CAMPESINOS!

NO BLUES



Starting a new Los Campesinos! album is an intimidating prospect and not just because of the apparently anti-Oxbridge title. It's a little like being the outsider listening to a rowdy conversation between a group of old friends. It's brash, loud and full of clever in-jokes that you don't quite get.

But that's also the joy of it, what on first listening is the musical equivalent of a friend of a friend's sister's house party quickly becomes a sappy catch up drink with old friends you haven't seen for months.

Almost every line is its own playful little fable or truism. The musical structure may initially sound a bit like a thirteen year olds first attempt to use



Garageband, but you soon realise that this selfsame boy is now closer to 33 and the album is more a monument to adolescence than the product of it.

The lyrics might have come straight from The Smiths but are presented in MGMT-esque synth-based indie pop, with just a dash more passive aggression. Tales of the escapades and love-sickness of their youth still prevail, but now they're presented more as omniscient advice than a bundle of boasts and whines.

The album is full of the kind of anthemic love-letters to adolescence that one could happily bounce around the room to, whether they're doing it ironically or not. The lyrics are as sharp as ever, referencing everything from obscure football facts to classic literature (handily both displayed in one of my favourite song titles ever, 'The Portrait Of The Trequartista As A Young Man'). Gareth David's voice still sounds like it's on the verge of breaking but he croons and crows tunelessly and is backed up throughout by some wonderful accompaniments and duets.

This album sounds a bit like the picture I have of my childhood, until I remember that I'm not actually Jez from *Peep Show*. Their music is pervasively catchy, lyrics quietly witty and every song leaves me smiling like a tale from an old friend in our favourite pub.

Zephyr Penoyre

music



M.I.A

MATANGI



Mathangi Arulpragasam leapt into everyone's consciousness after the huge success of her Mercury Prize nominated debut release *Arular* in 2005. Delivering scathing social criticisms under the guise of club-friendly singles and adopting the moniker M.I.A. (Missing In Action), she apparently achieved the impossible by giving dance music a radical agenda.

For her latest album *Matangi*, the artist has taken this radicalism further still by taking the same route as artists such as Radiohead and Eminem, bringing out her fourth LP on the internet to allow listeners to stream it for free.

As with her earlier music, M.I.A. mixes dubstep rhythms and riffs more suited to a club dance-floor with samples that evoke her own upbringing in Sri Lanka. However, unlike in *Arular*, the limitless mash-up of influences that she has collated for her latest effort seem more incongruous than inspired.

This is in stark contrast to the singles taken from her first two albums, which were unique and uplifting. When she began her music career in 2003, the

rapper's decision to mix Sri Lankan influences with more mainstream styles brought world music to a wider audience, even before Danny Boyle made it near-impossible not to associate 'Paper Planes' with his Oscar-winning film *Slumdog Millionaire*.

The eccentricity and artistic independence that have made M.I.A. so popular seems to backfire on *Matangi*. Although 'Exodus' and 'Matangi' stand out, the latter with a haunting and memorable refrain, all of the tracks eventually melt into indistinctive, repetitive white noise.

The songs on her other releases are all individually recognisable, however her nonsensical lyrics quickly become frustrating on this album. For somebody who has condemned contemporary performers in the past, claiming that "every bit of music out there that's making it into the mainstream is really about nothing," she appears to say very little on her latest release.

While M.I.A.'s music normally reveals esoteric influences and an instantly recognisable sound, *Matangi* only seems to consist of the soundtrack to a club night or an achingly cool film. Although the title of one of the songs on the album is the hopeful 'Y.A.L.A.' (You Always Live Again), it seems as if all M.I.A. has done to update her output is to add a persistent dance rhythm, instead of rejuvenating it with the originality of her other works.

The rapper whose music has seduced Danny Boyle, BRIT awards judges and the general public seems to have gone AWOL: can we have the real M.I.A. back please?

Emily Handley

television



DOWNTON ABBEY

ITV



"All life is a series of problems which we must try and solve," pondered Violet to a melancholic Edith in this final episode. "First one, then the next, and the next, until – at last – we die. Why don't you get us an ice cream?" And thus she summed up the raison d'être of *Downton Abbey* in one neat little nugget of wisdom: endless drama, but never without cosy traditions.

This time, the cosy tradition was the annual bazaar. Cora – who was apparently in charge – fussed around with lists a lot whilst everyone else did all the work. As *Downton's* least

developed character, Cora appears to exist only to lie in bed with a tea tray making comments about other people's business.

The resolution of the whole footman-kitchen maid love triangle/square/indeterminate polygon that has been inducing yawns across the country since episode one, was fairly underwhelming.

In the end, Ivy wasn't interested in Jimmy or Alfred, Alfred regretted not being interested in Daisy, Daisy regretted Alfred not being interested in her earlier and Jimmy was interested in nothing but downing punch at the bazaar.

So having sat through all those squabbles week after week, in the end no one even got engaged or died. *Downton*, you disappoint. It did, however, leave room for a touching moment between Daisy and Mrs Patmore and it was lovely to see Daisy do something other than mope behind potato peelings for once.

But let's talk about Bates and Mr Green. This week, Bates took a trip

to 'York'. "What were you up to?" asked Anna, knowing full well that 'York' meant 'London'. "This and that," replied Bates casually, but his eyes had a different story. "Nothing major," they glinted. "Went shopping. Murdered a valet. Y'know, this and that."

No one can do murderous nonchalance like Bates. Of course, we don't know he murdered Green. Not until the end of the episode when it turned out Green had been run over by a bus. Then we're pretty sure he probably did.

To be honest, I'm still 100% convinced that Bates

murdered his first wife, so it wouldn't surprise me if said bus was constructed from pastry and laced with arsenic (see series 3).

Dramatic death aside, it was a fairly tame end to a series that, in every aspect, has been a huge improvement on the last. It's been nice to see a different side to Mary. Bitchy Mary had got a bit dull, likewise Sappy Wife Mary. It was touch-and-go whether we were going to have to endure a whole series of Mourning Mary, but luckily she transformed fairly quickly into Kick-Ass Businesswoman Mary, who rejected doting suitors, rescued pigs, had mud fights, and suddenly inexplicably knew how to scramble an egg.

By the time last night's episode ended, she'd already rejected another two advances from Gillingham and Blake. I think we can guarantee they'll both be back for Christmas dinner.

Fiona Stainer



film



LE WEEK-END

DIR. ROGER MICHELL



Le Week-End proves an uncomfortable reminder that studying at Cambridge does not mean you are going to be somebody.

Husband and wife Nick (Jim Broadbent) and Meg (Lindsay Duncan), now in their golden years and nearly empty-nesters, are on their thirtieth anniversary sojourn in Paris. While Nick is looking forward to settling into a quieter routine and to rekindling the couple's romance, Meg wants to break the shackles of her

role as mother and secondary school teacher. The tender and thoughtful film is at its heart a bittersweet clash between these two characters.

The last time Nick and Meg were in the City of Light was on their honeymoon back in their youth. Instead of bounding up the steps of Montmartre, now they huff and puff and – bugger! – their knees have gone. A weekend alone together forces them to reflect on the years gone by. And so, at a gentle pace, the film deals tenderly and thoughtfully with the themes of ageing and true love.

"Oh, how dull, and not at all relevant to me!" you might suppose. Unfortunately, we are all indeed

headed for middle and even old age, and will have to confront the same questions as this pair of geriatrics.

Strolling down the boulevards of Paris would have anyone asking "why would you live anywhere else?" (especially if home happens to be Birmingham). With their layabout son finally out of the house, Nick

and Meg wonder whether it is too late to sell up and buy a flat in the Marais. They could start over! Have a second youth! For me it was all a bit too close for comfort. I have heard my parents' musings on the very same premise.

What really made me squirm, though, was when Nick reveals he is a Cantabrigian! Acceptance into this great seat of learning arouses great aspirations for the future in the

majority. Yet *Le Week-End* shows us that we may always remain a "potential Nobel Laureate" and that our book might never get published, or even written.

The setting is Le Gai Paris, but that only serves to throw the firmly British timbre of the film and its characters into relief. Golden nuggets of the nation's black humour had the whole audience chortling away. Although Hanif Kureishi's script dealt with familiar themes, it was not schmaltzy in the slightest. A reminder that we might as well enjoy circling the drain before the final flush.

Le Week-End is a wonderful and funny piece with stellar performances from the cast. If you liked director Roger Michell's *Enduring Love* or *Notting Hill*, and if you're a fan of Woody Allen or Richard Linklater's *Before Sunrise*, *Before Sunset* or *Before Midnight*, you'll love this.

India Matharu-Daley

audiobook



ZADIE SMITH

THE EMBASSY OF CAMBODIA



"There's always somebody who wants to be the big man." Zadie Smith's new short story *The Embassy of Cambodia*, which first appeared in *The New Yorker* in February, is all about power.

It tells the story of Fatou, a migrant servant to the Derawal family in Willesden, who withhold her wages and passport. She finds some freedom on Monday mornings, when she sneaks away from work and steals her employer's guest pass to go swimming at the local health centre.

Previously walled in to the resort in which she worked in West Africa, Fatou is now excluded by the walls of private houses and those of the mysterious new Cambodian Embassy. During her coffees in a Tunisian cafe with Andrew, a Nigerian business student, she talks with him about being on the wrong side of the wall: "Are we born to suffer?" she asks.

All Fatou can see above the wall of the embassy on her walks to the swimming pool is the arc of a shuttlecock in a mysterious game of badminton. The chapters record the score, 0-1 to 0-21, but we never find out who wins.

At only 69 pages long, *The Embassy of Cambodia* is simple, unpretentious and quite different from Smith's more experimental *NW*, also set in Willesden. Not a long story, but nothing short of brilliant.

What is even better, though, is the audiobook version, read by Zadie herself. As someone who associates

audiobooks with the droning of the cassette player in granddad's car, I was surprised at how much I enjoyed this one.

Perhaps reading aloud works best with poetry; audio versions of novels can be painfully slow. Yet being just 55 minutes long, *The Embassy of Cambodia* can be listened to in one

sitting. Once you start listening, it is almost impossible not to continue to the end.

Zadie, who sang as a jazz singer while she studied at

Cambridge, has a wonderfully deep voice. Her reading of Andrew's dialogue, Nigerian accent and all, is very convincing. Audiobook readings can be mechanical, but because Zadie is reading her own work she can articulate all its comic and allusive nuances.

Penguin might have been thinking of Christmas stocking fillers when they published this tiny book and

I won't be surprised if I see people taking it out of handbags and pockets on the tube in January. Next time I'm on the tube to Willesden though, I'll be taking out my earphones, and so should you.

Joe Temple



K'Boum and Oversees

Circus

K'BOUM AND OVERSEES

An evening of the best in British and French contemporary circus. It promises "BMX cycling, tomfoolery and break dance." Nice.

7.30pm, 20th November
Cambridge Junction
Clifton Way

Lecture

ILLUSTRATED TALKS

A series of talks by Geff Coombe in association with TCMS focusing on Schubert in general and the last sonata in particular.

7.30pm, 19th November
Music Faculty
West Road

Music

SUNA ALAN

The Human Rights activist and singer presents a programme of women's songs from Turkey and Kurdistan.

7.30pm, 16th November
Little St Mary's Church
Trumpington Street

Film

CATCHING FIRE

The next instalment in *The Hunger Games* trilogy. Go in the afternoon to avoid the tweens.

In cinemas now

Comedy

PHIL WANG

The former Footlight returns to the ADC for one night only, with his first full hour of stand up.

11pm, 19th November
ADC Theatre
Park Street

Theatre

THE DUCK HOUSE

Ben Miller stars in this new political comedy, centred around the 2009 expenses scandal.

18th-23rd November
Cambridge Arts Theatre
St Edward's Passage

Reviews & Listings



FOR THE LOVE OF SPORT

Roxana Antohi
REAL TENNIS

I'll be honest - after trying shooting last week, having a go at real tennis seemed far less exciting. I mean, I've done 'normal' tennis before and, dyspraxic as I am, I still managed to hit the ball every so often. So I thought "how hard can real tennis be?"

In theory, it sounds fascinating - it's often called 'the game of kings', because it's what bored Royals used to play a few hundred years back. Feeling ever-so-slightly smug about trying the blue-bloods' favourite pastime, I ventured to the court on Burrell's Walk to try the thing for myself.

The court is very unusual. Asymmetrical, it has sloping roofs and various openings in the walls. The person serving cannot do so directly to the opposition; instead it has to hit the ball against the sloping roof. The ball then moves across the roof and lands on the other side, where it's hit back directly. This in itself seems easy. But there are more rules - about the serve, the bounces of the ball, how you can score... personally, within ten minutes, I was utterly confused.

I didn't let this put me off though, so I started in the serving corner. All I had to do was to aim the ball at the sloping roof, where it was going to roll on the other side. But when I tried, the goddamn ball kept coming to my side, instead of rolling nicely where it was meant to. After 20 tries I finally managed to get it to the opposition. Thinking to myself that I should leave at my peak, I decided to change sides and be on the receiving end. But things got worse. I was simply unable to get the ball when it came rolling from the sloping wall. If I did, it would still land on my side - and crush my dreams of ever attaining real tennis glory.

With increased frustration at my own ineptitude, I hit the ball harder when I finally caught it. And so it happened that I managed to send the ball flying while at the same time hitting myself as hard as I could in the face with the wooden racquet.

Shooting pain and tears sprang up along with shame and for a few minutes I was unable to move or see. I decided that I had made enough impact on the team (and my face) and maybe I should just write about the sport from a theoretical perspective. The supportive captain tried to take my thoughts off the pain by telling me about how Shakespeare wrote about the sport in 'Henry V'.

Upon returning home, I put some ice on my nose and got my Shakespeare out. In the first act, a French prince sends King Henry a gift of tennis balls as a joke, in response to Henry's claim to the French throne. Henry replies to the French Ambassadors: "*when we have matched our rackets to these balls, we will, in France, by God's grace, play a set [that] shall strike his father's crown into the hazard.*" I don't know what experience of physical contact the French prince might have had with racquets, but had I been in his place, I would most definitely have been scared.

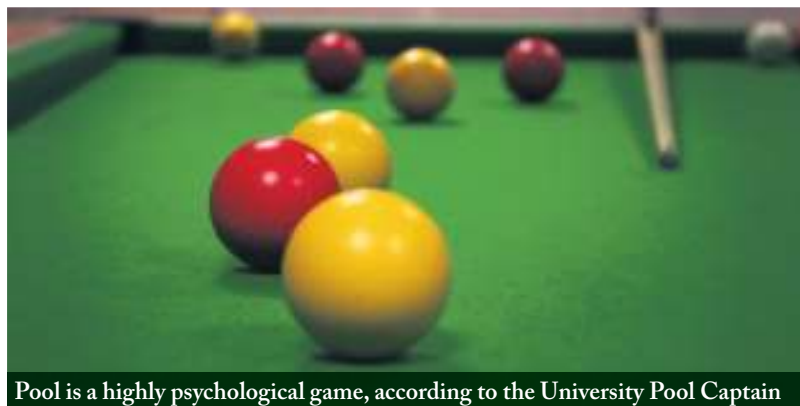
The outsiders of Cambridge sport

Matt Worth believes that real sport can also be found in less obvious places, so he investigates the Chess, Darts, Pool and Tiddlywinks Clubs within the University

Matt Worth
DEPUTY SPORTS EDITOR

The legendary Boat Race is televised worldwide, and thousands of fans from each side make the pilgrimage to Twickenham each year to watch the Varsity rugby match. But some of the most popular sports at Cambridge rely less on power and athleticism, and more on delicate control or complex strategy. It's time to take a look at the differing fortunes of some of Cambridge's indoor sports and games.

Take the University Chess Club for example. Chess is a famously cerebral game, so it's not surprising that it has a proud history at Cambridge. It's been played here for centuries (not always with official support - the mediaeval statutes of Peterhouse banned the game) and the current club traces its roots to 1856. Varsity matches have been played since 1873, and team members are awarded a Half Blue. Robert Starley, President of the club, says of the game: "the great thing about chess is that there's no luck involved - if you play better, you should win". It's far from dull - Robert believes that creativity and unpredictability and the ability to judge the right moment to launch into an attack are all crucial. The game is one of pure skill, which is something



Pool is a highly psychological game, according to the University Pool Captain

Cambridge has traditionally had lots of - we've produced several Grand Masters in the past. Whether you want to follow in their footsteps, or just enjoy a game or two, Robert encourages players of all levels to attend the club's meetings.

The current fortunes of darts at Cambridge contrast with those of chess. Daniel Morrison is unofficial President of the Darts Club, but he says the sport has been dormant for a while at Cambridge due to the lack of a "critical mass" of regular players and club members. Daniel would be keen to hear from new arrow-throwers, to help the club recover the glory days of the mid-2000s, which featured a lively inter-college league and even a televised Varsity Match. He describes the sport as inexpensive, fun, and a great

leveler: "everyone is equal; strength doesn't matter, nor height very much, and it's easy to improve quite quickly just by playing."

Another 1980s television favourite, snooker, has also been low key in recent years. However Rik O'Connor, President of the Pool & Snooker Club, tells us this year there'll be a Cambridge snooker tournament. It looks likely that a Varsity team will be fielded, too. Pool meanwhile is in rude health. This year there's a four division inter-college league, featuring no less than 32 teams from 20 colleges. There's also a coppers tournament; last year, Robinson won the double. As befits a bar-room sport, there's a strong social side: "it's the best way to tour the college bars and pubs of Cambridge", says Rik. The men's Varsity

team recently ended a 3-year Oxford winning streak, while the women are trying to recapture their dominance of the late 1990s. There's a prestigious BUCS tournament, held each year at a holiday camp in Great Yarmouth. Rik tells us anyone looking to take up this accessible, highly psychological sport - it's all about coolness under pressure, apparently - should get involved with their college team and come to the club's practice sessions.

Last but not least, Cambridge also plays host to surely the nation's proudest and most venerable university tiddlywinks club. The club was founded in 1955, and organizes contests for a number of curiously named trophies (like the Muscovy Duck Trophy, or the University Drunken Mixed pairs). Proving they're (reasonably) serious about what they do, the Varsity team - the Quarter Blues - take on Oxford at their distinctive, deceptively technical game. They also enter national tournaments. According to the club's website, Cambridge University is home to the reigning British men's singles champion, Dr. Patrick Barrie.



Blue Golfers remember Royston

The Blues went as 'the Outlaws' to Royston last week, but were left in low spirits

Adam Barker
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

The CUGC were at Royston this past Sunday - but don't tell the dons. Historically, Cambridge University sportsmen were not allowed to partake on Sundays, being the day of rest, so when two Cambridge alumni cut the holes on Royston common and invited the University to play on a Sunday, a pseudonym was adopted: the Outlaws.

The weather was cold, with a brisk northerly wind rushing down from the Baltic, but a warming mid-November sun was more than welcomed. The first group on the tee were Captain James and returnee Adam Lewicki who produced pearlescent drives amongst the raucous rugby matches taking place behind them.

Next up were Owen Williams and Jack 'the Ripper' Atherton who also produced forward movement amongst the humdrum. Chris arrived next on the tee wearing only a polo shirt and jumper, but this was soon rectified. His opening drive was rather perpendicular, and was reminiscent of the wild right turn taken by the HMS Rodney as she took flank of the Bismarck to get a better gunning position. He was accompanied by newbie Matthew Bellamy who was also feeling the heat and kept to his polo/jumper combination. The anchorman and woman were the Felix Hill and Francesca Bastianello duo, not renowned for their resilience to cold.

A slow start for Matthew meant he knew he needed something special to come of his pitch approach to the 3rd and after taking a worm's mouthful



The Light Blues enjoyed sunny weather while down at Royston, although the northerly wind caused some complaints

of turf, his thinned pitch stopped at 6 feet and he would go on to miss. No grooves were harmed in the making of that shot. A similarly wild time was had by Owen Williams, whose long pull into the botany left him feeling a little passionate.

The 9th was a rather dramatic bit of Northern Hertfordshire: Adam's opponent dispatched chip to send him 1 down; Jack thread one through foliage to the front of the green and Matthew thinned another pitch. The pitch went on to rattle the pin with an exocet trajectory and accuracy that even the General Belgrano would be proud of.

Chris manufactured a very neat par on the 12th to keep his match alive. He then stared up the hill on the 13th with

the ground ahead to produce the greatest comeback since Lazarus.

The top match had taken quite a turn, James had fought back from his 3 down to be all square on the short 16th. After a steady start, Adam found himself 3 down and hit a putt that covered so much ground that no amount of forward movement had ever been matched on short turf since General Lee's soldiers marched forward at the Second Battle of Lexington.

James' ball went underground on the left of 17th, putting our captain 1 down on the last. A peach of a drive and a stunning chip weren't enough, a 1 down loss from the fearless leader.

Losses from the rest of the team put the congregation in low spirits and

when Francesca and Felix arrived on the 18th tee, everyone feared the worst - the whitewash. Francesca could have sealed a point against Howie had some 6 foot putts dropped; both the CUGC and the Royston members hoped she would prevail.

Felix came down the last fairway with a great deal of conviction and vigour and announced his 1 up position. He went on to play a very deft pitch and box for birdie, another kick in the proverbials for his opponent whose beloved football team had just lost to league favourites Newcastle. Final result: Royston 7, the Outlaws 1.

The Blues look forward to their journey into dark blue territory next weekend as they play Huntercombe.

Footloose: best dancing spots in Cambridge

After years of competitive dancing, **Kittiphat Am Chanthong** has legs that women would kill for and skills that put most men to shame. *Varsity* has asked him for his top tips for dancing in town

I had been dancing for a few years before arriving in Cambridge. Admittedly, I thought I would find it difficult to find dance classes and socials around here. As it turns out, I was wrong. Cambridge is actually a great place to be a dancer, as there are many classes where you can start learning, improve your existing skills and even explore new styles of dance like belly dancing or swing. After a couple of years, I can recommend a few venues for those looking to find their own signature moves.

WOLFSON LATIN NIGHT

This list would not be complete without mentioning one of the best salsa and bachata (a type of romantic dance originating in the Dominican Republic) nights in Cambridge. This extremely popular latin night is on every Thursday from 9pm-12am at Wolfson College (£3 for non-Wolfson students). The night consists of a class in the first hour and general dancing after, so it is perfect for any beginners who want to both learn and then put things into practice in one go!

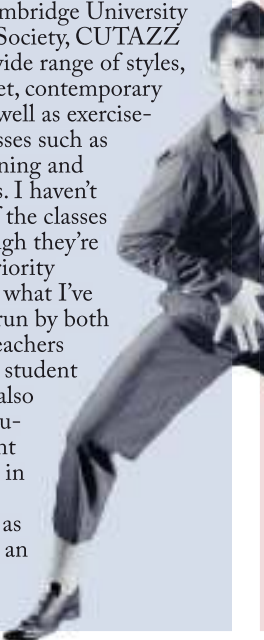


CAMBRIDGE DANCERS' CLUB

For me, CDC is the home of Ballroom and Latin dancing in Cambridge. If you like what you see on Dancing with the Stars or Strictly Come Dancing, this club is for you. CDC offers various classes suitable for any level of experience. Just started? You can show up at any beginner class and learn the basic steps and routines. If you're feeling competitive, like I did last year, you may join the DanceSport team and beat the Other Place at the national level (we have been doing so for the past few years!). CDC also hosts a free social general dancing at the University Centre just off Mill Lane every Friday from 8.30 – 10.30pm. It has a great atmosphere – a perfect place to pick up new moves and meet new people.

CUTAZZ

Originally Cambridge University Tap and Jazz Society, CUTAZZ now offers a wide range of styles, including street, contemporary and lyrical as well as exercise-orientated classes such as body conditioning and dance aerobics. I haven't been to any of the classes myself (although they're high on my priority list), but from what I've heard they're run by both professional teachers and dedicated student teachers. It is also a great opportunity if you want to be involved in performing at the Mumford as they also have an annual show!



BODYWORK

One downside about being stuck in Cambridge during the holiday period is that there's barely anything to do. If you're a dancer but can't find any classes run by the university societies, then BodyWork is an excellent choice. Based at Cambridge Dance Studio, they offer many classes ranging from ballet to Zumba. The classes are a little pricey at £7 per session for non-members, however, I went to a few contemporary classes and they really did help me improve my technique. This is the place to go to if you really want to improve and get a bit more serious about dancing.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY DANCE SOCIETY

Originally Cambridge Contemporary Dance Workshops, this society hosted some of the finest hip-hop, jazz, contemporary and Zumba during the last two years. There are fewer classes at the moment, but one worth mentioning is the weekly hip-hop class run by the leader of the legendary Mirrors Dance Crew. Each class focuses on basic hip-hop moves and then incorporate those into a routine to incredible tunes. These classes are usually on every Saturday at 1.30pm at Kelsey Kerridge (£3 entry, free class). An excellent choice if you're feeling energetic.



KING'S TANGO

The one thing I know about King's College, apart from being left-wing and having a beautiful chapel, is that they have a great group of dancers. Right next to the college bar, the King's Tango team run a weekly Argentine Tango session with a bit of lesson for you to learn some new movements followed by general dancing, for free! I'm still amazed at how much control you get when it comes to Tango. At some point you can just tell your partner to close their eyes and follow your lead and you both will still look amazing.

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Sport

FOR THE LOVE OF SPORT
Roxana Antohi tries a new sport every week. See what impact Real Tennis makes on her on page 30.



Sarah recently received a Sir Arthur Marshall Future Champions Award from Cambridge City Council, awarded to young people who play sport at a high level

SPORTSCENE

Blue time for Birmingham

BASKETBALL The Blues had their first away match of the season against Birmingham. Cambridge took an early lead, but without many of their outside shots falling, the Blues were unable to break the game open and entered half-time with only a nine point lead. Upon resuming play, Cambridge got into an offensive groove. Several fast break baskets and a solid zone defense gave the Blues a comfortable lead of over twenty points, and they coasted through the fourth quarter to win the game 68-49.

Blues lose at Chichester

FOOTBALL The Blues travelled to Chichester for their second league game of the season. Griffiths scored the first goal early on, but luck soon went against the Light Blues as a penalty was awarded for an unintentional handball. Haigh made the save but was unable to stop the follow up. In the second half the Blues scored first, but ultimately it was not to be their day as a lax defence allowed a Chichester midfielder to score a third goal, with a fourth coming soon after and the Blues missing a late penalty. Final score 4-2 for Chichester.

Lucky streak for Lacrosse

WOMEN'S LACROSSE The Blues are so far unbeaten this season with the following scores in their BUCS Premier South League: Cambridge 17-5 Bath, Cambridge 8-6 Bristol, Cambridge 14-11 Exeter. Following three away games the Blues will now be playing at home until the holidays. They are looking to build on their wins as they come up against Oxford this Wednesday. The Blues are aiming to win the Premiership South division once again, as well as making it to the BUCS finals.

Varsity selection heats up

CROSS-COUNTRY The first Hare and Hounds Varsity selection race took place at Stevenage, arguably the highest standard cross-country league in Britain. The women's race saw three Hare and Hounds take top 10 finishes. For the men's race, Alex Short took second place by a very small margin. The final selection race for Varsity will be on 16th November at Wandlebury Common.

Novices take on Oxford

MODERN PENTATHLON On 9th November the Modern Pentathlon novices faced up to their Oxford counterparts in what was an extremely close fought match. The fence was won by Kennedy and Bliss for the ladies, while a very impressive run saw Hodgson take an early lead in the men's race. Cambridge showed dominance in the pool and on the shooting range to win both ladies' and men's matches. The overall winners were Greenaway for the ladies and Hodgson for the men.

Find more match reports online at
www.varsity.co.uk/sport

Cambridge's future Paralympian

Sarah Leiter is a Cambridge student who manages to combine her studies with training with the GB Goalball team. **Roxana Antohi** asks her just how she does it



Sarah Leiter is one of those people who can just light up a room. She's currently doing a PhD in clinical biochemistry at Newnham, balancing that against training with the GB Goalball team. This week I sat down with her to find out her secrets and learn more about her achievements.

What is your disability and what impact has it had on your sports involvement?
I was born with Albinism, which leads to a lack of pigment in my hair, skin and eyes. I am very sensitive to sunlight and my eyes are not fully developed. With my glasses I can see from 6 feet what other people can see from 60 feet; lighting, too dim or too bright, makes a huge difference.

I had a really tough time in school when we had to play sports which relied on my ability to see a moving ball. While playing rugby, I was OK with seeing the people on the pitch but struggled to keep track of the ball and hardly ever managed to catch it.

It did not bother me too much at the time and a few years ago I would never have considered playing a disabled sport because I did not identify myself with the word disabled.

What is your opinion of disability sport provisions at Cambridge?

Through the college system I think there is a lot of inclusion on college teams. For example, the Selwyn College Boat Club has been working really hard this term to allow a blind fresher to row as a novice. Many sports can be made accessible through just a few modifications or altered instructions. I would like to see this inclusivity become more public so that disabled students are more aware of the options they have, and don't have to feel that they may be a burden on a team. Providing inclusive opportunities is fantastic but just having a specific sport or team can be advantageous. It allows people to compete on a level playing field and also provides social support to many.

Tell us more about Goalball – what is it and when did you start playing?

Goalball is a Paralympic team sport for blind and visually impaired athletes. Anyone can play goalball – you wear a blindfold so there is no need to be visually impaired. The Cambridge team got started in 2012 by the Council and has grown ever since. We now have two teams (one novice and one in-

termediate) and welcome people of all ages and sporting backgrounds.

Joining the Cambridge Dons Goalball Club has been the first time in my life I've had contact with other visually impaired people – it's great to share our experiences, troubles and amusing stories. It's been amazing to participate in coaching and see players gain confidence. It has also given me the chance to succeed at sport for the first time.

You are now training with the GB team. How did you get involved with them?

I joined the Cambridge Goalball Club in September 2012 and took part in a couple of novice level competitions. Then, in April, I got asked to attend a Talent ID day for the GB women's squad.

A couple of weeks later I was at my first GB training camp and then in early June I went to Poland for my first international competition with the development team. Joining the GB squad was not part of my plan – it just happened. Anyone who wants to do elite level sport needs to love the sport

