

VARSITY

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The age of the self?

Endemic narcissism or the ultimate fourth wave feminist act?
Nina de Paula Hanika traces the history of the selfie.

Why Cambridge is at the forefront of exploring the Milky Way



Science P13

Over 1,000 paid below living wage

Figures reveal that 905 staff are on zero-hours and casual contracts

King's comes out worst in table of colleges paying the living wage

Phelim Brady

News Correspondent

28 of Cambridge's 31 colleges are failing to pay hundreds of staff a living wage, according to newly released figures which lay bare the extent of low pay and precarious employment at the University of Cambridge.

In the same month that it was revealed the university's vice-chancellor had received a £20,000 pay rise, records released under the Freedom of Information Act show that 1,089 college and university staff are receiving wages of less than £7.65 per hour.

The living wage, which represents a £1.34 increase over the minimum wage, is said to be the minimum hourly wage on which a person can support themselves, and is calculated annually by the Centre for Research in Social Policy.

The figures, which cover the month of November 2013, also reveal for the first time the widespread use of zero-hours and casual contracts at the university, with more than half of all colleges involved.

Some 905 staff across the university are working on the flexible contracts, meaning they have no guarantee of work, and may lack access to maternity and redundancy rights, and protection from unfair dismissal. There were calls

to outlaw the controversial contracts from some MPs and trade unions, after they were the subject of a House of Commons debate last October.

The university itself reported employing 343 workers on zero-hours contracts and 83 staff paid less than £7.65 per hour.

Among the colleges, King's College led with 123 workers paid under the living wage, followed by Clare with 85, Churchill with 57 and Peterhouse with 53. Cambridge's wealthiest colleges, Trinity and St John's, reported 50 and 33 under the living wage respectively.

Fiona Woolston, one of CUSU's Living Wage Officers, said: "The living wage is about respect. It's about acknowledging that every person who contributes to the success of this university should have the right to an appropriate standard of living for themselves and their family, or to be able to confidently save for such a future."

"The Cambridge Vice Chancellor now earns £334,000, in contrast to the £14,789 earned each year by a member of staff on the living wage; however, many staff do not even receive this."

Homerton College and Hughes Hall were alone in reporting that they employ no staff paid below the living wage or on zero-hours contracts. St Catharine's also pays all staff the living wage, but has 18 workers on flexible contracts.

However, a number of colleges, including Trinity, Downing, Fitzwilliam and Peterhouse have suggested that in addition to their hourly wage, bonuses and benefits should be taken into account.

Paul Warren, bursar at Clare College, said that "when bonuses and benefits at Clare are included we do not have a single permanent member

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CHRIS WILLIAMSON

Student takes on gender segregation

Chloe Clifford-Astbury

Deputy News Editor

Radha Bhatt, a first-year student at King's College, has written a letter demanding that Universities UK (UUK) admits that its controversial gender segregation guidance is "unlawful".

In November, UUK issued guidance which said it could be acceptable for Muslim societies and other bodies to segregate their members by gender during public meetings on campus. This guidance was quickly withdrawn and put under review after widespread criticism.

A spokeswoman for UUK emphasised that the institution was opposed to enforced segregation, but that where voluntary segregation was concerned, the law was less clear.

Although not seeking to take legal action, Bhatt argues that the "discriminatory" values that might prompt gender segregation have no place in universities, which are "secular, neutral public bodies". In addition, Bhatt seeks assurance that the guidance will not be resurrected.

"These guidelines basically were the UUK capitulating to the views of extreme Islamist speakers", she said.

She also disputes UUK's use of the term 'voluntary'. "[Women] are going to be intimidated by their peers and the speaker themselves to conform to what [the speaker] wants to happen."

"People say 'voluntary segregation' – that's not even a thing."

Bhatt used the example of racial segregation to illustrate what she perceives as the absurdity of optional segregation.

The UUK guidance prompted outrage from a number of quarters. The Equality and Human Rights Commission announced that the segregation that would be allowed by UUK's decision contravenes gender equality laws, and a petition opposing the move garnered 8,000 signatures. Prime Minister David Cameron also criticised the guidance, saying that it "urgently" needed to be reviewed to avoid any kind of segregation.

Bhatt has not yet received a response from UUK.

VIVA LA REVOLUCIÓN: "I'll saunter into office", joked Russell Brand on Monday at the Cambridge Union, before quickly adding: "But before I'm going to turn from 'don't ever vote' to 'vote for me' we need to know exactly what it is that we're voting for."

Interview: Former Varsity editor Patrick Kingsley on his exploits in Egypt (p. 12)



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Hannah Wilkinson goes on a Bitcoin pub crawl around Cambridge, in order to find out what the new internet currency is all about



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Romanian student Roxana Antohi reflects on the government's immigration rhetoric on the lifting of border restrictions



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Jackson Caines meets the new female drag group 'Pecs' before their first performance on the Battersea Barge in London



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Sport

Ollie Thicknesse argues that homophobia still poisons sport, after a former footballer came out last week



It's not all me, me, me

Self. Selfie. Selfish.

This was the take of some commentators on the fact that 2013 was very much, as ex-editor of this newspaper Archie Bland wrote, "the year of the selfie". Everyone was getting in on the act, from the Pope to Miley Cyrus (the latter of whom posted 121 selfies on Twitter alone – top of the leaderboard for celebrities).

It is easy to see why our obsession with the selfie has been linked to accusations of selfishness and self-promotion. Just this week it was revealed that public money has been spent on commissioning portraits of MPs, with £12,000 going on immortalising Dianne Abbott.

Yet it's not just the elected who are at it. One report suggests that the average person spends one hour a day on social media, with users carefully curating an online image of themselves through Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

33 million people in the UK now have

Facebook, which amounts to two thirds of the online population. More than ever, there seems to be a compulsive need to narrate every moment of our lives online.

However, this obsession with the self can be balanced against the sheer number of people that will turn out to listen to what other people have to say. Leaving his poor choice of words aside, Russell Brand's appearance at the Cambridge Union on Monday demonstrated the ability of one person to speak out against the status-quo, and demand an alternative.

While the good ideas may have to be weeded out from the bad, there was a sense of optimism that something can be done.

It takes one person to speak out in a crowd for something to change. As much as 2013 was the year of the selfie, it was also the year of the online campaign. Previously unknown to the majority of the Twitter population, Caroline Criado-Perez made a name of herself – unselfishly – firstly for

her petition to keep women on banknotes, and secondly for a campaign against online trolls.

It is easy to see the contrast between the anonymity of the troll – one of whom admitted to being driven by boredom – and the decision to give up your anonymity in order to take a stand and say something meaningful.

Another example is Thomas Hitzlsperger, an ex-Premier League footballer previously unknown to the non-football watching population, who revealed that he was gay last week.

The taboo remains huge in the sport, and the former Aston Villa midfielder suggested that there was a "long way to go" before there would ever be an openly gay footballer playing in the premier division.

People like Hitzlsperger and Criado-Perez turn the selfie trend on its head. Change will only happen if people continue to speak out about themselves and their experiences. Maybe our fascination with the selfie is no bad thing after all.



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letters@varsity.co.uk

A RESPONSE TO "COPS OFF CAMPUS: THE PROBLEM WITH STUDENT PROTEST"

Despite the blood on the streets of Euston on 5th December 2013, much mainstream media attention has focused only on the 'apparent' use of police brutality at the recent "Cops off Campus" demonstrations.

Louis Degenhardt follows this trend by providing an analysis of the actions of "seemingly innocent" peaceful protesters who were arrested and "allegedly assaulted" by the police.

Perhaps what mars said analysis more than its inability to focus on the facts however, is its complete incomprehension of the motivation

of the students involved.

In reality – and despite his 'sympathy' for the protests – Degenhardt remains purely 'outside' the claims of the movement.

This is first evinced, I think, by the author's focus on the most trivial aspects of the campaign. Specifically, the author focuses on how much public support the campaign has acquired, and the "immature and entirely inappropriate means" taken up by the students in question. By the latter, the author refers to the bins and doors damaged outside Senate House on 11 December 2013.

These are only trivial aspects of the protest inasmuch as they barely touch upon what issues have driven the movement so far. These include: the privatisation of student services; the prospect of the abolishment of University of London Union; the recent injunction against sit-in protest on campus; and the 3 Cosas campaign for sick pay, holidays and pensions for the outsourced workers at the University of London.

Is protest against these also an "immature and entirely inappropriate means" to an end? As long as we continue to judge the actions of protestors

with reference to the "letter to their MP" criteria, then of course, they will continue to "appear" as "legally dubious actions" – and the students themselves, only "seemingly innocent".

The point however is to realise that there is an ethical economy operating behind the destruction of bins and doors, and that the desires produced and constrained by that economy now deserve more of our attention than established voices that have hitherto dominated debate.

*David Ventura,
London School of Economics*

ON RUSSELL BRAND

I fear we are at risk of becoming far too sensitive. Save the protests and arguments for those who actually attack LGBT people, those who use such words in hatred and anger. Clearly, Brand is not one of those people. I'm very concerned that we, as a community, are becoming far too knee-jerk in response to every instance. Enough already.

Robbie Wallis, online

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“IT SEEMS AS THOUGH THE BRUTALITY OF COLONIALISM HAS BEEN FORGOTTEN AND IS REPEATEDLY IGNORED”

Pearl Mahaga
Comment (P. 15)

“Entire sections of the film are nothing more than video montages”

Mandela:
Long Walk to Freedom

Week 1

The Canon: A Literary Sketch Show



1,089

Number of staff across the university paid less than the living wage.

THE TOP 5

ONLINE

1. “Shut up you Harry Potter poofs”: Russell Brand doesn’t hold back at the Union
2. Striptease, satire and drag: Pecs takes to the stage
3. Cambridge ranked one of the highest in UK porn poll
4. Varsity readers’ panel: Is this Russell’s revolution?
5. Mark Duggan: no justice, no peace

**News meeting
7pm on Tuesday, Maypole**

**Comment meeting
4pm on Saturday in Varsity offices**

We’re looking for photographers and illustrators.

**Email editor@varsity.co.uk
for more information**

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of staff" earning less than the equivalent of £7.65.

Colleges also reported that a number of the staff paid under the living wage or working zero-hours contracts were students working part-time, or 'casual' workers with other jobs.

Jesus College said that "many of the zero-hours workers are students looking for experience and people who need some flexibility in their working arrangements."

A spokesman from the University referred to its guidance on pay: "[T]he majority of jobs below the living wage are generally trainee grades or individuals on zero hours contracts."

Late last year, Oxford University agreed to pay the living wage to its in-house staff, but without a guarantee that outsourced agency staff would receive the same. Most university colleges in London have been living wage employers for a number of years.

A number of Cambridge colleges, said that they are keeping their basic rate of pay under review. Selwyn said that staff can expect to see a pay rise in line with the living wage later this year. "It is likely that we will adjust again at the annual pay round next August, but there is currently a timing difference," said Nick Downer, bursar at Selwyn.

The investigation has also uncovered that more than half of all colleges are using staff from external employment agencies, often to cover tasks such as catering on an ad hoc basis. Temporary agency workers have no access to redundancy pay or the right to claim unfair dismissal.

When asked whether these workers were paid the living wage, the university and a number of colleges said the information was unavailable. Only Newnham and Peterhouse said that all their agency staff are paid the living wage.

Figures also show that 55 staff across the university have opted out of the Working Time Regulations EU directive, which sets a maximum working week of 48 hours. These employees are potentially working more than 9 hours per weekday.

THE FACTS

Number of employees paid below the living wage of £7.65/hour

KING'S

123

CLARE

85

CHURCHILL

57

PETERHOUSE

53

TRINITY

50

DOWNING

49

PERSPECTIVE A KING'S COLLEGE PORTER



JESS FRANKLIN

Chris Clarkson has been working as a porter at King's College on and off for 17 years. He has attended meetings of the Living Wage Campaign and has raised the issue in a staff consultative group.

What's the reason for your interest in the Living Wage Campaign?

It's basic fairness, I just think it's the right thing to do. I get [paid] over the living wage but there's a lot of people who don't. It's wrong that they don't really. I think people should get paid enough for a decent standard of living.

Were you aware that King's had the highest number of staff being paid below the living wage?

I wasn't. And I was quite surprised to be honest with you. I always thought Kings was quite a progressive liberal college.

Have you discussed the issue with your colleagues?

I've discussed it with people in the porters' lodge and I've tried to discuss it with a few of the bedders, and they're in favour of it basically. [Whether] they're union people or not, it's the fairness thing really.

What do you think is stopping it from being implemented?

Well, the college seems to think that it does pay over the living wage when you take into consideration pensions, car parking and the like. But that's not really the issue, especially for the part-time staff.

There are free meals on duty but that's only if you're actually here while the meals are being served and if you're working full time, so I don't think they can take that into consideration at all.

Why should students be informed about the cause?

The students I've come into contact with, some of them are the prime movers in it. But a lot of the people that the students come into contact with are the bedders, and I think they should realise that they get paid under the living wage.

I think students reflect society as a whole – there are a lot of people whom it doesn't affect and so aren't aware of [the issue], so it's just a matter of consciousness and getting made aware of these situations. That's why I try to engage people in conversation to make them [more] aware.

Interview by Hannah Wilkinson

Shakeup in National Scholarship Programme

Cambridge reduces number of awards amid cuts to programme

Richard Nicholl

News Correspondent

Scores of prospective scholarship recipients could face renewed financial worry this autumn upon arriving at the University of Cambridge, after the eligibility criteria for the National Scholarship Programme (NSP) was tightened.

Following severe cuts to the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, it is expected that this is the last year that the programme will run.

The NSP has for two years provided awards in the form of bursaries and tuition fee waivers to students from families with an annual household income of £25,000 or less, but its budget is being cut from £150 million to £50 million, according to a written statement to Parliament from David Willetts, the minister for universities and science.

Although this was intended to occur in the 2015/16 academic year, Willetts announced that the government

would bring forward the planned cuts. This will cause the national minimum award to shrink from £3,000 to £2,000 per annum from the autumn of this year.

In its circular to universities taking part in the NSP, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) expressed its wish that universities continue to fund students at the previous rates until the scheme is reoriented towards postgraduate study for 2015/16.

Warwick, Leicester, York and UCL are among the institutions which have announced they will follow this instruction and fully make up the shortfall themselves.

But according to a Media FHE survey, not all universities will be able to meet this task – Southampton, Bristol and Derby will be reducing the value of their awards.

Meanwhile, although the value of each scholarship from Cambridge remains the same, the university will be reducing the number of its awards by 82, from 290 to 208.

It has also emerged that students will have to be poorer than before to receive the funds. It is expected that the programme will no longer award scholarships to those from households



The number of students receiving NSP will fall this year

earning over £18,000 per annum.

A spokesperson for the university said: "For 2014/15, the government contribution to the NSP is being reduced by two thirds. However, HEFCE have made clear their expectation that institutions should maintain the total level of funding which they had originally budgeted in support of the programme, and the University of Cambridge intends to comply with

this guidance. Under the new arrangements, Cambridge expects to make 208 awards. Each Cambridge NSP award will be worth £6,000, as in previous years."

The spokesperson added: "The NSP is only one small part of the collegiate university's extensive and flexible financial support package, which aims to ensure that no UK student with the academic ability to thrive at

Cambridge should be deterred from applying by financial concerns."

Even under its original funding arrangements, the NSP was not free from criticism. Liam Burns, NUS President 2011-13, called it an "elaborate con trick," because it was often used to waive fees rather than directly fund student living costs.

Sam Ruiz, CUSU Access Officer, emphasised the availability of other sources of funding, such as the Cambridge Bursary.

"NO UK STUDENT WITH THE ACADEMIC ABILITY TO THRIVE AT CAMBRIDGE SHOULD BE DETERRED FROM APPLYING"

He added that while the NSP scheme isn't perfect, "universities had only two weeks to respond to these cuts in funding once they were announced, giving little opportunity for institutions to come up with creative solutions."

Spanish students protest abortion law

From her year abroad in Spain, **Alice Pickard** reports on a controversial new law

Spanish students have taken to the streets in protest against a new law restricting access to abortion, which many fear will take the country back decades.

Under the new ruling, a woman will only be able to have a legal abortion if the pregnancy poses a threat to her life or physical or mental wellbeing, or if her pregnancy is a result of rape. It will also be possible in cases of severe foetal deformation.

These reforms have been met with widespread hostility. The new laws were introduced by the Partido Popular (PP), the People's Party, which came to power in November 2011. It is Spain's foremost right wing party and has strong links to the Catholic Church. On 20th December, the day the reform was passed, there were national protests against the proposed law, leading to arrests in the capital.

Many of those taking part in the protests were female students whose futures may be affected by these reforms.

One female student from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, who was unable to protest but is strongly against the new law, said: "I believe the decision to abort has to be fully made by the woman and not by men in government who will never



There have been demonstrations across Spain protesting against reduced abortion rights

have to face the problems that some young women will have to face.

"With a good social health plan that will provide free contraceptives and information about intercourse, then there should not be an increase in the number of abortions."

This is a reversal of the law introduced in 2010 by the Partido Socialista

Obrero Español (PSOE), the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party, and the changes will be more damaging for some women than for others. Women who cannot afford to go abroad to a private clinic for a safe abortion could well end up risking their lives undergoing a so-called 'backstreet abortion'.

In Madrid, a woman was

photographed begging on the streets with a sign asking for money to send her to London for an abortion.

Abortion will now be considered a criminal offence if carried out to prevent the birth of a disabled baby. The cabinet states that discrimination because of disability is an infraction of a person's human rights. Women will

no longer be able to ask for abortions without giving a reason during the first eight weeks of pregnancy, and girls under eighteen will have to inform their parents if they want an abortion.

Supporters of the reform argue that it is progressive because of its equal treatment of all human beings, disregarding any disabilities the foetus might develop. Detractors argue that, as far as expectant mothers are concerned, the law does not ensure justice.

"THE DECISION TO ABORT SHOULD NOT BE MADE BY MEN IN GOVERNMENT WHO WILL NEVER HAVE TO FACE THESE PROBLEMS"

After the PSOE's 2010 law was introduced, there was no significant increase in the number of abortions, and between 2011 and 2012 there was a fall.

The PP's proposed reforms have yet to be passed by El Congreso de los Diputados and the Senate, the Spanish equivalents of the House of Commons and the House of Lords. If passed in both, the reforms will likely be set as law in September. Many are hoping that changes will be made to the initial proposals.

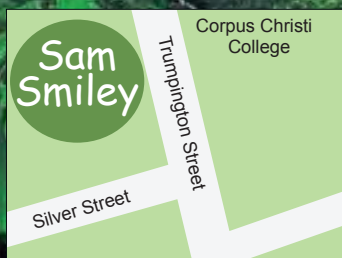
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Students from Romania speak out against media representation

Jack McConnel

News Correspondent

Romanian students at Cambridge have responded to the rhetoric used about the lifting of border restrictions over the new year.

Cambridge Romanian Society (CRS) said in a statement: “[We] recognise that we live a difficult time in Europe and that the governments strive for the well-being of their nations, the British one being no exception.

“At the same time, we fully support the European open views on employment and immigration which have until now benefited both the British and Romanian economies.”

Profir-Petru Pärtachi, a Romanian first-year at King’s College, blames news outlets for twisting the public’s view: “The media creates a skewed view. Some Romanians come here to work here on the cheap. But there are those who are in skilled jobs, which benefits the UK economy.”

The media storm comes after the government introduced a range of measures designed to curb the feared wave of Romanian immigrants this year. Those found begging or sleeping rough face deportation and barred re-entry for 12 months unless they are able to provide proof of employment.

Andrei Popofsky, a first-year mathematician from King’s College, whose family is Romanian, said: “The people who want to come here are actually hard working – they are not here for the benefits.”

Son of Cambridge Nobel laureate sentenced for attack

Marth Elwell

Senior News Editor

Nobel Prize winning biologist and former master of Magdalene College Professor Sir John Gurdon was the victim of an attempted strangling by his son, a court has heard.

William Gurdon – the son of Sir John, who received the Nobel Prize in medicine in 2012 for his pioneering research in cloning – appeared at Cambridge Magistrates’ Court and pleaded guilty to two counts of assault.

The 45-year-old committed the offence in October of last year.

The court heard how William Gurdon lived in one wing of the family’s home in Whittlesford, Cambridgeshire, while his parents lived in the other. Since the incident he has been staying in a Bed & Breakfast.

He suffers from alcoholism and has previously undergone rehab at The Priory rehab clinic.

Sir John told the police that William had become angry when he suggested to him that he should seek help for his drinking.

According to the prosecution, “William was being very aggressive towards his father.

“Then suddenly William lurched towards John and pushed his mother out of the way, knocking her to the floor causing a cut to her head.

“When she got up she saw John on



Sir John Gurdon’s son attempted to strangle him

his back on the floor with William standing over him and his hands squeezing his neck.

“She tried to pull him off but he was too strong so she shouted at him. John was making choking noises.”

Police found that William was drunk when they arrested him. The

prosecution added: “He told officers he meant to do it – that he wanted to get arrested and his mum does nothing about his drink problem.”

The defendant’s lawyer said that his client had an “unusual living situation”

He said: “He has struggled to find

work and has no money of his own, other than £20,000 of savings which he was given by his parents.

“At the time of the offence he was drinking everyday and now he only drinks two evenings a week.”

William Gurdon was given a suspended prison sentence, with 12 months of supervision and an alcohol treatment programme. He was also ordered to pay £85 in court costs.

“WILLIAM WAS BEING VERY AGGRESSIVE TOWARDS HIS FATHER”

District Judge Ken Sheraton told the defendant: “Your behaviour was disgraceful. Your parents have given you money and provided you with a place to live, and you treated them in the way you have.”

Speaking after the hearing, Sir John’s wife Lady Jean said: “William has been very remorseful; his actions had a lot to do with drink.

“We are welcoming him back to our home and he is trying to get himself cured of all his problems. We love him dearly and want to help him.”

“These past weeks have been awful for the family as we haven’t been able to see William. Now we want to put the incident behind us and move forward.”

Lecturers strike back over pay dispute

UCU has called another strike as negotiations fail to appease lecturers

Phelim Brady

News Correspondent

Academics have voted to stage a walk out on Thursday next week in response to a long-running quarrel over pay offers.

Lecturers and academic support staff from the University and College Union (UCU) will be striking from 11am to 1pm on the 23rd to protest over a pay increase of 1 per cent, which the union has described as “miserly”.

There are plans for an additional two hour walk-outs on 28 January between 2pm and 4pm, and on 10 February from 9am to 11am. UCU has claimed this will mean tens of thousands of lectures and seminars face disruption across the country, including in Cambridge, although it stressed that “any kind of disruption is always a last resort”.

Explaining the action, UCU General Secretary Sally Hunt said: “Despite another embarrassing round of embarrassing revelations about the very handsome pay rises those at the very top have enjoyed recently, universities are still refusing to improve a miserly 1 per cent pay offer and are still oblivious to the hypocrisy of their actions.”

This new industrial action follows



Nationwide strikes took place last term, with many students expressing solidarity with lecturers

two waves of joint strikes staged last term by the UCU, UNISON and Unite unions and supported by CUSU. Staff and students joined picket lines outside major University of Cambridge sites on 31 October and 3 December, before gathering for rallies outside the Senate House on both occasions.

Speaking at last October’s rally, Mordecai Paechter, a first year student from King’s appearing on behalf of

CUSU, called the one per cent pay rise offer “insulting”: “The students will support the staff all the way”, he said.

UCU say that the pay offer they are faced with means academics will have seen a 13 per cent real terms cut in their salary since 2009, leaving them with “little option but to escalate our action”.

But the University and College Employers Association (UCEA),

the higher education industry body charged with negotiating pay, have rejected the strikes as “a cynical move to cause, in the union’s own terms ‘maximum disruption’ while minimising cost to members”.

“Employers have expressed disappointment at UCU’s latest tactic to disrupt higher education institutions, this time targeting students”, a UCEA spokesman said. “Institutions will do

their very best to protect students but this industrial action is designed to damage the student experience. However, the overwhelming majority of staff realise that the UCU’s demands for higher pay increases are neither affordable nor sustainable.

“The pay increases implemented last month and backdated to August 2013

“THIS INDUSTRIAL ACTION IS DESIGNED TO DAMAGE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE”

actually totalled around 3 per cent in most institutions; with the 1 per cent for all on top of 3 per cent incremental increases for many, plus merit awards.”

However, unions have argued that cash surpluses held by universities, estimated to amount to £900 million this year, mean that higher education institutions can afford to increase pay further.

NUS president Toni Peace has backed the call for a greater increase in pay, describing the current increase as a “measly pay offer to staff made by vice chancellors who are receiving pay raises of 8 per cent”. But she also urged UCEA and unions to find a solution: “We need to see the employers and unions getting round the table”.



CORIOLANUS IS A WINNER: Cambridge alumnus Tom Hiddleston has been so successful in drawing in the crowds that the Donmar Warehouse have decided to extend their run of Josie Rourke's production until the middle of February. Fans will only be able to buy tickets for the extra shows by entering a draw. It will also be screened at cinemas nationwide.

UK institutions attack the practice of unpaid internships

Universities are refusing to advertise unpaid internships to students

Abby Simkin

News Correspondent

UK government institutions are making a concerted effort to undermine employers who fail to pay their interns. Earlier this year, the University for the Creative Arts and Goldsmiths stopped advertising employers seeking unpaid work from students.

HM Revenue and Customs has also recently announced that they are targeting 200 employers in order to enforce legislation that stipulates minimum wage for full-time interns. The problem is extensive: estimates by the Trades Union Congress suggest that as many as 250,000 workers are not receiving sufficient pay.

With 950,000 young adults unemployed in the UK, and the rate of joblessness for under-25s rising to 3.74 times what it is for older people, the question of the unpaid internship is more pressing than ever. The graduate without a future is a stock character of our age, and many consider these positions as their only way into the workplace.

The intern's motivation is obvious: by taking on unpaid jobs, workers gain contacts and experience, and can hope for a more interesting or highly paid career later. Indeed, keeping one eye



Goldsmiths in London no longer advertises unpaid internships

on the future seems to be the main argument for why students should work unpaid, and employers are able to recruit young workers worried about future prospects.

While work experience obviously has its advantages, detractors claim that such schemes are exploitative. Opponents commonly employ terms such as 'slave labour' to attack non-

paying employers, and argue that interns should not undertake unpaid work that would otherwise be done by paid employees. Intern Aware points out that: "Under employment law, people who work set hours, do set tasks and contribute value to an organisation are 'workers' and are entitled to the minimum wage."

However, the competition for

placements is intense, and as a result many students are willing to work for free, even under conditions that might be considered illegal.

As a result, companies have little incentive to offer paid schemes, making opportunities even scarcer for those who simply cannot afford to work for free. The latter consideration has led opponents of the practice to argue

that unpaid internships exacerbate inequalities.

Interns fighting their own corner are in some cases finding success. In September last year, Chris Jarvis, a games intern, won £4,600 in a settlement with Sony for his time working for them in Cambridge. Disillusioned intern Alex Dudson took a different course of action, and launched Intern magazine. He told the Guardian that he encourages people to remember that they contribute value, and try to get out as much as they put in.

Opposing unpaid work also has its drawbacks. Katie Mills, responsible for student enterprise and employability at the University of the Arts London, claims that some employers withdrew internship advertisements when they were informed that legislation dictated they should pay interns. Internships are difficult to secure under normal circumstances, and reducing the number available could be denying opportunities to students.

Josh Matthews, a second-year mathematician at King's College, suggests a compromise may be necessary: "Students should consider the experience itself as a part payment, but businesses should at least offer compensation to cover expenses."

Many organisations aim to clarify students' internship rights. Intern Aware help interns take action over unfairly paid employment, and the Cambridge Careers Service offers free advice and in some cases bursaries for students on work placements.

A Bitcoin Pub Crawl

Hannah Wilkinson sets off on the world's first pub tour funded solely by the cryptocurrency of the moment

It's a rainy Monday night in Cambridge, and three soaking wet techies and I are making history. Cambridge is the only town in the world to contain more than one pub which accepts the digital currency Bitcoin. Both The Haymakers and The Devonshire Arms are owned by the same computer scientist, who started accepting the currency in his establishments earlier this year.

Formally the preserve of a few technocrats, who could earn Bitcoins by cracking mathematical puzzles using their computers, Bitcoin is starting to capture the imagination of the general public. How long before hordes of students are exchanging bitcoins for Jagerbombs in freshers' week?

The clientele of The Haymakers on Chesterton High Street, our first stop for the evening, is a little more subdued, comprising mostly middle-aged men in suits, their iPad screens glinting as they check the latest tech news.

Michael Brooks, a programmer and medical doctor, who graduated from Cambridge to found his own tech startup, PatientSource Ltd, explains our project to Nick the barman. Nick doesn't look impressed.

Luckily, group morale is high. My brothers in Bitcoin have kindly cycled to the pub in the pouring rain to explain to me the ins and outs of a currency which, they claim, is a phenomenon the like of which the economic world has never seen.

They will also foot the bill. Everyone who holds the currency has a Bitcoin wallet, which is essentially a computer file where your virtual money is stored. Filling up your wallet isn't easy. Since Bitcoin has no central authority – no official currency exchange – I would have to sell my pounds on the open Bitcoin market. This process can take days. And I just couldn't wait that long for a pint.

We order our pints. Mike's business partner Phil Ashworth is the owner of their joint Bitcoin wallet. We are also joined by Josh Treon, a compsci from Trinity. Phil takes a picture of the QR

"BITCOIN'S INFAMOUS VOLATILITY IS POTENTIALLY WHY THE HORDES OF STUDENTS HAVE NOT YET MATERIALISED."

code we are given on a receipt. This allows him to send money from his Bitcoin wallet to the pub.

"Do you like this way of paying, or is it a pain?" I ask Nick's fellow barman, who sports a humorous computer-themed T-shirt and a pony tail.

"It means I don't have to touch people," he shrugs.

In order for Bitcoin to become mainstream pub crawl fare, more people are going to have to understand what it actually is. Unfortunately it turns out that the more pints you drink, the harder-

er comprehension becomes.

Mike explains to me that Bitcoin began in 2009, as a currency that wasn't regulated by central banks, or backed by a government. Any computer around the world could 'mine' bitcoins by cracking mathematical puzzles. But as a currency it had no worth. There was no way of converting people's bitcoins into currencies, or real life usage, that people understood.

This was where Silk Road came in. Although it was shut down in October, this website on the hidden internet needed a way for people to buy their cocaine and hitmen without being traced. Being totally anonymous, Bitcoin was perfect.

Around the same time the first Bitcoin exchanges were established, which allowed traders to convert their currency into dollars. Now, Bitcoin had real value.

Bitcoin managed to survive the abolishment of the Silk Road, and can now be used to buy locally brewed ale. According to Nick the barman, a fair amount of customers pay in Bitcoin,

but it's still a novelty. Bitcoin's rocky road to the mainstream has made it more than a little volatile. Mike has warned me that the price we pay for the pint will vary 30 per cent depending on when we go in the day.

Bitcoin's infamous volatility is potentially why the hordes of students have not yet materialised. "You want to know that what you can buy today is going to be the same price tomorrow or a

"THERE'S SOME FASCINATING MATHS BEHIND IT. DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE ALGORITHMS?" MIKE ASKS

week down the line," says Josh.

Phil shows me why this is the case: Our pints cost £7.80 in sterling. We paid 0.0159 bitcoins. The pub's computer system takes an average twice a day of the current price of bitcoins, which is different on different exchanges. But Phil shows me the price on the largest Bitcoin exchange. The price of a bitcoin had swung 10 per cent in one day.

"So depending on when I bought the bitcoin that could have cost me £9, it could have cost me £6, it just depends on when you buy them," explains Phil. "Since I bought bitcoins in September, that purchase has probably cost me £5/6 because the price has gone up over that period of time. But if I bought them this morning it probably would have cost me £9/10."

"There's some fascinating maths behind it. Do you want to know more about the algorithms?" Mike asks. I nod enthusiastically, taking a sip from my pint and spilling most of it down my front. He looks at me: "Maybe we'll leave the maths for now."

One thing becomes clear: Bitcoin is not for the likes of me. And it's not for many other people either. The benefit that comes from it is trading, rather than practical use.

Aficionados tend to buy their bitcoins and then hold out until their value increases. This is the first time Phil and Mike have ever used their wallet for anything other than trading.

As we trek to pub number two, which is a wet and cold cycle ride down a lonely ring road, it seems like the Bitcoin pub crawl might not catch on as quickly as I thought.



THE HAYMAKERS

DEVONSHIRE ARMS

MARK CARON FROM THE INOUB PROJECT

Law firm turns blind eye to Oxbridge

A leading law firm is taking a new CV-blind approach

Jack McConnell

News Correspondent

'Magic circle' law firm, Clifford Chance (CC), has adopted a policy of 'blind CV' interviews in a bid to eliminate the so-called 'Oxbridge bias'. The change, introduced a year ago, means that final assessment interviewers on the firm's selection process will only be able to see the applicant's name.

The move was in response to recommendations from the Sutton Trust, which aims to enhance educational equality and improve social mobility. 41 different universities are represented in the pool of 100 successful applicants to the firm, up from 32 the previous year.

The encouraging statistics were met with approval by key figures, including Heather Iqbal-Rayner, chair of the Junior Lawyers Division, who described the scheme as a "trend setter" in The City. She was, however, more sceptical about the wider implications: "I don't think it's going to have a big impact on high street firms as they already recruit from a more diverse range of candidates."

Professor Richard Moorhead, Director of the Centre of Ethics and Law at University College, London, hails this as a "step in the right direction, both on diversity grounds and on



A Cambridge degree may no longer be a fast track ticket to the top

merit," but suggests that "CV blindness may be more impactful at the CV-sifting stage."

This view is echoed by Sachin Parathalingam, a first-year law student from King's College: "It is illogical because in the initial stages of the

application process, the assessors will see which university you went to, so the bias will still be there."

He added: "any Oxbridge student will appreciate that ability and merit are more important than which university you went to."

However Louise O'Hara, President of Cambridge University Law Society, welcomed the scheme: "We acknowledge that the Oxbridge bias can be a problem in recruitment, and it is important that firms such as Clifford Chance take positive steps to try

and eliminate that bias. This policy seems to be a good way to make the application process fair for everyone involved."

However, it is not certain that such a scheme will become the universal norm. Professor Moorhead speculates that the policy's low-key introduction was intended "to see how they feel about the quality of recruits a couple of years in, without committing to the scheme prematurely."

His comment comes as CC's pre-tax profits for 2012-13 were reported to have dipped by nine per cent.

"WE'RE LOOKING FOR THE GEMS AND THEY'RE NOT ALL IN THE JEWELLER'S SHOP"

The 'blind CV' approach is one of many ideas the firm is pioneering, following increasing pressure on employers to have a more representative workforce.

According to LegalWeek, the number of pupil barristers who attended Oxbridge increased from 23 per cent in 2009-10 to 35 per cent in 2010-11. 38 per cent of trainees at 'magic circle' law firms have an Oxbridge education.

One senior CC employee was not concerned where trainees studied: "We're looking for the gems and they're not all at the jeweller's shop"

College reveals worst students

University College has apologised to students over admin error

Amy Hawkins

Deputy Editor

Certain students at University College, Oxford, have been left humiliated after an administration error led to a list of the 50 worst performing students being sent to the entire college.

The Excel document contained the names, subjects and percentage marks of students who achieved a 2:2 or less

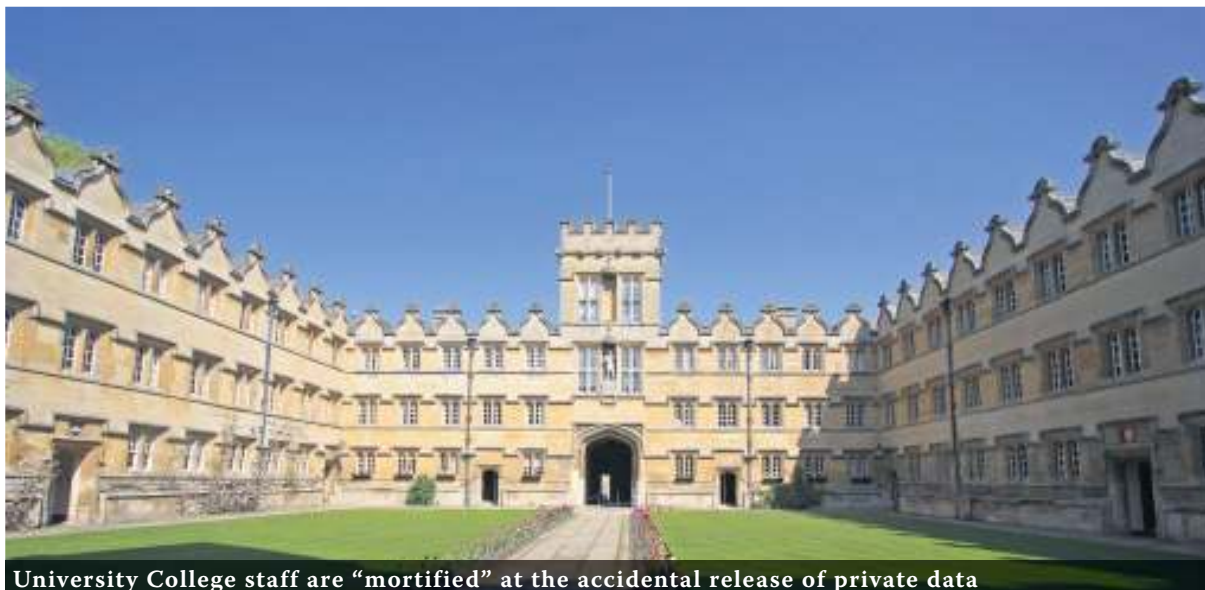
"I WAS PRETTY GUTTED AFTER MY RESULTS LAST TERM, BUT DIDN'T REALISE I WOULD BE PUBLICLY HUMILIATED"

in Michaelmas collections - progress exams which Oxford students sit at the end of each term. These results do not count towards their final degree mark.

Nine lawyers and six engineers were among those identified by the mistake.

A second email was sent to students soon after, asking them to delete the email since "it contained inaccuracies".

Speaking to the Oxford Tab, a student on the list, who did not wish to be identified, said: "I don't ever want to do



University College staff are "mortified" at the accidental release of private data

collections again. I was pretty gutted after my results last term, but didn't realise I would be publicly humiliated. I can't even go into college any more."

Another student said: "Of course, everyone on the list is just trying to laugh it off. But in reality, no one feels comfortable with having something so personal shared with the entire college."

However, not all students were concerned about the mistake. "I don't feel as though there's any pervasive feeling or undercurrent of betrayal. Someone made a mistake, shit happens. I've gotten over it," said Otamere Guobadia, a second year lawyer who was named on the list.

"Failing a collection doesn't make

you stupid," he added.

Kristiana Dahl, the college's academic administrator, who Guobadia called "lovely and ruthlessly efficient", was said to be "mortified" by her mistake. University College's Senior Tutor has also apologised to students.

"We would like to apologise to all students affected by this inadvertent disclosure for any distress this has caused and reassure them that we are investigating exactly how this happened and are determined to make sure this does not happen again," said Dr Anne Knowland. She added: "University College takes the treatment of sensitive data very seriously."

Dr Knowland also sought to emphasise that collections are primarily

intended to help tutors in "identifying problems and give students an opportunity to practise sitting examinations, improve exam techniques, and understand methods of assessment and marking criteria."

JCR President Abigail Reeves praised the way in which the college handled the situation. After meeting with Dr Knowland, Reeves emailed students to assure them that action was being taken to ensure that such an incident would never happen again.

University College is one of the oldest colleges of the University of Oxford. Notable alumni include Bill Clinton, Clement Attlee and Stephen Hawking, who is now a Research Fellow at Gonville and Caius College.



CAMBRIDGE SPY

Rumour has it...

It was a not-so-fortuitious start to the new year for one Newnham reveller, who failed to notice her drunken accident, even when it involved her own birthday cake...

One member of Magdalene College took to their freshers' Facebook page to complain about the stringency of the new internet firewall. Sometimes Fifty Shades just isn't enough...

Last term ended with a bang for one girl, as she very hospitably accommodated not one, but two members of the poor homeless Sydney University rugby team who were stranded in Cambridge...

The Varsity ski trip resulted in a luxury private room for one student, as his drunken behaviour meant no-one would share a room with him...

A fresher at one swap failed to tell the difference between close friend and close family.

Miss V x

NEWS IN BRIEF



Top universities fail on free school meals

CAMBRIDGE Figures released by the Department of Education suggest that the University of Cambridge only admitted 25 students entitled to free school meals during 2009-10 and 2010-11. The University of Oxford accepted just 15 in both years, while the average across Russell Group institutions was revealed as 64.

The University of Cambridge has attacked the statistics, instead claiming that in 2012, over 50 students formerly in receipt of free school meals were admitted. The university confirms that it is "committed" to equal opportunities.



Cambridge on top in porn poll

CAMBRIDGE According to statistics released by the pornographic website, Pornhub, Cambridge ranks 16th in the UK for the number of visits to the site, beating Oxford by nearly 400,000 views.

During the last year, there were 1.39 million registered visits to the website from Cambridge. In comparison, the official UK government webpages receive an average of 1.4 million hits each year from across the UK.

People in Cambridge spend an average of 9 minutes and 50 seconds on the website, which is nearly a minute longer than the world average of 8 minutes and 56 seconds.

Mondays in January appear to be the most popular days for British users to indulge themselves on the website, while Cambridge-based Pornhub viewers opened on average 6.84 different pages on the website each time they visited.



Regent Street loses landmark

CAMBRIDGE England's oldest bicycle shop and Charles Darwin's vendor of choice, Howes Cycles, has closed after 173 years of business. Michael Howes, the sixth generation of the family to run the shop, has gone into retirement at the age of 65, and announced when speaking to Cambridge News that "if your surname is not Howes, then you are not taking over".

The shop, a feature on Regent Street since 1971, closed its doors for the last time at the end of December, despite remaining popular with students and locals alike. The shop can trace its history back to 1840, when John Howes started the business as a coach-builder and wheel-wright.

The race for top students

Universities attract brightest students with free flights and laptops

James Sutton

Deputy News Editor

As universities across the country begin to give out offers to applicants, several top universities have revived the practice of 'unconditional' offers.

Institutions including the University of Birmingham, Queen Mary, University of London, Nottingham and Leicester have all increased the number of unconditional offers given out this year – apparently to attract the top-performing A-Level students.

Queen's University, Belfast, has also tried to draw in students with grades of AAB from mainland Britain with

"UNCONDITIONAL OFFERS WERE AT ONE TIME COMMON PRACTICE"

the promise of £1,750 per year, flights home, cinema passes, gym memberships and free upgrades to en-suite accommodation.

This comes as record numbers of students apply to university despite the tuition fee increase, and amid calls from the University of Oxford for the £9,000 ceiling on fees to be removed.

Research has shown that almost all students who applied to university received a place in the last year.

These enticements are set to become commonplace, in spite of criticism from the Higher Education Policy Institute.

The removal of the cap on the number of students with A-Level results equivalent to ABB or above that can be enrolled by UK universities has meant that the already competitive marketplace for students is now even more so, for universities looking to recruit the highest-achieving students.

Unconditional offers were at one time common practice in the Oxbridge admissions process, as it was felt that extensive entrance exams and interviews gave admissions tutors a sufficient insight into applicants' abilities to confidently offer places.

However, significant reform of the Oxbridge admissions process throughout the 1980s saw a reduction in entrance exams – bringing Oxbridge into line with the majority of British universities in giving out conditional offers.

"The collegiate university prefers offer holders to demonstrate their ability through public examinations. Some unconditional offers are made to

post-qualification applicants who have already completed their sixth-form studies", said a spokesperson for the University of Cambridge.

However, other top universities may be drawing students away from Oxbridge.

The University of Leicester plans to give out unconditional offers on the largest scale during the current round of applications.

A spokesperson said that they were "making unconditional offers in most subjects across the university" to "candidates predicted AAA* or equivalent". They added that the university has had "overwhelmingly positive feedback so far."

The University of Birmingham was the first to try this out last year, resulting in 1,000 unconditional offers being given out across 12 courses. 300 applicants took up places at the university on the back of these offers.

This change in recruitment approach corresponded with a 15-place jump up the rankings for the University of Birmingham last year, according to the Guardian University Guide. For universities, it seems that attracting more top applicants with unconditional offers can translate into academic success.

As this trend increases, more high-ranking universities are likely to take up this practice, and could draw the highest-performing students out of the marketplace.

Coffee and conservation

Varsity News *Sponsored Editorial*

A Cambridge sandwich shop has launched a campaign to protect the rainforest. For every cup of coffee bought at Sam Smiley, which calls itself "probably the oldest sandwich shop in Cambridge", they estimate that they help save ten square feet of endangered rainforest.

Brothers Ed and Chris Bliss opened Sam Smiley on Trumpington Street in 1991. From September last year they started using Resource 'triple certified' coffee beans, which are linked to the charity Cool Earth.

Cool Earth seeks to protect rainforests from deforestation by working with indigenous communities to regain control of rainforest areas.

The charity works with 65 villages around the world, primarily in the Amazon, which represents half of the world's rainforests.

The Bliss brothers estimate that through their choice of coffee supplier, they have helped save 30,000 square feet of rainforest. They hope that this will increase to a quarter of a million square feet by the end of the year.

"[We] both love walking and nature and felt that by supporting this charity, [it] was a way of 'giving something back'", said Ed Bliss.

They are also hoping to raise awareness of Cool Earth's work by distributing information packs in local schools.

'I would abolish MI5'

A Cambridge professor has spoken out against Britain's secret service

James Sutton

Deputy News Editor

Professor Ross Anderson, the head of Cryptography at the University of Cambridge's Computer Laboratory, and a Fellow of the Royal Society, has questioned the future of Britain's national security. Speaking to Forbes, Professor Anderson stated: "Were I a legislator, I would simply abolish MI5."

The British Secret Service, MI5, is in charge of protecting the country from threats of terrorism and espionage. However, it has come under scrutiny recently, after the American whistleblower Edward Snowden released evidence of mass data collection by intelligence agencies.

Professor Anderson has argued that Britain should be more transparent in the way that it goes about its national security, in the style championed by Denmark and Norway, where issues such as terrorism come under the control of the police.

In his interview with Forbes, Anderson explained that it would be better to entrust national security to "a uniformed, disciplined service that's subject to proper parliamentary and judicial oversight. The way to do it is not to have an organisation like MI5".

Corruption is a central issue for Anderson, who claims that the lack of transparency and accountability within MI5 create a potential breeding ground for malpractice.



Professor Anderson is wary of government "spooks"

He points to the example of J. Edgar Hoover, the director of the FBI from 1935 to 1972: "Nobody dared to challenge Hoover, not even Kennedy, Johnson, or Nixon." Anderson fears that MI5 may come to have this level of power in the UK: "Once you start getting secret agencies that act as the prime minister's personal bag of tricks, you are laying yourself open to all sorts of corruption."

It is not only the risk of corruption that Professor Anderson believes is at fault with MI5, but also its efficacy.

Anderson claims that governments "just don't have the technical or managerial skills [to manage vast amounts of public data]... Only private industry could do that."

Calling MI5 "spooks", Anderson has accused them of collaborating with sites like Google and Facebook to collect data on internet users.

Anderson is also the chair of the Foundation for Information Policy Research – a think-tank which aims to "understand IT policy issues and explain them to policy makers and the

press." He claims to have been a victim of internet censorship, which he describes as "a growing problem, and not just in developing countries; I've been on the receiving end more than once."

He adds that the problems of terrorism and espionage are not as large as "scaremongers" would have us believe, and that the police would be entirely capable of managing these issues, as in Norway and Denmark. He refers to these two countries as being "more civilised" in their approach to matters of security and intelligence.



CHANGING PLACES: JB Gill, former member of JLS, has told Hello! magazine that he wants to follow in the footsteps of Prince William and take an agricultural management course at Cambridge. Gill, who has since turned to farming, said: “[M]aybe if he reads that I want to do it, they can call me up and we can study together? That would be wicked.”

Poorer students less likely to graduate

New research highlights higher drop out rate among poorer students

Helen Amos

News Correspondent

The debate over university access intensified this week after research published by York St John University drew attention to the strong correlation between dropout rates and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Institutions with the highest number of entrants from the lowest income brackets have the highest proportion of students leaving further education before completing their first year.

“A SENSE OF BELONGING IS CRUCIAL TO STUDENT SUCCESS. IF YOU DON’T FEEL YOU BELONG, YOU’RE MORE LIKELY TO DROP OUT”

Despite reports last year of a steep fall in dropout rates, there is still a great disparity between universities. While fewer than two per cent of students at Cambridge, Bristol and LSE fail to complete their first year, London Metropolitan University sees a 16.6 per cent drop-out average, closely followed by the University of Bolton, where one out of every seven students gives up their degree.

Such discrepancies are further highlighted by parallel data measuring each



London Metropolitan University has particularly high drop-out rates

institution’s intake of students from the lowest socioeconomic groups.

Russell Group universities take in 10 to 20 per cent of their students from low-income households, while nearly 50 per cent of students at London Metropolitan come from a poor background.

It has been suggested that this provides universities with a disincentive to widen recruitment among the most disadvantaged young people, as they risk substantial financial losses by offering them places.

The University of Cambridge uses contextual data in their selection process, including the applicant’s postcode and the frequency with which their school sends students to Oxbridge.

A spokesperson for the university stated: “The university seeks the ablest and best-qualified students with the greatest potential from every background. Admissions decisions are based on students’s academic ability and their commitment to, and potential for, their chosen course.”

“Our standard conditional offer of

A*AA at A Level is exacting because our research shows that this is the typical level of attainment needed in order to succeed on a Cambridge degree.

“Our own monitoring shows our admissions decisions are objective and fair: students from different educational backgrounds perform equally well at Cambridge.”

Professor Les Ebdon, the director of the Office for Fair Access, commented: “A sense of belonging is critical to student success. If you don’t feel you belong, you’re more likely to drop out.”

NEWS IN BRIEF



£20,000 pay rise for University V-C

CAMBRIDGE The vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge received a pay rise of £20,000 last year, according to a study by Times Higher Education. Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz last year earned £334,000, making him one of the highest paid university vice-chancellors in the country.

A university spokesperson said that this reflected his “sustained excellent performance since coming into office”. The increase amounts to an average salary rise of 8.1 per cent - significantly higher than the disputed 1 per cent pay deal agreed with university staff last year.



Faculty Librarian in Home Office row

CAMBRIDGE David Rushmer, a senior library assistant at the Faculty of English, is fighting a Home Office decision which branded his marriage to Wang Xiang, a Chinese freelance journalist, a ‘sham’. The couple, who initially met on a poetry website in June 2012, married in China a year later.

Wang was asked to attend a two-hour interview in Beijing with a UK Entry Clearance Officer (ECO) - over 1,000 miles away from her home on the south coast of China. After Wang’s interview, her visa application was denied, meaning the couple have been on the opposite sides of the world since July 2013.

Over 1,000 people have signed an online petition set up by Rushmer, who has accused Home Office regulations of being “excessively harsh”, and of having “torn thousands of families apart.”



Cambridge MP secures seat in virtual stadium

CAMBRIDGE The Liberal Democrat MP for Cambridge, Julian Huppert, has become one of the first people to purchase a ‘virtual seat’ in the Home Stadium, which is set to host the Homeless Football World Cup. At a ticket price of £30, a life-long ticket allows fans to watch games from the Homeless World Cup online. The tournament is set to take place in Santiago, Chile, later this year.

The project aims to raise money for homeless charities by feeding investment into grass-roots football groups and social development organisations. Speaking to Cambridge News, Huppert expressed how he was “delighted” to be one of the first ticket-holders. His seat is Tier 1, Section 1: Row O, Seat 14.

The Interview: Patrick Kingsley

AN ENGLISH MAN IN CAIRO



Hannah Wilkinson talks to former Varsity editor Patrick Kingsley about reporting on tumultuous times from Egypt's capital

It would be nice to believe that Patrick Kingsley's meteoric rise through the world of journalism is as much down to chance as his relaxed modesty seems to suggest. His chilled-out approach to everything from career advancement to covering protests makes becoming the Guardian's Egypt correspondent at 23 sound like a stroll round the pyramids.

But there is method to Kingsley's modesty. From how he talks about journalism it is clear that talent and a sound understanding of modern journalistic principles are what propelled him from award-winning Varsity editor in 2009 to dodging bullets in Tahrir Square in 2013.

Egypt was rarely out of the headlines last summer. Following the removal from power of Islamist president Mohammed Morsi by the military, the country was plunged into a series of violent events in which thousands lost their lives. Cairo residents often woke to the buzz of military helicopters circling overhead. Frequent protests made it hard to move around the city. Every event was confused and contested. It was up to journalists to make sense of what was going on.

Monday 8th July was no exception. As Islamist protestors prayed outside the Officer's Club in Cairo, the military opened fire. Chaos ensued, in which at least 51 people died.

Kingsley's "in depth reconstruction" of these events, which took the form of an interactive map, was crucial in making sense of what happened.

He insists on the impossibility of

constructing what he calls a "bullet-proof narrative – there's was no camera hanging over everything from a bird's eye view". Nevertheless he painstakingly utilised a combination of witness accounts and social media to create his report.

"You talk to as many people as possible, cross-reference their testimony with videos, with residents, with tweets from the time, start to create some kind of narrative.

"It's not a perfect process but it's maybe a few steps towards that."

The piece won him the 2013 Frontline Award, commended for what the judges called Kingsley's ability to "create a narrative out of chaos".

Liveblogging from chaotic events as they occur, Kingsley emphasises the increased difficulty of creating any kind of narrative. Negotiating stones, tear gas, and often bullets, Kingsley's relaxed side serves him well in many of Cairo's more hair-raising situations.

"When you're in these dangerous situations you kind of need to keep calm. You gain nothing by panicking or getting scared. I almost zone out of an emotional state".

If you're going to get the story, emotions cannot hold you back: "I need to get the information I need, I need to get the quotations I need, I need to count the number of bodies, I need to see where these people have been wounded and then once I've got the information I need, I'm going to get out as soon as I can for my own safety".

About a month after the incident outside the Officer's Club, the military

decided to cement their grip on power by clearing the Islamist protest sit-ins, which had been ongoing since Morsi's ouster. On the first day of these clashes, several journalists were killed. Four days later, at the scene of a besieged mosque, Twitter was on tenterhooks as Kingsley also went missing. Recounting his experience, Kingsley drops his cool for the first time, describing himself as "shit scared".

"Basically you could call it an abduction", he says. "I was a bit greedy for one more conversation with a witness and I didn't get out of a slightly hairy situation as quickly as I should have."

"THEY SORT OF SLAPPED ME AROUND A BIT AND GRABBED MY BALLS AND DROVE ME OFF INTO SOMEWHERE IN NORTHEAST CAIRO"

In the chaos of the square outside the mosque, Kingsley was mobbed by a group of vigilante soldiers. Two of them took him off on a motorbike. "They sort of slapped me around a bit and grabbed my balls and drove me off into somewhere in northeast Cairo," he tells me.

Kingsley describes the fifteen to twenty minute journey as "probably

the most frightening experience of my life". "I thought this could be something pretty brutal, maybe I was going to get beaten up and no one would know where I was."

Kingsley was in luck. He ended up spending a few hours in a police station, but is aware that his fate could have been far worse.

The arrest and detention of journalists throughout the summer was not uncommon, but in what Kingsley calls a "shocking" turn of events, three Al Jazeera English journalists are still in custody. Should he be worried? As Kingsley points out, relations between Al Jazeera and the Egyptian government are historically fraught. But this doesn't stop the news from being "a little bit vexing."

"I think at the back of all of our minds is who will they go for next?"

I ask him if he ever gets worried calls from his mum. "I got the odd concerned email" he says casually. "My friends and family and colleagues have just been very good at not adding to the worry of being in situations. Or just don't care."

When I ask him for a comparison between his Cairo experience and editing Cambridge's oldest student newspaper, he politely tries to find one. Protests in Cambridge tend towards lacklustre at best, but Kingsley clearly feels he owes the paper a lot. "One of my favourite things I've ever done was editing Varsity", he recalls. He got his big break as a Guardian features writer off the back of winning a bunch of student media awards as

editor. But whenever he's asked about his success he describes himself as "riding on the coattails of some really talented people".

"The experience of weathering a storm for a whole term and working with really talented people fills you with a lot of confidence", he says. "The experiences aren't directly comparable but the kind of willpower and sometimes the guts that you have to have serve you well in any context – be that even in Egypt during a time of conflict."

CAREER IN BRIEF

- 2009** Edited Varsity; won six awards including journalist of the year
- 2010** Became a Guardian features writer
- 2012** Published his travel book, How to be Danish
- 2013** Became the Guardian's Egypt correspondent

Mission: map the Milky Way



Cambridge is at the heart of Gaia mission to solve the celestial puzzle and understand our galaxy

Amy Hawkins

Deputy Editor

As the Earth starts on yet another orbit of the big ball of gas that we know as the Sun – the star that sets our clocks and feeds our plants – a new project aiming to map one per cent of the one hundred billion stars that make up the Milky Way has been set into motion.

The Milky Way, the galaxy that contains our humble solar system, is a vast beast. It takes one beam of light (something which travels pretty fast, I hear) 100,000 years to travel across it. This is what Gaia is up against.

The Gaia satellite – which was launched from French Guiana at the end of last year – began as an idea by a small group of scientists in the early 1990s, and will be in orbit for the next five years.

Its billion-pixel camera will return data for the first map in 2016. The data will allow astronomers to build a history of the Milky Way from its earliest beginnings, producing the first three-dimensional ‘census’ of our night sky.

According to Professor Gerry Gilmore of the Institute of Astronomy, the UK principal investigator for the mission, Gaia “will allow us, for the first time ever, to walk through the Milky Way – to say where everything is, to say what everything is. It is truly a transformative mission.”

Cambridge is at the beating heart of what has been called “one of the most ambitious space missions in history”. The university is one of the primary Gaia data processing centres and will publish new data on supernovae, black holes and dark matter that has previously been a mystery to astronomers.

The hope is that by measuring the distances of stars relative to other stars, and relative to one million supermassive black holes that the team’s measurements have identified, Gaia will be able to create a ‘reference grid’

that spans three-quarters of our known universe.

Perhaps even more excitingly, Gaia will put to test Einstein’s theory of General Relativity, by measuring the way in which light bends around the Sun. Einstein also predicted the existence of ‘ripples’ in the space-time continuum, which would alter the apparent positions of groups of stars. Gaia will be able to theorise the possible strength of these ripples.

The satellite will also be able to determine the age of each of the stars,

**“ONE OF THE MOST
AMBITIOUS SPACE
MISSIONS IN HISTORY”**

allowing scientists to make a comprehensive timeline of the galaxy.

In order to produce the exquisitely precise data that Professor Gilmore and his team are searching for, Gaia needs to be locked into an orbit in which heat and gravity are stable. To keep Gaia adequately cold, it has been sent up into space with a shield about the size of half a tennis court, meaning that the temperature difference across the satellite will be less than one-millionth of one degree (that’s 0.000001°C).

It will also be securely locked into an orbit in which the gravity of the Earth and the gravity of the Sun exactly cancel each other out, 1.5 million kilometres into space. These genuinely weightless points are known as Lagrange points, and there are only five such points around our sun. Gaia will be locked onto the second point, and will need almost no fuel – and, crucially, hardly any engine disturbing movement – to keep it in orbit.

Such ambitious aims do not come cheap. The satellite itself, which was funded by the European Space Agency, cost €650 million to build. However, Professor Gilmore believes that the findings will “revolutionise our knowledge of astronomy”. As a bonus, it will also be able to spot any killer asteroids heading our way – not that it will be able to do anything about them.

TOP 5 SCIENCE STORIES

1. A study published this week by researchers in Baltimore claims that **caffeine** can improve **long-term memory**
2. Cambridge scientists have discovered a new technique for **rewiring stem cells**, which may advance **cancer research**
3. Professor Dame Ann Dowling has been appointed the **first female president** of the Royal Academy of Engineering
4. Nine **womb transplant operations** have taken place in Sweden, in a bid to help the women conceive naturally
5. **Animal rights group** AVC has launched a campaign to stop public funding of the university’s **‘monkey labs’**

PLANET

of the

WEEK

CoRoT-7b

In the daytime, CoRoT-7b resembles something out of the most dramatic disaster movie ever made. We think it weighs about eight times the mass of the Earth, which means it’s probably made of rock, but it orbits very close to its star - about 1/23rd the distance from the Sun to Mercury. If our assumptions are right, then during the day the local star boils the sunny side of the planet so high that a massive ocean of molten lava forms. Needless to say, we’ll probably not be retreating there when our own sun becomes a Red Giant and consumes the Earth.



Gaia was launched last year from Sinnamary in French Guiana

Comment

From Romania with love



Roxana Antohi

Romanians don't come here to steal our jobs and scrounge off the state; they love this country.

I left Romania, my home country, three and a half years ago. I'd never felt at ease there. Sometimes, you're born in a place where you simply don't belong and the feeling lingers with you for an entire lifetime.

I was lucky enough to find my true home by accident. I'd always been fascinated by the United Kingdom – or, more precisely, by the mythical image in Eastern perception of a country with foggy streets, black cabs and never-ending rain.

But when I boarded the plane, aged 18, ready to make my way into the world, ready to break the boundaries that society tried so hard to impose upon me, I had no idea what to expect. I left behind people telling me that I was crazy, that I was going to fail, and took the leap, alone.

For the majority of my life I'd lived in a closed-off culture, where outside influences rarely made an appearance. Yet here I was, breathing multi-culturalism. Asian, Middle-Eastern, Indian, African-Caribbean and European – all these incredible cultures interplayed with each other in a dance that took place on the background of the charming British landscape.

History that I hadn't learnt in school, food that made my taste buds burst with joy – so many things about the country made me love it. The people, who I'd expected to be cold and glum, shared the most wonderful sense of humour – self-deprecating, caustic and deadpan, and it caught me off guard every time. I fit right

in. I even liked the eccentricity of the British weather.

As years went by, my relationship with the country grew stronger. I got to know it better, learn its faults, and loved it still. I identified more with it than I'd ever done back home. After a while, every time someone asked me where I was from, I wanted to scream desperately "From here!" but couldn't. I had a Romanian passport (and accent), after all.

My view wasn't shared by the British officials. Trying to get a student work permit that allowed me to work during holidays to pay my college bill was like hitting my head against a wall. The waiting time for the permit was around a year and one of its requirements was getting expensive private healthcare, so I never got it.

I was lucky enough to get a very generous bursary from my college, which allowed me to pay for living costs, but some of the people I knew at other universities had to drop out because of the costs involved.

My relationship with this country changed in 2013 – the year when I unwittingly became a member of one of the Daily Mail's most hated groups: a Romanian immigrant. Not that I hadn't been one before – it's just that I had felt like I blended in with the cultural mix that I'd encountered here. All of a sudden I was swept up in a hurricane of vile rhetoric, fuelled by the press and politicians.

What furthered my confusion was the thought that I had been in the

eye of the storm all along, blissfully unaware of the pent-up anger that British citizens had felt towards us. Or had they?

Polls suggested that 56 per cent of British people wanted immigration to be cut – but 47 per cent of them thought that immigration was bad for the economy. Had their opinion been influenced by the headlines – and were they right to believe them?

Most research shows EU immigrants actually boost the British economy – they are far more likely to come to the UK for work than to claim benefits. As such, they pay in far more than they take out. As for stealing people's jobs and creating unemployment in the British population, studies suggest that, overall, migration has no impact on UK-born unemployment.

The truth made me sad, in that it was so far from the anti-immigration rhetoric sprawled across headlines and regurgitated by populist politicians, who I'd expected to at least do their own research before condemning whole nations for the sake of a few votes.

Feelings in the Romanian community were equally mixed. The expats I knew, ranging from Cambridge students to car-washers, were insulted at the idea of being called scroungers for no good reason, and confused by how differently their day to day experiences with Brits were, when compared to the inflammatory headlines.

They'd made friends with the natives, exchanged cultural impressions,

shared jokes and lived together. Of course they'd found people who were against immigration – but when it came to their daily lives, they were all people working for their families, all members of the same community.

In Romania, the reaction was a mix of increased outrage at the idea of Romanians being so belittled in Britain, and genuine concern for the 'poor British people' having to deal with an avalanche of Romanian natives invading their island.

Populist rhetoric had been carried over into Romanian press without anyone looking at the actual facts. A domino effect had swept across the continent – and few knew what the truth behind the headlines actually was.

When 1st January came, the tidal wave of Romanian immigrants failed to materialise. When midnight struck on New Year's Eve, I didn't have one egg thrown at me – instead, I received texts from my British friends welcoming me to the UK 'for real this time'. A new year found me loving this country just as much, despite the bitter memories of Romanian-slaying headlines. Brits and Romanians – and immigrants of countless other nationalities – continued to live together.

Everyone is now much more aware of the immigration issue, but many questions need answering still. But things like this take time. I just hope that, as time goes on, fewer eyebrows will be raised at the idea of Romanians, like me, living in the UK.



Johannes Lenhard

If we give nothing else, the least we can do is respect beggars's privacy.

Humanity on the streets

On the corner of King's Parade, I recently spoke to a woman who sells the Big Issue. Right next to King's Chapel sits Jana*, day in, day out. She arrived from Romania two years ago, in search of a better life.

Jana is different to other Big Issue sellers, though – and not just because of her gender or headscarf. Jana likes telling her story. Even though her English is broken, her gripping and distressing history draws people in – probably just as much as the sad and desperate look in her eyes.

Many give her more than the Big Issue costs, caught by what she has to say about how she came to England and wasn't able to find a job. Jana is open about the fact she lives in a flat. She is out on the street because she is about to be evicted, and needs money to still have somewhere tomorrow.

Having worked with many street people over the last two years, in both London and Cambridge, I was more suspicious than most at first. Was her story really true? Or was she bluntly lying to me?

Other homeless people complained about her, too. "She only comes out here before Christmas, and makes our life harder." David in particular, who busks on King's Parade, wasn't happy about her presence: "She takes all my money away. Even my regulars don't give a shit about me anymore. And it is fucking cold out here."

On a different occasion, I met Mike on Trinity Street, in the middle of the night, waiting for one of the rare passers-by to give him some change. "Really bad day today. People are stingy even though it's Christmas."

I was amazed by how open Mike was. A brown glass bottle of methadone was tucked inside his jacket. Tossing it back and forth, he proudly announced that this 100ml of methadone was the only thing he needed to get through the weekend. He didn't use heroin anymore. Mike claimed to be clean.

"But, you know, I still need to make some money. I really can't work and stuff. Got problems with my back." Again, I wanted to believe Mike, but I

really wasn't sure what to make of this. Was his whole 'spiel' only an invention, fabricated to make money?

On the streets of Cambridge, Jana, David and Mike are competitors. They are after the same spare change, the same sympathy. They employ different tactics to reach this goal. While Jana lets her sensitive eyes and whispered words speak for themselves, Mike boasts of his achievements. David is open about his complaints – and hopes for compassion.

As a giver, you can never know what is really true. You rely on what you are told, what you see, feel and hear. All three of them might be lying, and any gift might turn out to be a moral hazard.

But this misses the point. Giving to people on the street goes beyond calculation, beyond even the economics of morality. Why do we need to know what really is true? Why turn a microscopic lens on people who have no privacy anyway? David and Mike are literally living on the street; they don't have an apartment they can

return to at night.

We shouldn't stick to our usual rules when it comes to people on the streets and our gifts to them. If we do, we deny people that try to build a comfort zone in this most uncomfortable environment their right to existence.

Stories, little pleas, even lies, are measures of protection for people on the street. With our obsessive striving for transparent individuals in other realms of society, we are hollowing out the human. Sexuality without secrets is pornography. With the same obsession applied to street people we are making whole lives unliveable.

Gifts to homeless people shouldn't be earmarked. There can't be strings attached. They shouldn't be about control, checks and tests. If we – as a society – can't decide on one or the other form of basic income, we could at least consider building private zones of humanity. This is what unconditional gifts can be for people living on the street.

*All names in this article have been changed.



Pearl Mahaga

Cambridge students need to recognise the atrocities of the British Empire.

On our Empire amnesia

I cannot say that I'm overjoyed to be writing this article for a Cambridge audience in 2014, but it seems that even this prestigious environment is not immune from 'Empire amnesia' – ignorance to the atrocities of the British Empire.

But why write now? As a third year undergraduate, I've seen numerous examples of this ignorance, where offensive and insensitive behaviour is justified on the grounds of 'fun'. The theme of the 2009 Emmanuel May Ball was initially 'British Empire', and the Pitt Club themed their annual Christmas party in a similar style last year. While both of these caused some controversy, many are still in the dark about why this might be problematic.

It seems that many of us have a distorted impression of colonialism, to the extent that we see nothing wrong with celebrating it without due criticism. Britain still retains the fetid fantasy of its benign Empire, a justification for celebrating history that seems totally perverse.

While the general sentiment surrounding historical episodes such as slavery, the Holocaust and Apartheid is one of acknowledged sensitivity, it seems as though the brutality of colonialism has been forgotten and is repeatedly ignored.

Many of us will flock to cinemas to see *12 Years a Slave* this week, despite harbouring a reluctance to engage with visual depictions of horrific history. The director Steve McQueen has expressed his concerns over a "kind of amnesia or not wanting to focus" on slavery, "maybe because it was so

hideous, people do not want to see. People do not want to engage".

This possibly explains our reluctance to face the truths of the British Empire - it is strange that the Empire still has positive connotations for many people in a way that slavery does not.

We are taught that the British

"IT IS SHOCKING THAT SO MANY OF OUR BRIGHTEST UNDERGRADUATES ARE STILL IN THE DARK WHEN IT COMES TO THE REALITY OF THIS HISTORY"

Empire might have been harsh at times, but on the whole that it made Britain great and its legacy is largely positive.

In history teaching, it's more common for the stories of white officials to be recounted; the walls of classrooms are decorated with colonial maps depicting the scale of the Empire, and the message is reinforced that Britain should celebrate its history. The myth of the 'civilising mission' lives on.

We are not pointed to, and perhaps do not want to face, the ugly truths: that Britain detained millions in camps and fortified villages, caused a

famine in India that is thought to have killed 30 million people, and routinely used brutal displays of violence and torture to secure their minority rule.

According to the research of Caroline Elkins, a professor at Harvard who spent 10 years in Kenya recording a history that had been suppressed by the colonial authorities and the British Foreign Office, the list of atrocities is horrific. As my country of birth, even I was shocked to find just how barbaric the response to the Mau Mau revolt in the 1950s was.

Mauling by dogs and electrocution were not uncommon methods of torture. Men were anally raped, often using knives, broken bottles, rifle barrels, snakes and scorpions. Women were gang-raped by guards. Land Rovers were used to drag people until their bodies disintegrated. Men were rolled up in barbed wire and British soldiers kicked them around.

This is just one appalling episode in the history of a largely brutal regime. These graphic details are of course in addition to systematic political and economic disenfranchisement, and the stripping and belittling of countless vibrant cultures. Only last year did Britain pay compensation to over 5,000 victims. Even then, Foreign Secretary William Hague stopped short of issuing an official apology.

The University of Cambridge is meant to be a place of learning and reflection. It is shocking that so many of the brightest undergraduates in the country are still in the dark when it comes to the reality of this history. I am appalled that it's still common for

parties in this city to be British Empire themed.

I am aware that most of these people don't set out to offend, but their ignorance and insensitivity to this history is especially offensive to those who originate from former colonies.

It is indicative of a much deeper issue regarding the treatment of Britain's history in its overseas colonies, and one that is perhaps equally true for other European nations. However, I feel strongly that Cambridge should take a lead in acknowledging the true history of the Empire.

Cambridge students are not responsible for past atrocities, but as intellectuals, and potentially future political leaders, they have a responsibility to engage with the stark facts and think about the impact they still have today.

Objecting to British Empire themed parties would be a good place to start.

Have any views on this week's comment pieces? Tweet us @VarsityUK, or write in to letters@varsity.co.uk



A View from the Bridge

Alice Udale-Smith

As a 4th year in Cambridge, there are a hundred and one things that make you feel old. For me, it's normally a particularly young looking fresher inconsiderately occupying my favourite spot in the bar. But this week it's the news that, for the first time ever, the number of text messages sent this year actually decreased from the previous year. Texting, it seems, is no longer cool. As usual, nobody bothered to tell the 4th years.

According to Deloitte's predictions, texts will continue to decrease in popularity next year as we all switch to apps like WhatsApp and Snapchat, eventually abandoning the humble SMS entirely. There is, though, no evidence yet to support my theory that this will ultimately lead to a new language consisting entirely of emoticons and selfies.

Teachers at some schools (well Eton anyway) have already banned Snapchat, worrying it might be used to send sexual messages and distract students. While it's easy to laugh off such worries as the imagination of over-precious teachers, part of me worries they might have a point. Ill-advised images now spread quickly across Twitter and Facebook, and the thought of having my own youthful mistakes plastered all over the internet for posterity is enough to make me thankful I didn't have a smart phone when I was a teenager.

Meanwhile in the land of entertainment we're entering one of the least enjoyable periods of the year – Awards Season. So it was refreshing to see Emma Thompson's delivery of the award for best screenplay at Monday's Golden Globes. Martini in one hand, heels in the other, Thompson managed to gush over the nominees with a sincerity few other presenters managed.

Unlike everybody else she also seemed to understand quite how silly getting dressed up to sit in a fancy room and applaud one's own achievements for nearly three hours appears. "This red" she said, gesturing at her shoes "is my blood", throwing them over her shoulder a minute later to have a spare hand to open the winner's envelope. Even Jennifer Lawrence threatening to push Taylor Swift down the stairs couldn't beat that.

And finally, how can I not finish with the news that Cambridge is to play host to our very own Duke? Never mind that he's studying a course nobody has ever heard of. I was offered £50 if I could touch his face before the end of Lent (a fact that my alarmed mother reacted to with a shriek of: "But Alice! He's MARRIED now!").

The Prince's security will be pleased to know I declined the offer. Hanging around in town hoping to bump into a royal would take up valuable library time. Besides, I'm too old for that sort of thing.

We must learn from Zimbabwe



Raffaella Taylor-Seymour

Zimbabwe is not the first place that comes to mind when thinking about the British immigration debate, but there are worrying parallels

On the 1st January this year, powerful new 'indigenisation' laws came into effect in Zimbabwe, with the aim of forcing all foreign-owned businesses to pass into the hands of black Zimbabweans. It is a move that has horrified the international business community that accuses Mugabe of once again leading his country into economic jeopardy and risking the little stability that has been regained since the 2009 crisis.

Indigenising the Zimbabwean economy involves forcing non-Zimbabweans (for instance Mozambiquan or Nigerian small business-owners) to relinquish at least 51 per cent of their stakes in Zimbabwean companies.

The list of sectors currently affected, however, leaves out the 'big fish' of the foreign-owned enterprises, such as the mines and the banks. At present, those affected include hairdressers, beauty salons, bakers, employment agencies, agriculture and transport. Those that do not comply will risk being arrested, and considering that those affected have little financial or diplomatic power, they are not in a position to fight back.

Last year's election saw Robert Mugabe win his seventh presidential term, and he won on a platform which promised to "indigenise, empower, develop and employ". Critics were quick to label this latest move a rushed and populist policy that will target tiny businesses owned by immigrants who were strong enough to stay in the country even when it was on its knees.

I know Zimbabwe well, having spent two months there last year carrying out research. Mugabe, now a cardboard cutout villain in the Western world, is a man who divides the country.

From what you hear in the Western media, you'd be forgiven for thinking that he rules purely by force. In fact, he has as many supporters as detractors, and even those who oppose his recent policies recognise him as a liberator of their country. If nothing else, his rhetoric has traction in a country where the scars of colonialism are not easily forgotten.

My question, however, is how unique is this policy? To an outsider, Zimbabwean politics seems to lurch between barbarity and farce, and this move has easily played into that narrative. But it's interesting to see how this policy compares to other countries seeking to 'indigenise' their economies, labour markets and property ownership.

Since the late 1980s, Oman's Sultan Qaboos has been gradually introducing 'Omanisation' policies that seek to increase the numbers of indigenous people working in prime sectors. Certain industries, such as taxi driving or petrochemicals, have to reach quotas for the number of Omanis employed.

It's an extremely popular policy among Omanis, but similar fears have been raised that it will deter foreign investment and make it hard for companies to recruit adequately skilled labour.

Looking closer to home, it's interesting to consider how debates surrounding immigration have given rise to similar concerns. In 2009, Gordon Brown spoke of "British jobs for British workers." Last year, vans drove around areas with high immigrant populations, warning them to "go home or face arrest".

Such moves wouldn't seem out of place in Zimbabwe, a fact we're perhaps reluctant to admit. In an

era of increasing movement across borders, many states are witnessing alarmist responses to higher levels of immigration. In the context of Zimbabwe, colonised over 100 years ago, sentiments are even stronger.

Indigenisation laws in Zimbabwe aim to address the imbalance in the economy that goes back to the settlement of Rhodesia by Europeans in the 19th century.

The number of white settlers never made up more than four per cent of the population, but for over a century the country's economy and land ownership was dominated by a white minority who clung onto political power until 1980.

Within Zimbabwe there are strong sentiments in favour of pursuing indigenisation. A friend of mine recently told me, "philosophically, most Zimbabweans support indigenisation. People disagree how to put that philosophy into practice." Many believe it's fair to repossess what was taken during colonial settlement.

The danger is that these laws will in practice target immigrants who support the economy, a narrative that sounds very familiar.

British politics has become saturated with discussions that regularly descend into racist and xenophobic diatribes. Comparing the British, Omani and Zimbabwean cases, I feel they are a warning of the dangers of suppressing open discussions about nationality and citizenship, that ultimately result in drastic measures.

Those who are against nationalist policies tend to avoid discussing the issues and explaining the complexities. The hazard is that such an approach creates deeper cracks where fault lines already exist, which may be harder to heal further down the line.

The need for a new economics



Marco Schneebalg

The Vice President of the Cambridge Society for Economic Pluralism lays out the need for a new economics

The shape of the world economy has changed dramatically over the last twenty years, but the economic curriculum has not. Curriculum reform is necessary and long overdue to overhaul some of the outdated concepts that are still being taught. A re-introduction of the intellectual dynamism of pluralism would reinvigorate the discipline.

The last twenty years have seen the dotcom bubble burst and the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. It's fair to say that economists failed to anticipate the coming of the crisis or its magnitude once it had arrived.

In fact, if anything, there was a sense of self-congratulatory complacency. A tranquil period of steady growth, low inflation and wealth for all was set to continue indefinitely.

Then the crisis of 2007/8 arrived and shook the economics establishment out of its happy torpor. Suddenly the discipline burst to life, throwing out now defunct ideas like perfect competition and resuscitating neglected concepts like banks and money to reinvigorate their models.

The Institute for New Economics Thinking was set up to promote research at the frontier of economics to the tune of millions of dollars.

Despite this blossoming of new ideas in academia, economics education remains broadly static. Economics

continues to be taught as if it were a science. Theories are taught as if they are proven beyond reasonable doubt, rather than fallible, as models of human behaviour must be. Little attempt is made to relate the abstract mathematics we are fed back to the real world, to the economy you see in your day-to-day life.

Some will say that this is harmless, but many students graduate straight into a job where their relative ignorance regarding the status of economics is used to make economic policy decisions using a rationale that academic economists have not believed for decades.

Perhaps the most striking example of the effect this can have is the Treasury's policy of austerity, which has been widely derided as economically harmful by economists – including at the IMF – and yet it's supported in a typical undergraduate curriculum, where austerity is lauded thanks to its oxymoronic properties of expansionary contraction.

Updating the syllabus to bring it into line with current economic thinking and injecting a bit more realism and critical thinking are uncontroversial changes and as such there can be no excuse for not making them. Indeed, the CORE initiative led by Professor Carlin of UCL and funded (once again) by INET is developing a new first-year undergraduate

curriculum that intends to do exactly that.

But is this enough? Opportunities for change are rare, so when they arise it is important to consider whether a more radical transformation is necessary. Should other schools of economic thought enter the syllabus? Would students not benefit from learning about Austrian, Ecological or Feminist schools alongside the dominant neo-classical mainstream?

And perhaps economics should rediscover its relationship with its social science cousins. Is not economics so unavoidably intertwined with psychology, politics, sociology and anthropology that teaching it in isolation is unduly monochromatic?

A rising chorus of voices would answer 'yes'. In January 2013, the Post Crash Economics Society of Manchester University launched its campaign for a more pluralist curriculum. In June, a national body, Rethinking Economics, was launched at an LSE conference that has now expanded to become a network of over 2,000 young people. Indeed, the Cambridge Society for Economic Pluralism has been promoting alternative schools of economic thought since 2011.

There has never been a better moment for economics to be self-critical and carefully consider whether the time for greater pluralism has come.



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Doing it like a Dude

Jackson Caines meets the women behind the new female drag group 'Pecs' before their first performance

There's nothing particularly radical-looking about High Barnet on this sleepy Sunday afternoon. As I make my way down the street, the north London suburb seems deserted; the only characters in sight are a listless young man in a grey hoodie and an elderly gentleman carefully cleaning his car. I wonder what they'd make of the rehearsal taking place a few houses down.

I ring the doorbell and am ushered in by a young woman who is both self-assured and slightly flustered. The house is bursting with activity. The strains of a close harmony vocal rehearsal drift into the kitchen from an adjoining room, "Ladies and gentlemen... welcome!", while dance routines are being fine-tuned elsewhere. I've entered the world of Pecs, an all-female drag collective made up of ten Cambridge students and graduates. The woman who answered the door is its co-founder, Temi Wilkey.

"I was plagued by the conundrum," Temi recalls, "about why drag queens are much bigger than drag kings. Why, when you think of drag, do you think of drag queen immediately before king?" At a party in November, Temi suggested to Celine Lowenthal that they put on their own drag king show,

and with her enthusiastic response the Pecs project was born.

With Temi and Celine as co-directors and the line-up now finalised, the show promises a mixture of ensemble dances, solo numbers and sketches. Boxers, ballet dancers and Justin Timberlake (a.k.a. Thrustin' Limbersnake) all make an appearance.

"Why, when you think of drag, do you think of drag queen immediately before king?"

While doing their research, Temi and Celine seized upon the writings of queer theorist Judith Halberstam. "One thing she points out that we thought about a lot is that masculinity is considered somehow neutral," explains Celine. "Dressing up as a male isn't really considered to be a costume in and of itself. We've discovered that that's not the case at all, and that there are a huge variety of masculinities

that can be performed: feminine masculinities, masculine femininities and so on."

Not everyone grasps this concept immediately, as Temi well knows. "I remember mentioning the show to somebody, and they said, 'Oh, women in drag - isn't that just women wearing clothes?'" This elicits a big laugh from the group; they've put in enough time and effort to know drag kinging is a bit more complicated than that.

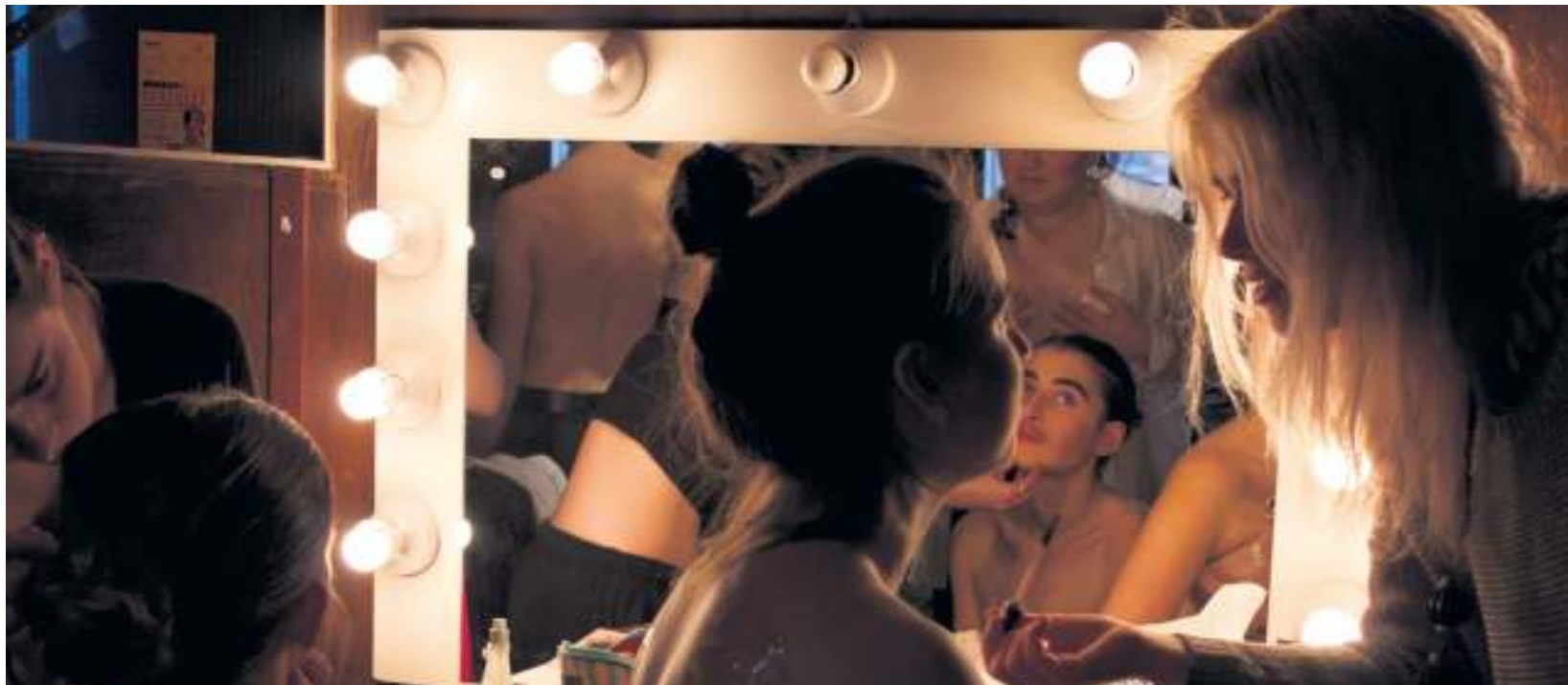
In workshops, Isabel Adomakoh-Young tells me, they've had to pay close attention to the nuances that distinguish male physicality. "It's been really interesting to just, say, hold your shoulders in a different way. You actually have to keep doing that continuously, and it's amazing watching other people do it because they're sending out an entirely different message."

Most members of Pecs cut their teeth acting in straight theatre at school and university, but some have experience with circus, burlesque and physical theatre. Pecs isn't Isabel's first foray into drag. "Every year at summer camp we'd put on a play, and I was always cast as a man. I played Captain Hook, which was really interesting because Hook's such a strutting,

particular archetype of masculinity. My friend, who was very camp even as a boy, played Sneezy, and so that was the first time that I really came across the gender paradigms and how you could play with that."



All of the performers agree that the appeal of drag is rooted in a deeply-held curiosity in their own bodies. This highly personal aspect of drag has proven something of a revelation, explains Rosie Skan. "It not only opens your eyes to how you're behaving, but suddenly you look around and you feel like you can look at society in a completely different way. You're looking around and you can see everyone's body language, everyone's outfit choices."



Jessica O'Driscoll-Breen makes the point that drag kinging can be a form of liberation, even rebellion. Jessica grew up in rural Ireland, an environment she found restrictive. "Girls have to be very girly, boys have to be very stoic. I was always encouraged to be that perfect

little girl. When I moved away from home, I began to question that and look into queerness and things like that. It's really cool trying to be a man; in a way, it makes me feel a bit weaker, because I'm not as good at being a man as I am at being a woman, but in another way it makes me feel more powerful."

"You look around and you feel like you can look at society in a completely different way."

Victoria Veronica Aubrey insists

that even in more liberal societies, the pressure to conform to gender norms is strong. "Everyone is brought up in those gendered terms of masculine and feminine. It's difficult in our society to be gender-queer or transgender because it's not accepted; having that fluidity is something that people are so violent against. I suppose part of putting on this show is to raise awareness."

It's not just women who are the victims of gender conformity. Part of Pecs's *raison d'être* is to show how men too have to deal with 'body-monitoring' - the subconscious need to appear outwardly acceptable to society. Isabel describes an act in the show which features two characters out of *Grease* who are obsessed with looking cool, constantly posturing in their car and checking their quiffs. "As much as

the act is mocking that, it's also lamenting the fact that they feel that they have to do that in order to be attractive." Their performance on Battersea Barge is not the end of Pecs's journey; all members of the collective have expressed an interest in working together again, so this might well be just the beginning. If these performers have their way, perhaps drag kings won't be playing second fiddle to the queens for much longer.

In the meantime, they are ambitious about the potential for their show to remind people that when it comes to their gender identity, they have the right to shop around. In Isabel's words, "It's not necessarily that we need to be different, but let's just check what other options there are before we buckle down. There's no reason to assume that this is the best way to be."

You're Born Naked & the Rest is Drag

Jacob Mallinson Bird on his other half

My first experience of drag was watching *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* when I was seven years old. Seeing a coterie of camp queens dancing their way through the Australian outback, dripping in rhinestones, marabou and glitter, was an image I've never quite forgotten. Watching this free, unashamed glamour through the haze of my grainy VHS, sitting in a rainy suburb in Essex, Bernadette, Mitzi and Felicia became my idols.

Then came *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. No longer the old-school glamour drag of outrageous

colour and costumes, Dr Frank N. Furter showed me a darker, sexier, more androgynous side of drag. A hedonistic, glamorous, transvestite alien who lives in a palatial manor with his very own muscle hunk...

You can see why, in my awkward acne ridden pre-teen state, I envied Frank N. Furter. And the drag was appealing not because he looked or acted like a girl, but just because of the unabashed confidence. Prancing through life in a corset, pearl necklace and suspenders with a carefree nonchalance was unthinkable for me, now having escaped suburgatory

and entered into the world of the all-boys boarding school. I couldn't really envisage myself strutting into the buttery in a pair of thigh high boots, however much I may have wanted to.

It's been a year since I teased my alter ego, Dinah Lux, into existence, and I couldn't really imagine life without her. On the one hand, being a drag queen is just endless amounts of fun. Once you learn not to take yourself at all seriously, leaping round a club in six-inch heels and nipple tassels is an incomparable feeling.

But there's also a more personal side. Having this limitless confidence as a girl definitely has an impact on my life as a boy. Under the pseudonym of Dinah Lux, and under the layers of make-up, duct tape, glue stick, and false lashes, I adopt a whole other entity - but it is still essentially me.

Although I may look and act nothing like myself as I do in the day, that confident creature is still me, and that confidence filters into my daily life. Whether it's not caring if someone stares at my 'weird' outfits in the street, or even just having to awkwardly answer a question in

a lecture, Dinah has given me a lot more confidence.

Also, the opportunities I've had from it have been astounding. I was once at a night-



PETER FINGLETON

club with my best friend, and we got chatting to someone in the smoking area. In that classic drunken way, we obviously

became best friends.

The next day I got a phone call from a magazine editor, who the guy had worked for, and within a month I was in the new Primal Scream music video.

I've been lucky enough to shoot with Nick Knight, to be invited to the Yves Saint Laurent show in Paris, and host parties with Brooke Candy, all just because I happen to like to wear a dress of an evening.

Drag has taught me that, in the words of RuPaul, "if you can't love yourself, how the hell are you gonna love somebody else?" But also, how is anyone else going to love you? If you have total, shameless enjoyment in being the best 'you' you can be, then I truly think that everything else will fall into place.

Ok, maybe I'm not going to get a first, and yes, maybe there are countless dangers and annoyances with being a drag queen, but the pros definitely outweigh the cons.

In dressing ourselves, we present an image to the outside world. Why not make it a glamorous one?

To Thine Own Self Be True

From self-portraits to selfies, Nina de Paula Hanika traces the art of portraying the self


Selfie was the Oxford English Dictionary's word of the year for 2013, and is officially defined as: "a photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically one taken with a smartphone or webcam and uploaded to a social media website." So far, so Facebook. Selfies bred like bacteria in 2013, apparently by 17,000 per cent, and yet our faithful friend the OED goes on to add in its handy example: "occasional selfies are acceptable, but posting a new picture of yourself every day isn't necessary." Ooof – cuts deep.

Criticised as endemic narcissism by Jonathan Freedland, lauded as the ultimate fourth wave feminist act and even explored in an 'essay' for the New York Times by everyone's favourite pseudointellectual, James Franco, it seems the selfie wields enough power to make even the dictionary seethe.

Yet, the self is a slippery fish that people have been attempting to pin down for years.

Prior to the invention of photography, artists were the only ones with the potential to provide a tangible image of one's appearance, and with better mirror production techniques developed during the Renaissance, artists increasingly turned to the most convenient subject matter available: themselves.



 aiww

♥ 448 likes



 vinny_van_gogh

♥ jf_millett, theo_van_gogh

● vinny_van_gogh I wish they would only take me as I am

theo_van_gogh i think we can wait patiently for success to come; you will surely live to see it. it is necessary to get well known without obtruding oneself, and it will come of its own accord by reason of your beautiful pictures

impressionist_claude I am very depressed and deeply disgusted with painting. It is really a continual torture.




 rembrand1606

♥ saskia_vanu, rijksmuseum

● rembrand1606 I can't paint the way they want me to paint and they know that too.

hugehuygens All honor to thee, my Rembrandt!




 alexis_hunter

♥ brookmus1

● brookmus1 the lines which split the figure and hide your modesty echo the divisive, chronological approach employed throughout your oeuvre...



 ladygaga



Several artists chose to return repeatedly to the subject of their own self over the span of their lifetime. The Dutch artist Rembrandt painted dozens of self-portraits over his career, beginning at twenty-two years of age and painting his last in 1669, the year he died.

It seems that, if these fifty paintings, thirty-two etchings and seven drawings were to be gathered into one room, a sort of seventeenth-century time-lapse would unfold, not just of the ravages of age, but of mind, wealth, and artistic technique.

Van Gogh, one of the most prolific self-portraitists of all time, painted close to thirty images of himself in just the last three years of his life.

Again, these works display a constantly curious talent, experimenting with brush-stroke and palette, but for some, it is difficult to ignore the pared down quality of the final four, his piercing dark eyes staring out from a pained face tinted green with sadness.

One could, of course, read these forays into self-portraiture as merely documentary; a means of mapping the ever-deepening forehead furrows and receding hairlines, or in the case of a certain Mr van Gogh, number of ears.

But with the most famous examples, it is difficult not to feel a more poignant, searching quality in their chronic self-reflection. Such works present us with the key line of questioning when regarding self-portraits: to what extent can we ever be objective when looking at ourselves, and, do we really want to be?

This tension between subjectivity and objectivity would become key for a lot of female artists, especially those working within the growing women's art movement of the 1970s, begun in the United States by Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro.

The self-portrait had been a common subject matter for female artists for centuries, due simply to the fact that, with restricted working resources, frequently the only available model was themselves.

Photography had also become a popular medium for female artists since it had yet to be fully subsumed into a male dominated canon, allowing a sense of greater potential to carve out new ground for themselves.

Yet, for some feminist artists, the photographic self-portrait became a politicised weapon. Susan Sontag would publish *On Photography* in 1977, writing that "While a painting or a prose description can never be other than a narrowly selective interpretation, a photograph can be treated as a narrowly selective transparency.

"But despite the presumption of veracity that gives all photographs authority, interest and seductiveness, the work that photographers do is no generic exception to the usually shady commerce between art and truth."

It was clear to many that, despite its aesthetic of documentation, photography was just as susceptible to subjective manipulation as any other art form.

Many female artists responded to the bombardment of advertising

images adopting the male gaze by turning the lens on themselves.

Both Cindy Sherman and Gillian Wearing would, and continue to, utilise the self-portrait to explore the manner in which women are perpetually sold the concept of re-invention and ready-made identities, reducing them to two-dimensional cartoons, but also encouraging their participation in a game of deceit.

By donning disguise, the resulting, highly constructed images are in some way surreally threatening and highly conscious of the response they would provoke in the viewer.

Other artists, however, would respond to this problem in a quieter, more personal, way. One of my favourites, Francesca Woodman, would dedicate her short and troubled life to producing hundreds of black and white photographs of herself.

Usually choosing to set her works in crumbling, deserted buildings, and often presenting herself partly, if not fully, nude, her work is intrinsically connected to a study of her gendered body. Frequently using movement, long exposures and hiding parts of herself, her oeuvre presents ghostly image after image.

Yet Woodman is not naïve. She was clearly highly aware of the seductive qualities of her body; she curls up next to eels that mirror the curve of her hips and crouches on a dusty floor wearing only a cropped sweater. She looks up at a camera looking down, thrusting upon the viewer a disparaging gaze of control.

"The relationship between self-portraits and the selfie becomes complicated when we move beyond the boundaries of 'official' art"

It is this idea of control which has led to many contemporary commentators citing the selfie as a feminist act, one in which young women present the world with an unapologetic and celebratory image of themselves.

This seems to make sense when considering selfies whose subjects exist outside of normative standards of beauty.

But the inter-congratulatory nature of the manner in which the selfie is shared, and their existence within the context of a patriarchal society, break down this analysis; the insistence upon adding every tumblr-girl's tagline #nofilter says it all.

Artists have been taking less constructed self-portrait photographs for years, too. Alexis Hunter's *Self-Portrait*, 1977, or several images from AA Bronson's *Mirror Sequences*, arguably could have been taken by any one of us armed with a camera and a little know-how.

"Female artists responded to the male gaze in advertising imagery by turning the lens on themselves."

And still, the relationship between self-portraits and the selfie becomes ever more complicated when we move beyond the boundaries of the 'official' art world and look at images presented outside the gallery space.

Ai Weiwei, a Chinese artist who has been under constant surveillance by his government since April

2011, has been using Instagram to share smartphone images of himself since it began, and he is by no means the only contemporary artist to do so.

Are the images he shares art? They are often aesthetically pleasing, but require no more technical knowledge to produce than any other amateur smartphone photographer.

But prior to Instagram, his personal blog was shut down multiple times. His insistence on visually communicating with the world by any means he can changes our reading of these selfies into a rebellious act.

Regardless of whether we can call a selfie art, it cannot be coincidence that time and again, humans choose to turn the focus on themselves.

If Descartes is to be believed, the selfie is a 21st century case of 'I Instagram, therefore I am.'



A Closer Look: Sisley

Franciska Fabriczki takes a closer look at what's on display at the Fitzwilliam

The Fitzwilliam Museum houses such an impressive collection of impressionist paintings that getting lost in its halls feels like being transported to the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. French household names such as Degas, Renoir and Monet are all represented, but one of my personal favorites, the Franco-British Alfred Sisley also makes an appearance.

Sisley is often described in relation to the great impressionist painters such as Monet. The subjects of his landscapes are calmer and less dramatic, and are therefore considered to be the textbook examples of impressionism. But to consider him less

of a revolutionary would be wrong; throughout most of his life his paintings were considered unorthodox and rejected from the respected salons of Paris.

The impressionist preoccupation with sunlight and shadows is captured well in this painting, *A Street*, possibly in Port-Marly, as the buildings of the sloping village street cast shadows on its inhabitants.

But what I always find remarkable is the playfulness with which he portrays the sky above all his landscapes. Sisley himself confessed: "I always start a painting with the sky."

Vulture Loves...

Giving up 'giving up'

2013 was the year of the 5:2 diet, the Insanity Workout and plenty of wheat-dairy-sugar-free. Do we miss it? Not at all. Start the New Year as you will most certainly end it: full on food, low on dollar and thoroughly content.



◁ Feast on focaccia, torta di pistacchi and caffè at Aromi, a charming Sicilian cafe on Bene't Street. Originally founded in 1957 in Acireale, Sicily, a.k.a the region of flavours, it offers a taste of Italy in the heart of Cambridge.



Trying to quit but struggling? Satisfy your cravings with Todd's Chewing Gum Tobacco Ketchup. Available online at harveynichols.com, £7.50.

▽ Feeling fruity? Try out these berry hues from OPI to nail January glam. Their website has an online studio to help you choose your perfect shade. Check out www.opiuk.com, with prices from £11.50.



"May the New Year bring you courage to break your resolutions early" Aleister Crowley

The *Ultimate* Burger



Meat. Bread. Cheese.
The ultimate in January joy.

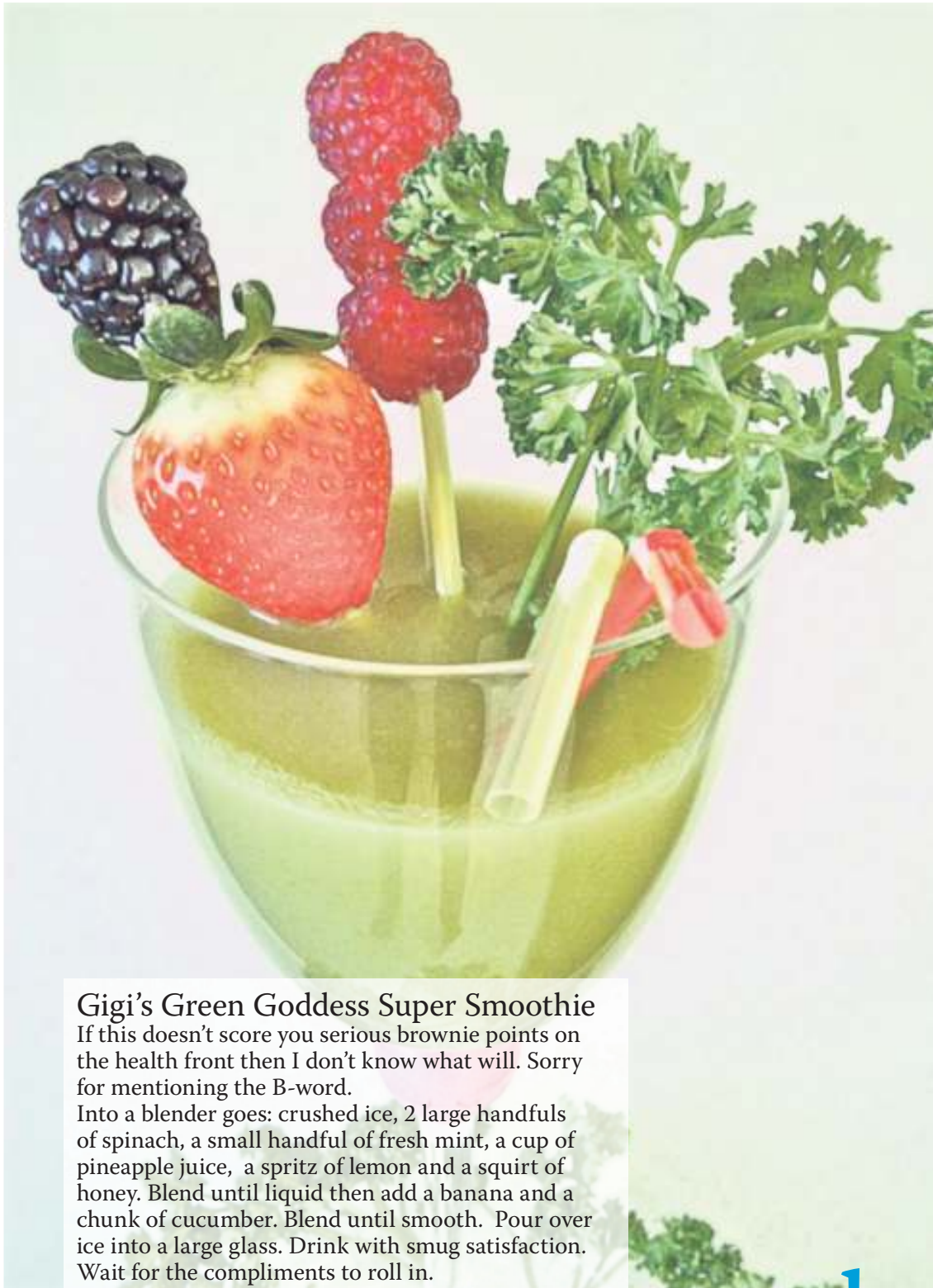
You will need: vegetable oil, small onion (chopped), 500g minced chuck steak or mince, small handful of breadcrumbs, dash of fresh parsley (chopped), salt, pepper.

Plus: Cheese, four buns, bacon, salad leaves, tomato (sliced), red onion (sliced)

To make your burger: Heat the oil in a pan and cook the onion until soft. Leave to cool. Patience, pal. Mix together the onion, beef, breadcrumbs, parsley and seasoning. Divide into four burger-shaped patties and keep them in the fridge.

When you're hungry: Heat up your frying pan and slide in the burgers. Cook for a few minutes before turning them over and topping with a thick slice of cheese. Cook to your preference before putting to one side. Wipe the pan clean. Grab your buns and toast in the hot pan.

To eat: Put your cheese-topped burger into the bun before adding the bacon, leaves, tomato and onion. Serve with salty fries for a full-on feast. Add a splodge of ketchup and you'll be laughing.



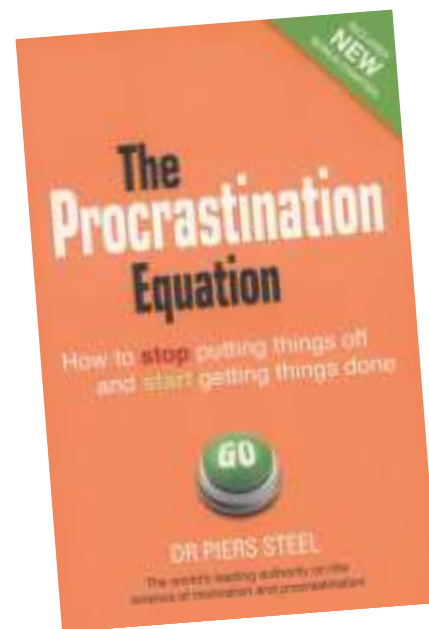
Gigi's Green Goddess Super Smoothie

If this doesn't score you serious brownie points on the health front then I don't know what will. Sorry for mentioning the B-word.

Into a blender goes: crushed ice, 2 large handfuls of spinach, a small handful of fresh mint, a cup of pineapple juice, a spritz of lemon and a squirt of honey. Blend until liquid then add a banana and a chunk of cucumber. Blend until smooth. Pour over ice into a large glass. Drink with smug satisfaction. Wait for the compliments to roll in.



Honey honey, how you thrill me. Want clear, glowing skin? Smear your face with a teaspoon of honey. Leave for 15 minutes before washing off with warm water. Don't answer the door in the meantime.



◁ I put off writing this till the last minute. It wasn't because I was working. I was procrastinating. But I can at least claim it was with a purpose. If you are among the 95% of the population who shares my affliction, check out Dr. Steel's *The Procrastination Equation* (Pearson Life) to find out why.

but if you insist...

If you must adhere to convention then do it properly. It doesn't have to be all hard work. New Year, New You.



What's up, bud? Bring the outdoors in with a trip to the flower stall in Market Square. Recent evidence suggests that flowers are a natural

mood moderator, triggering positive emotions. That 'flower power' lot was on to something. As if we needed an excuse. . .

3 OF THE BEST EXERCISE CLASSES

Fitness and Fun all-in-one. With classes to suit any budget, there really is no excuse.

1. Capoeira at The Cambridge Union Society. £2 members, £5 non-members, cus.org.
2. Spinning at Kelsey Kerridge Sports Centre. £5.40 for students, kelseykerridge.co.uk.
3. Metcon at Cambridge University Sports Centre. £3 for students, sport.cam.ac.uk.





Life in Style

*Styling by Jacob Mallinson Bird. Photographed by Tom Porteous and Barney Crouch.
Models: Ryan Peterson, Kyle Farmery, Benedict Douglas, Jenkin Van Zyl, Leo Carlton, and Lewis Burton. Clothes: Models' own.*



With Paris Fashion Week in full swing, all eyes are on the hottest new trends. In an industry obsessed with novelty and changing your whole wardrobe twice a year, it's often easy to forget that a sense of style is essential. Isabella Blow, Daniel Lismore, Daphne Guinness – what sets these icons apart is their unwavering sense of style, often flying in the face of what is 'fashionable'. Here are some of London's most inspiring dressers. Epitomising everything from clinical, futuristic chic, androgynous femme fatale, and Elizabethan vamped-up glamour, each of these young creatives shows how the clothes we wear are symbols of self-expression, and that we needn't always be slaves to fashion, but rather pioneers of ourselves. Yves Saint Laurent said it best: "fashion fades, but style is eternal." *Jacob Mallinson Bird*



The Bard

RIVKAH BROWN

That the words “Shakespeare’s so hot right now” should open a feature in the London Evening Standard entitled ‘How to Be a Bard Ass’ might be seen by theatre aficionados as a damning sign of the times.

A sign that, what with recent star-studded productions of Henry V (Jude Law), Richard II (David Tennant), and Coriolanus (our very own Tom Hiddleston), not to mention Othellos (Adrian Lester) past and King Lear (Simon Russell Beale) yet to come, the Bard has been reduced to a fad.

Shakespeare coming back into fashion? “He never went out!” I hear you cry, brandishing your dog-eared Arden editions. Yet this apparent truism isn’t entirely true: Law, Tennant and Hiddleston are reviving three highly under-performed Shakespearean protagonists, even for the most avid of theatre-goers. That they should be allowing the Bard to piggyback on their celebrity in order to re-engage the general public with the theatre is fantastic.

Indeed, rather than ‘grouching’ that Coriolanus has ‘sold out to teenage girl fans’, perhaps we ought to be worrying about how exclusive this once mass medium has become.

Despite such laudable efforts as the 16-25-year-old Entry Pass, discounted tickets are distributed in painfully limited numbers, and have done little to alter the demographic of theatre-goers; it is rare to attend a performance at the National Theatre without being greeted by a sea of white hair.

This is where Cambridge crucially differs. Despite ADC bar-fly stereotypes, I am continually heartened by the popularity theatre enjoys across all sections of the student body. This is partly a result of the extraordinary glut of theatre we have in Cambridge; with up to fifteen shows in a single week, and occasionally aggressive flyer-ing tactics on the Sidge, it’s almost impossible to avoid.

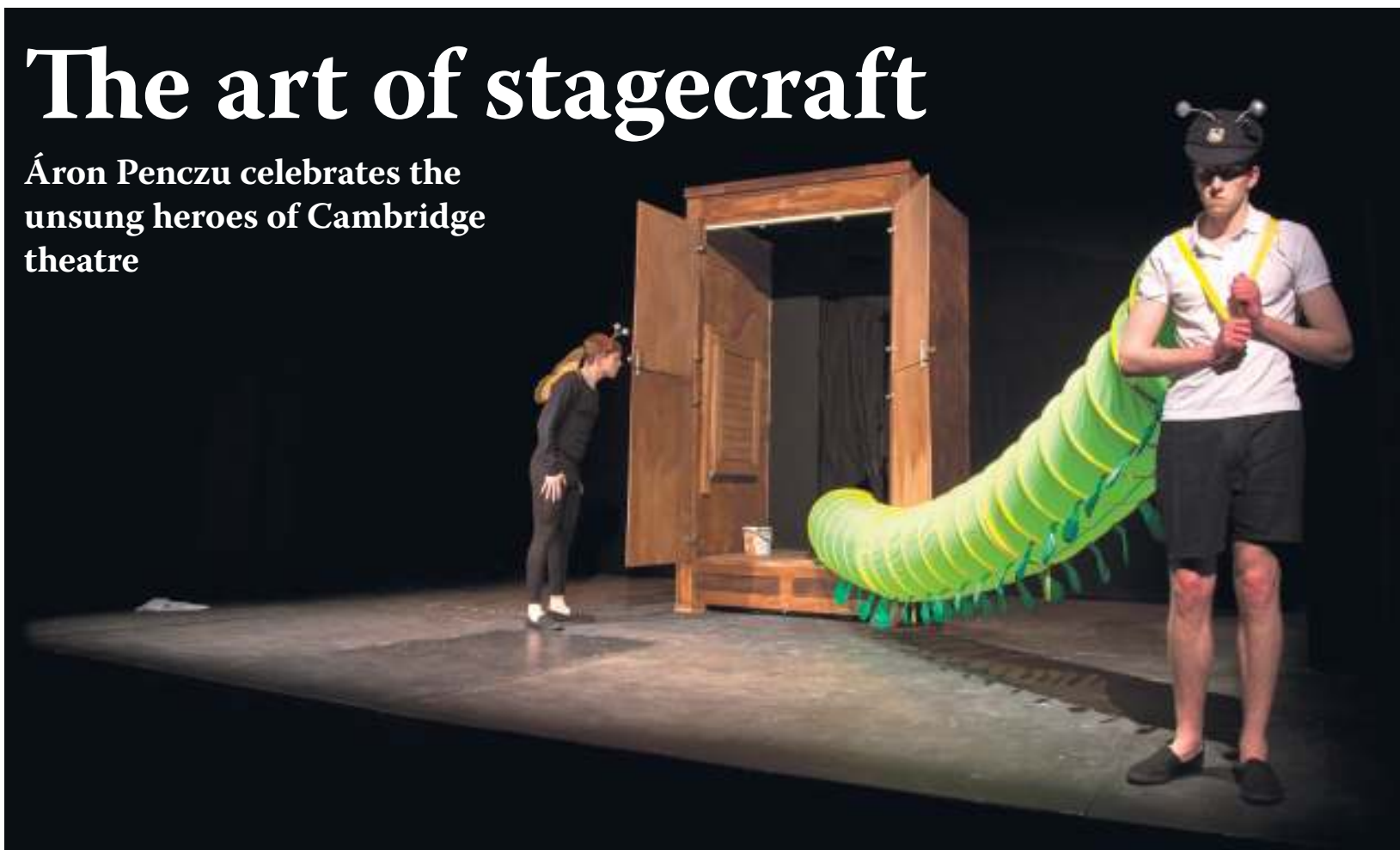
Because of the vast smorgasbord of shows on offer, it’s also far easier to be spontaneous, to slip off to a late show after a drink. It’s a simple formula: make tickets cheap and easy to come by, theatres accessible and performers (occasionally) your mates, and students will flock in their droves.

It’s also refreshing to live in a town where the local is taken as seriously as the national, even international. It is a credit to the calibre of Cambridge’s thespians that students get as excited about this week’s ADC mainshow as the latest instalment of The Hunger Games.

And this term, there’s a lot to get excited about: ETG, The Footlights Spring Revue and Doctor Faustus, to name but a few. In a way that the London stage has yet to replicate, theatre in Cambridge is as popular as ever – long may it remain so.

The art of stagecraft

Áron Penczu celebrates the unsung heroes of Cambridge theatre



It’s 7.40pm inside the ADC. The audience is seated: scattered chatter before the start of the show. The safety curtain is still in. Behind it techies crouch in the internals of the set’s soldering, fiddling with wires, checking plugs. Five minutes to go, and there’s still something wrong with the intricate wiring of the LEDs. Anxious actors peer at them from the wings: the audience is growing restless. For three hours they’ve been trying frantically to get the lights to work. Finally, at 7.45pm, the signal is given. The techies give up; the safety curtain sinks down out of view. The show must go on.

It’s the opening night for ENRON, and the LEDs in question are meant to mark out subsections of the stage. They’ll be missed most in the light-saber dance-scene, when the stage is largely black. Today they are unfixable, and the performance continues without them – for the rest of the week they’ll work fine. ENRON will receive three rave reviews, and most of the audience will go home none-the-wiser. It almost makes you wonder if a set like this is worth the trouble at all.

It’s an uphill task at best, stagecraft. Interested? Expect to spend anywhere from weeks to months putting in four-

hour shifts at the club. Then get ready for the run-up. In the days before you open, people around you will help you keep to the ‘16-hour rule’ – that you work no more than 16 hours a day. In most cases, you’ll work no less. It’s not particularly remunerative; unpaid, of course, but also largely unappreciated.

Exempting techies and thespians, few people know what you do. If you’ve never heard of Camdram you’ve got no chance. And the roles themselves (set designer, tech director, stage manager, stage hand) tell only a fraction of the story. Everything from planning and designing an entire mise-en-scène to merely formalising a director’s vision can fall under the scope of tech director. If you’re lucky enough to receive a review mention, chances are it’ll attribute something wrong.

Most techies are in it for the pleasure of the work itself: of building something from scratch. With set budgets of up to £3,500 (for a really ambitious Footlights pantomime), it’s possible to make something quite extraordinary. There is satisfaction to be gleaned from the realisation of a concept, and puzzles to be solved, solutions to be improvised.

Unlike much in Cambridge, it’s all hands-on. Touring companies like CAST or the ETG present their own

challenges and opportunities: assembling and taking apart a helter skelter every day, for example, or building a table that can fit in a suitcase.

Techies who do a lot of backstage work are passionate in their involvement, people who go to shows to see particular sets. Or sitting anonymously in the audience, gazing upon their own handiwork, they savour the moment of completion, the clamour of applause. Illiterate in the practicalities

illumination. There are old Sods, graduates of long ago, and Sodlets, children of two Sods. At their annual dinner they share anecdotes and pass on knowledge.

Though there is competition for prestigious positions on the higher-budget mainshows, smaller plays can struggle to get applications, and many roles are filled only by direct request. As a consequence, practically anyone who’s interested can get as much experience as they want, and practised hands – often old Sods – help mentor newcomers through their first shows.

I went to see ENRON on its third night, when the LEDs were working fine. Light is what I remember first of the show when I think of it. The play was beautifully executed, full of energy and excitement, and I left the ADC raving.

Perhaps Robert Eager, one of the geniuses behind its design, was pleased when he read the reviews. ‘Most of all,’ Hugo Havranek wrote, “the set and tech gave the play a high-budget feel: glitz and glamour, a fantastic exterior; that is what the play did best.” Or perhaps it didn’t matter. Perhaps Rob knew already that the set was exceptional, that the play would be incalculably poorer without it. That stagecraft was worth it after all.

“MOST TECHIES ARE IN IT FOR THE PLEASURE OF THE WORK ITSELF: OF BUILDING SOMETHING FROM SCRATCH.”

of stagecraft, we must seem purblind to them.

The informal community of Cambridge techies, past and present, call themselves Sods, after ‘shafts of darkness’ – the narrow, unlit stage-sections that can occur when you use multiple lights to achieve ambient



A tale of two generations

Eloise Davies speaks to the directors and producers of Amy Herzog's *4000 Miles*

The Caffè Nero opposite King's, famously a hotbed for Soviet sympathisers, was a surprisingly appropriate location to meet the directors and producers of *4000 Miles*. This comic drama, written by Amy Herzog, explores the relationship between an elderly communist granny and her grandson.

4000 Miles was a finalist for the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and won Time Magazine's #1 Play or Musical of 2012. This is not quite its British debut, but as Assistant Director Patrick Brooks puts it, "it is probably its amateur dramatic debut ... definitely in Cambridge at least!"

Director Matthew Lee (co-directing with David Rattigan) arguably has a lot to live up to. Is he worried? "Not really. Maybe that sounds arrogant – I don't know – but I wouldn't want to work with a bad play. I was one of the directors for Jerusalem last term, and obviously that has a huge following."

He is equally sanguine when I suggest there might be difficulties introducing an American comedy to Britain: "The writer is pretty sophisticated. We in Britain like to think of ourselves as having quite a sophisticated sense of humour."

In fact Lee was surprised to find that the writing's sophistication caused the most difficulty: "The closest thing I've done before is Chekhov: it was all about understanding the subtext. This play's incredibly subtle; it's a bit of a challenge when it comes to understanding the characters's motivations."

"I'm very interested in inconsistency, causality, and creating an arc which resonates with the audience, and found you really need to work with this play to do that. I've really enjoyed it."

All three agree that this emotional complexity is the central theme of the play. "Although you've got humor, you haven't got characters

who are in a happy place," says Alex Cartlidge, the play's producer.

Lee explains further: "The message is that there's a way through loneliness and that the ability to form new relationships and accept that loneliness is a part of life and isn't necessarily a bad thing."

"So you have this 91-year-old grandmother who's been lonely for the last few years of her life, but she's the most stable of the characters. Then you have her grandson coming along, and she teaches him a lot about how to mature. How to be more like her, so he can deal with the problems he's got now, and the problems he's got to come."

The play presents technical challenges, as Cartlidge is keen to emphasise: "The main thing for me would be for people to appreciate the way we are aiming to be as realistic as possible. We're pushing the costumes as well. Attention to detail is key." The actors are working along similar lines: "Julia's playing a woman 73 years older than her, and she's as convincing as an 18 year-old playing a 91 year-old can be."

4000 Miles' politics are also complex. "Politics is one of the things that the grandmother and grandson bond over," explains Lee. "Both partly buy into politics to express their identity. Leo lives an unconventional lifestyle."

"But for all Leo's noble principles, he's selfish, whereas his grandmother was a communist because it was a way of showing you cared about society. There's a good quote about it in the play: 'A lot of people were communists back then – it was like, it was like ... recycling, or whatever.'"

There is some social criticism in the play, which seems relevant to the students of today, who are often accused of having lost their social conscience: "For Leo life is easy enough that you can wear a political ideology in the way you

dress, with badges and those sort of things, without it actually meaning much because there isn't actually anything you have to fight for. Or the things we do have to fight for are so difficult or big that people don't."

"Leo's someone who needs to grow up, and getting a deeper understanding of politics is one way his character does grow up. He solves the dichotomy between the way he actually acts and what he says he will do."

"They're supposed to be taking down the communist flag by King's, aren't they," Cartlidge points out, evidence of the slow death of student political culture. Brooks immediately recognises the perfect demographic: "If you come from King's you must come see the play!"

Yet filing away the play as political does not do justice to its scope and depth. In Lee's opinion, its main value is almost spiritual: "No matter how hard you think life is, it's not as hard as you think it is. Life is quite liveable. Maybe in quite a Buddhist way, the play's message is that people don't have to suffer."

"It's very deep," agrees Cartlidge. "We should have put that as a quote on the poster."

4000 Miles runs at Corpus Playroom at 7pm from 21st-25th January



The Canon: A Literary Sketch Show

Written by Dan Leigh.
9.30 pm at Corpus Playroom from 14th - 18th January 2014



Imagine yourself to be Daniel Leigh, the main writer of *The Canon: A Literary Sketch Show*. The Corpus Playroom has, incredibly, allowed you to put on your own sketches in the first week of term. It's opening night, and a chilling thought enters your mind: what if the jokes suck? What if no-one laughs?

There's a reference in *The Canon* to the famous TV show of comedian Jerry Seinfeld, a master of his craft, who would be the first to tell you that the golden command of comedy is simple: it has to be funny!

Luckily, Leigh need not worry, because *The Canon* is a very funny show. It has laughs in plentiful supply. English literature was plundered last night for puns and gags that should have been terrible, but turned out to be hilarious. Crucially, the actors delivering the jokes were consistent in the quality of their performances.

Lily Lindon and Catriona Strong were the most versatile among them, and given the large number of female characters in this show, I did wonder whether it would have benefitted from having more women in the cast.

The standout performer was Leigh himself, especially in the brilliant supervision sketches, which are (I presume) inspired by Fry and Laurie's parody of a drama workshop. The second of these brought the concept a few insane degrees closer to absurdity: the result was spectacular to watch.

The Canon is by no means perfect;



it could do with a bit of trimming here and there. Plath's Kitchen and Virginia Woolf's meeting with an estate agent were clever in playing with the audience's anticipations, but there were a few sketches that didn't do the same, in which everyone worked out the main jokes by the third or fourth line.

'Bill' Shakespeare's stand-up routines were quite funny, but his jokes about writing to get laid were crude and cringe-worthy (the sketch about the scandalous origins of Frankenstein was a better take on the same topic).

The sequencing of sketches could have been better too. In great sketch shows such as *A Bit of Fry and Laurie* and *Monty Python*, longer sketches are broken up by interstitials.

However, in *The Canon*'s second half, short sketches followed one another in quick succession, necessitating a lot of change-overs. This slowed the pace down, especially when the preceding sketch didn't get a laugh.

Nevertheless, call it the guilty pleasure of an English student if you will, but I was left in stitches by the Dickens sketch.

Despite some misses, the quality of Daniel's show – with additional writing by Lauren Brown – was high, often inventive and original. Parts of it were better than anything I saw in the Footlights' Canada show. Writing and performances of this standard deserve recognition and praise.

Finn Brewer

What's Trending?



4000 Miles @corpusplayroom
NYT: 'one of the most inspired and unexpected emotional climaxes I've ever seen in a play'.



Terminus @corpusplayroom
'We go, see the slo-mo ebb and flow; the mill, the babble, the rabble of wobbling waywards, exiled and aimless (...) who the hell knows where?'



WelcomeBreak @adctheatre
'Ok, finish your nuggets, I'll get this blood off my hands, then it's bedtime.'



WhatTheButlerSaw @corpusplayroom
'My wife is a nymphomaniac...I married her for her money and, upon discovering her to be penileless, I attempted to throttle her.'



BlueStockings @adctheatre
Set in Cambridge, 1896. Premiered at the Globe, 2013. Produced at the ADC this Lent.



FiveKindsOfSilence @corpusplayroom
Murder, incest, and Florence & the Machine – and that's just the opening scene.



Alcestis @adctheatre
Euripides. Richmond Lattimore. Anne Carson. Ted Hughes.



The rise of the detective

Fiona Stainer

Maybe someone's laced our tea, infiltrated the TV scheduling, or employed Derren Brown to hypnotise us on a street corner, but currently we are all infatuated with detectives.

Investigateur extraordinaire Hercule Poirot may have said his final farewells last year, but there are a million more surreptitious sleuths lining up to take the place of the much-loved Belgian eccentric, sneaking stealthily into every available timeslot.

There are, it seems, plenty more where Poirot came from (I'm talking figuratively here – they're not all Belgian). Subtle as they may be on screen, the plentiful presence of private eyes has not gone unnoticed.

It's not just the smooth Sherlock-types, but the complex Luthers and the whimsical Lewises too, not to mention the maternal, empathetic ones and the surly ones with heart conditions, à la Broadchurch's Olivia Colman and David Tennant respectively.

So smitten are we that the brains behind this year's National Television Awards have created an entirely new accolade to accommodate them. Among those in the 'TV detective' category are Colman and Tennant, Idris Elba and Benedict Cumberbatch. To quote the latter, the game is (very much) on.

Will they be judged on crime-solving prowess or performance? If the award is best detective, then I'm going with Cumberbatch. If it's on best performance, then I'd pick Colman (although it's a close call).

Yet pitting Colman and Tennant against each other is a shame. Their characters' dynamic was an important part of Broadchurch. It seems wrong to compare their performances when each complemented the other so well.

Perhaps the re-categorisation is understandable. Given our obsession, any of these nominees would surely be robbed of a win – and this time the crime-solvers would be the culprits.

Obviously, due to the nature of a public vote, the awards favour performances from actors in popular programmes, meaning standout performances in more niche offerings are likely to miss out.

Consequently, my investigator-of-choice didn't even make the longlist. Top Of The Lake was an exquisitely shot and scripted six-part drama in which Det. Robin Griffin (Elizabeth Moss) investigated the disappearance of a pregnant schoolgirl.

Moss tracked Robin's increasing fragility beautifully throughout, giving a devastatingly well-pitched portrayal of her subsequent emotional breakdown as her past caught up with her.

It was a performance worlds apart from the frenzied brilliance of Cumberbatch, but every bit as captivating in its own right.

Sherlock - His Last Vow

BBC



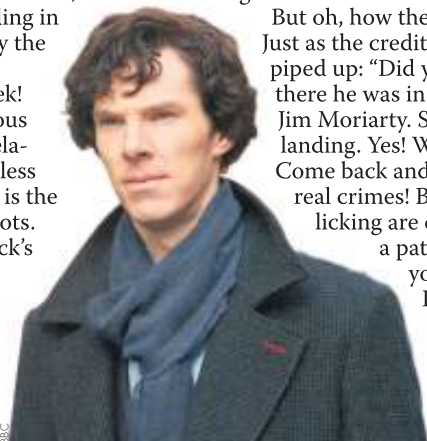
That's that then. Sherlock has gone as quick as it came. Quicker, maybe – it got off to a bit of a shaky start. Luckily the sought-after 'actual plot' that was seemingly absent in previous episodes at last materialised. And there was a fabulous cliff-hanger to boot.

We finally got to meet the owner of the icy blue eyes that stared out at us on New Year's Day as Watson sautéed on the bonfire: Charles Augustus Magnusson, sole retainer of a gigantic amount of incriminating information on everyone he'd ever come across (also a massive creep). When he wasn't licking people's faces, he was blackmailing the country. But not for much longer. Enter Sherlock.

A slightly squalid Sherlock, actually, hiding in a drug den (on a case, supposedly). "Don't look in the bedroom!" he ordered once he'd been dragged home. Sherlock was clean, so what was he hiding in the bedroom? Only the flirty Irish bridesmaid from last week! Watson's incredulous response to this 'relationship' was priceless – Martin Freeman is the king of reaction shots. Next thing, Sherlock's on morphine, this time in hospital: he's been shot.

The culprit? None other than Mrs Watson.

Oh, Mary!



Fiona Stainer

What a dark horse, stringing us along with your jovial manner! We saw the word 'liar' on the screen next to 'bakes own bread' when we first met Mary, but we chose to ignore it because she was just so nice. Credit to Amanda Abbington for making us invest so much in her character that the big reveal, when it came, was a real shock.

Confrontations followed, interspersed with Christmas at the Cumberbatches (with Benedict's parents reprising their roles as Mr and Mrs Holmes). There were lines in this episode that wouldn't have been out of place in a sitcom, but as always they were woven around a much darker story – beneath the panache, it was a beautifully crafted drama.

A final rendezvous with Magnusson, and Sherlock was on a jet headed for Eastern Europe/certain death. Not again.

But oh, how they toy with us! Just as the credits began, a voice piped up: "Did you miss me?" And there he was in all his mad glory: Jim Moriarty. Sherlock's jet was landing. Yes! We did miss you! Come back and engineer some real crimes! Blackmail and face-licking are one thing, but a patch on the havoc you used to cause! Let's just hope your mayhem isn't another two years in the making.

Of Mice and Men

Restoring Force



Strengthened by the successful 2011 album *The Flood*, the all-American metal band Of Mice and Men have released *Restoring Force*, described by the band's front-man Austin Carlile as a way of bringing balance to the band and solidifying them as a leading nu-metal group.

The album features typical heavy metal guitars, driving percussion, and angst-ridden lyrics from singer and bassist Aaron Pauley. Indeed, the first track, *Public Service Announcement*, serves as a heavy mosh-tastic tune that will undoubtedly please metal fans. However, the album becomes more complex with songs that start as loud metal songs but build up into more rock or pop-based choruses with satisfying hooks.

The band has clearly taken cues from recent American rock and nu-metal bands; the song *Would You Still Be There* is firmly in the realm of pop-rock.

Another You starts with Carlile's crooning over low auto-tuned echoes before throwing the listener into angry rock



Rebecca Rosenberg

complete with epic guitars; this structure automatically brings to mind America's modern rock stalwarts Linkin Park. The song breaks down into a military call to arms reminiscent of *My Chemical Romance*.

Sometimes the heavier numbers take time to reach Carlile's choruses or seem directionless before being brought back to life by an invigorating guitar solo, but in general the combination of Pauley's authentic metal voice and Carlile's more contemporary rendering is cohesive.

There are only three songs that drag down the otherwise exuberant album, gathering lyrics from what seems to be heavy metal Hallmark cards.

Despite these disappointing efforts, the album presents a surprising mix of styles that will appeal to different generations of metal fans, not to mention rock and even pop music fans.

Certainly *Feels Like Forever* has a definite anthemic feel, a well-rounded song that will no doubt spearhead Of Mice and Men's success with this album.

COMEDY

Andrew Lawrence

Star of *Live At The Apollo* and *Dave's One Night Stand*, Andrew Lawrence comes to Cambridge with his hit show *There Is No Escape*.

24th January
Cambridge Junction



DAVE COX

JAZZ

Liane Carroll/CUJO

Cambridge University Jazz Orchestra welcomes award-winning vocalist Liane Carroll as their guest artist.

7.30pm, 31st January
West Road Concert Hall

LIVE MUSIC

CUCO

Nicholas Collon conducts The Cambridge University Chamber Orchestra in Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*.

8pm, 18th January
King's College Chapel



Twelve Years a Slave

Steve McQueen



Steve McQueen doesn't make films that are easy to watch. *12 Years a Slave* is a harrowing, brave and important piece of cinema, bringing the reality of slavery to mainstream American film. It follows the true story of Solomon Northup, a free black man living in upstate New York in 1841, who is kidnapped, torn away from his family and sold into slavery.

The film is quite simply excellent. At its heart is a brilliant performance

from British actor Chiwetel Ejiofor as Northup, quite rightly an Oscar favourite. Fellow Brit McQueen showcases the full range of his skill as a visual artist. His ability to pick and hold shots is uncanny, and the film is full of poignant frames that linger long after its end; the mess of scars on a young slave's back, the anguish on Solomon's face as he wakes in chains, a man hanging from a tree by his neck.

The first part of the film focuses on the destruction of Solomon's life when he is kidnapped and transported to the South. Benedict Cumberbatch joins Ejiofor onscreen as the first 'master', Ford. Soon Ford sells Solomon on to avoid the odious Tibbeats, portrayed



REGENCY ENTERPRISES

Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom

Justin Chadwick



A film about the life of Nelson Mandela was always going to be successful, but one that premiered on the eve of his death has an appeal that no publicist could engineer. The film leaves much to be desired in terms of pacing and focus, yet its fine cast of actors carries it to greater heights than it might otherwise have achieved.

Idris Elba's depiction of Mandela is nothing short of remarkable. His performance shows incredible range, taking Mandela from his young, wayward days as a lawyer and freedom fighter in 1940s Johannesburg, through the long years of imprisonment, and culminating in his inauguration as President of South Africa in 1994. Naomie Harris sparkles as Mandela's wife, Winnie, and does justice to the strength and courage of a woman who suffered alongside her husband.

Despite strong acting, beautiful cinematography and a rousing score, it felt as if there was a real story being held tantalisingly out of reach for the film's overly long running time of 146 minutes. Justin Chadwick's film keeps viewers at arm's length, depicting Mandela through the veil of his public image. Entire sections of the film are nothing more than video montages, cycling quickly through his first two marriages, his involvement with the

ANC, and the actions that led to his incarceration for twenty-seven years.

Trying to adapt Mandela's life for screen was always going to be challenging and, while Chadwick did not fail, he did sacrifice a more meaningful film for the sake of packing in as many major life events as possible. There is no room to breathe in this film; to gain a real sense of the man behind the legend. There are some beautifully tender moments; Mandela with his first-born son, who dies while he is in prison, or the painful realisation, when released from prison, that he and Winnie no longer have a real marriage.

The continually-rolling timescale reduces significant periods in Mandela's life to mere headlines and soundbites; even the appalling violence of the apartheid struggle takes on a snapshot quality.

All of these elements turn *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* into a whistle-stop, disappointingly shallow history lesson. "You are not a stranger. You're Nelson Mandela," a young Winnie tells Mandela. Sadly, the man that was Nelson Mandela is still a stranger when the credits roll on this film.

Anne O'Neill



VIDEOVISION ENTERTAINMENT

The Railway Man

Jonathan Teplitzky



Eric Lomax was one of thousands who, after the fall of Singapore in 1942, was tortured by the Japanese military police, the Kempeitai, and forced to work on the railroads. These memories did not disappear upon his return to the UK and eventually made their way into a memoir, which has now made its way to Hollywood.

Jeremy Irvine, Oscar-nominated for his performance in *War Horse*, doesn't disappoint as the younger Lomax (the waterboarding scene leaves a lasting impression, not least because he did his own stunts), while Colin Firth superbly portrays his later life, grappling with the ghosts that haunt both dreams and reality. It is only Nicole Kidman, as Lomax's wife, who seems colourless, at times even blunt.

Director Jonathan Teplitzky excels in detail: whole scenes are shot in the blurred reflections of sea-facing windows, encounters mirrored in passing trains. But the overall cinematography is rather clunky. The film flicks back and forth between different filters. Very yellow for disturbing

flashbacks, and shockingly bright for the natural beauty of Burma, they are simply too jarring. It also jolts nervously between many locations – numerous trains, a veterans's club, a Scottish honeymoon, and the war with its camps and cells.

Fortunately, the technicalities do not overshadow the story's hopeful content. Lomax's journey to face his tormentor – not to murder but to find peace – is a powerful message for any process of reconciliation.

But power also emerges from the light Lomax's story casts on a situation not yet confined to history. What happened in the torture room on the banks of the River Kwai seventy years ago has been repeated over and over ever since. A horrific depiction of torture not far from the realities of Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib is incredibly pertinent. Even if we have seen Firth perform a better script, and Kidman with more character, *The Railway Man* is worth watching – if only to make ourselves aware of this not-yet history.

Johannes Lenhard



JONSON/RE

superbly by Paul Dano, who is bent on killing him after Solomon fights back after a humiliating attack. The second part of the film, just over half of the two-hour epic, takes place on Edwin Epps's plantation. While Ford is given traces of humanity, Epps is a totally repulsive figure. Nonetheless, Michael Fassbender's portrayal does not resort to cliché, and offers a fascinating representation of a man mad with power, whose estate is a nightmare of violence and fear.

The dialogue is strong throughout, full of solemn 19th-century rhetoric and a striking biblical tone. Northup's character is fascinating, but apart from Patsy, there is not quite enough

attention paid to the other slaves.

The film does bring out the horrors of slavery, depicting relentless whippings and hangings, but it does not quite build up a sense of the scale or length of the travesty. We do not really feel the gruelling misery of twelve whole years.

However, the explosive scenes of the second half, played out by Ejiofor, Fassbender and the relatively unknown yet brilliant Lupita Nyong'o, still confront the audience with a great deal, while never descending into violence for the sake of it. The film is an accomplished and artistic exploration of suffering.

The strong performances are

intensified by the great cinematography (Sean Bobbitt's work), which makes good use of the striking mixture of swamps, forests, cotton fields and Southern mansions. Hans Zimmer contributes yet another perfect soundtrack, ranging from churning drums to a sweeping final score.

It might not be a comprehensive study of slavery, but it deals with the topic bravely and skilfully. McQueen picks some brilliant shots and has an outstanding cast at his disposal. Solomon Northup's story is done justice by cast and crew alike.

Rob Oldham

THEATRE**Black Coffee**

Robert Powell returns to Cambridge Arts Theatre as Hercule Poirot in a new production of Agatha Christie's first ever play.

7:45pm, 20-25th January
Cambridge Arts Theatre

EXHIBITION**John Craxton**

A world of private mystery: John Craxton, RA (1922 - 2009). A retrospective looking at his post-war paintings to later depictions of Crete.

Until 21st April
Fitzwilliam Museum

RECITAL**Ben Grosvenor**

Previous BBC Young Musician of the Year and youngest ever soloist at the first night of the Proms, Benjamin Grosvenor performs a piano recital.

7.30pm, 29th January
West Road Concert Hall

ALBUM**Bombay Bicycle Club**

The brand new album, *So Long See You Tomorrow*, featuring *Carry Me* and *It's Alright Now*.

Released 3rd February
Universal Island Records



UNIVERSAL ISLAND RECORDS

Disabled sport in Cambridge gets a lift

Sports Centre initiative targets disabled students and others in Cambridge

Roxana Antohi

Sports Correspondent



At the end of this month, the Cambridge University Sports Centre will host the first of its Disability Multi-Sport sessions. This initiative has been established in partnership with Cambridge City Council and two organisations who work towards raising the profile of, and engagement with, sport – Sportivate and Living Sport. Dial-A-Ride, a local non-profit organisation that provides accessible local transport services, is also a partner in the venture.

The sessions are designed to allow students, staff and members of the community with disabilities to take part in a variety of sports at a regular time and in a high quality facility. The sessions will be run from 10 am until midday on Saturday mornings for an initial six-week period, allowing participants to engage in a wide range of sports for £3 per session.

The Assistant Director of Physical Education at Cambridge, Karen Pearce, has helped design the sessions.

Among the sports she has decided to have are badminton, sitting volleyball, boccia and table tennis. She says that “there will be a mix of coached activities and casual playing opportunities. The sports will vary from week to week, and we will take into account feedback from attendees as to which sports are the most popular, and which they would therefore like to do more of.”

Karen continues: “there is also the option to use the fitness, strength and conditioning facilities, where PE Department staff will be available to give inductions and assistance to first-time users.” A few table-top sports will also be available; there will be table cricket, chess and other games set up in the reception area, and a ping-pong table available outside under cover.

This initiative comes after Varsity last term added its voice to calls for better disability sport provision at Cambridge. The campaign has focused on a perceived lack of an organised environment within the university for disability sports. The existing options for disabled sportspeople were seen to be taking part in modified versions of regular sports, or joining local clubs.

But, according to the latest Sport England Active People Survey, 93% of disabled people in England do not take part in sport.

The organisers share the view of the English Federation of Disability Sport, that it is vital to create more opportunities for those wanting to get involved in inclusive sport. The Multi-



Open to all: the University Sports Centre is reaching out to disabled sportspeople

Sport sessions have been designed accordingly, to take full advantage of the facilities available: the Sports Centre was designed with accessibility as a key guiding principle. In case those interested in taking part consider transport to be a barrier, the organisers have engaged Dial-A-Ride, who will be providing a minibus to collect students and take them to the Sports Centre, and take them home again after the session.

The organisers hope that these sessions will provide the opportunity for people not only to play sport, but also to get together and discuss the key issues and barriers that may have prevented them from doing so before. Rather than dictating the way in which disability sport should take place in Cambridge, the department is hoping to facilitate the development of disability sport in the city, by providing the space, equipment and

support to allow it to evolve in a way that meets the needs and goals of the participants.

Whereas the sessions are aimed at anyone with a disability, able-bodied students have the option to volunteer at the event as well. Anyone can get involved as a teammate, opponent, umpire or gym-buddy.

The organisers ask anyone interested in taking part to email them at events@sport.cam.ac.uk

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Sport



For the love of sport
Roxana Antohi escapes the worries
of student life, 2,000 feet above
Cambridgeshire

ALEXANDER MARKIN



Cambridge men's captain Harry Collard carves his way to second place in the Grand Slalom event on the Varsity Trip

YANNICK LAJADY/VARSITY TRIP

SPORT IN BRIEF

Sport on Union term card

The Union Society has released its termcard for Lent 2014. The main sporting draws this term are the debate on 6th February, "This house would boycott the Sochi Olympics", and a speech on 17th February by Clarke Carlisle, recently retired footballer and former chairman of the Professional Footballers's Association. The Sochi debate is likely to concentrate on the issue of homophobia in sport, in light of criticism of Russia's stance towards LGBT individuals. Clarke Carlisle, on the other hand, is widely recognised as one of the most erudite and entertaining individuals in contemporary football, dubbed 'Britain's brainiest footballer'. He has played in the Premiership for Burnley, appeared as a guest on Question Time (the first footballer to do so) and featured as a contestant on Countdown. He has spoken out on issues such as racism, homophobia, and mental health in sport.



Green Lions train at Hull KR

Cambridge's rugby league squad – known as the Green Lions – enjoyed some professional training, with a January camp at Hull Kingston Rovers. The team have made a good start to this year's BUCS season, standing unbeaten in second place with three games in hand.

Cambridge women rout Bedfordshire

The women's football team have seen off University of Bedfordshire (Luton) 3rds by an astonishing 23-0 scoreline. Lisa Furtwanger starred, bagging seven goals. The cup victory sees the Light Blues through to the last 16, to face the University of East Anglia on 12th February.

VARSIY SPORT NEEDS YOU

With Lent term traditionally the busiest time of year for Cambridge sportspeople, there will be a lot for Varsity Sport to cover in the coming weeks. We are actively recruiting sports correspondents to increase the coverage we can give to sport and sporting issues in Cambridge and beyond.

If you would like to write about sport – whether match reports, features, interviews or opinion – please get in touch with us, at sport@varsity.co.uk. We are also looking for keen sports photographers.

Lent promises a sporting feast

Exciting term for Blues and college teams as major competitions

Matt Worth

Sports Editor

Refreshed after its Christmas layoff, university sport is set to return in force for Lent, traditionally the biggest and busiest of the terms for Cambridge sportspeople.

The highest-profile event associated with Lent actually takes place after the end of term. All eyes will be on the Thames on 6th April, as Cambridge and the Other Place meet once more for the men's Boat Race. Oxford are the title holders, but this has alternated for the past four years; Cambridge's men certainly won't be assuming it's their turn, however. Equally hotly contested will be the women's boat race, taking place slightly earlier on 30th March at Henley-on-Thames.

The rowers are not the only squad facing their Varsity test this term. The women's rugby union match (at Oxford on 8th March) will see Cambridge try to overturn two years of Dark Blue dominance. The female footballers face Oxford on the same date, while the men have provisionally set their match

for 6th April. The Varsity hockey games are on 9th March, at London's Southgate Hockey Centre. Cambridge's men and women are each the holders of their respective titles.

Many other Varsity contests are packed into the two weekends of the (officially titled) Jaguar Land Rover Varsity Games. This year's games take place in Oxford, offering intriguing swap possibilities for committed spectators as well as participants.

The key weekends are 28th February to 2nd March (events include basketball, lacrosse, table tennis and volleyball) and 7th to 9th March (seemingly the larger event, offering badminton, boxing, ice hockey, karate, kendo, taekwondo and trampolining, as well as dodgeball and Ultimate Frisbee).

Aside from the rivalry with the Dark Blues, there are some other key fixtures to look out for. The men's rugby union XV were defeated in December's Varsity match, but have fixtures against the Army (12th February), Royal Air Force (19th February) and Navy (5th March) to look forward to.

Meanwhile the popular "Town v Gown" event on 6th February will pitch student boxers against representatives of local clubs. The final card has yet to be drawn up, but Amateur Boxing Club president Rob Liu anticipates 10-12 hotly contested bouts. Something of a spectator sport sensation in recent

years, Town v Gown takes place in the Guildhall, with cheap drinks on offer to help you make a night of it. Tickets are available through the club and (from 13th January) through Ryder & Amies.

For many university teams, Lent is

"TOWN V GOWN BOXING HAS BEEN SOMETHING OF A SPECTATOR SPORT SENSATION IN RECENT YEARS"

the term where league competitions draw to a close, with attention turning to summer sports (not to mention exams) as we reach the Easter holidays.

BUCS leagues in sports as diverse as volleyball, football, table tennis, netball, women's rugby union and rugby league all reach their climax in February and March. Many of the Light Blues have much to play for. As we went to press, the women's rugby union team topped Midlands 1A, well placed for promotion with three matches to play; meanwhile the men's football 1st team are toiling at the foot of Premier South, albeit with the advantage of two games

in hand. The women's table tennis first team are well-placed to qualify for the BUCS national championship (held in late March) while the netballers chase promotion from Midlands 2B.

There are also a number of one-off student championships in Lent, of which the biggest is perhaps the BUCS Indoor Athletics Championships, in Sheffield from 21st to 23rd February. Beth Swords of the Athletic Club told us that Cambridge expect to field a strong contingent. The club are optimistic after taking four medals in last summer's BUCS Outdoors. Other championships include volleyball (on 8th and 9th February at the University of East Anglia) and archery (the BUCS indoors at Telford on 1st March).

No sporting preview of Lent would be complete without mention of Cuppers. In many ways the definition of participatory sport at Cambridge, Cuppers tournaments offer less-than-elite (and no doubt some elite) college sportspeople their chance at glory.

Often contested with a vigour that rivals the Varsity matches, and host to all kinds of arcane but heartfelt rivalries, Cuppers contests feature teams from every college, in an astonishing variety of sports.

Many of these sports also have thriving leagues, with larger (or simply more enthusiastic) colleges often fielding three teams or more.