CUSU elections: the candidates revealed

Amanda Akass

THE RACE IS now on for the CUSU Presidency as Mark Ferguson, Nadia Kahn and Dave Smith launched their campaigns last night at Fitzwilliam College.

Nominations were also announced for the 13 other CUSU Executive positions yesterday. Most positions are uncontested with a notable decrease in the number of candidates from previous years. No one has come forward for the Welfare and Graduate Students Sabbatical position, arguably one of the most important portfolios in the Executive.

The presidential candidates staked their positions in three minute long speeches followed by questions at hustings last night at 7.15.

Mark Ferguson, chair of the Fight Against Increased Rents committee, outlined his vision of a focus on access, rents and accountability: “CUSU should be taken to the students – I would hold a meeting at every college in the first three weeks of Michaelmas term and get a mandate for change”. He also argues “against the politicisation of CUSU by a vocal majority”. Ferguson’s speech concluded “I’ve always been a firm believer that if something ain’t broke, then don’t fix it, but it isn’t good enough any longer. CUSU is broken and I intend to fix it”.

Nadia Khan, current Students with Disabilities Officer, emphasised her commitment to access, communication and educational issues, “ensuring every student can fulfil their academic potential”. In her speech she stressed what would be her personal dedication to the Presidential role, as someone who “eats, sleeps and breathes her job – I would work hard to keep the Executive together. If the Executive breaks down it isn’t good, we should have less chat and more actions”. Kahn also advocated an expansion of CUSU Ents.

Dave Smith, current Student Action Officer, launched an argument in strong opposition to top up fees. He outlined his plans for “a demonstration for the day before lectures begin in Michaelmas – we will not accept top-up fees quietly”. He also demanded CUSU stop wasting Council time with illegal motions which “do not effect students as students” and generally commit to reform; “we need to change the crass narrow minded way” it operates on some levels. Smith wants CUSU to become more “effective – we should not just sit on the sidelines and shout”.

Grey Baker and Ashley Aarons are in competition for one of only two other contested positions, the sabbatical Services Officer. The task for next year’s officer is to oversee CUSU’s move from Trumpington Street to the new Union building on the New Museums site.

Despite the recent furore over the future of having a CUSU Women’s officer as a sabbatical position, Harriet Boulding is running as a candidate. She said, “I don’t want to spend my time defend-
Overseas admissions rise

The turnover for last year's CUSU elections was somewhere around the 25% mark. This puts our little mini-democracy about halfway between Nepal (10% earlier this year) and the USA (53.3% in the 2004 Presidential elections).

This isn’t really that surprising. The Nepalese were voting for a rubber-stamp parliament and ran a fair risk of getting shot in the process. The Americans were voting to fill, arguably, the most powerful job in the world. For them there is little risk of sudden death in the polling booth unless you’re hit by a particularly violent flying chad.

So which is CUSU more like? It administers a host of welfare services: the Student ID, services in the CUSU Access Officer Zen (CUSU Access Officer), a central union building. Most importantly a bar serving cheap sandwiches, a computer room, free ofreject 800 fine. It is just absurd, really.

Kent Police said that fixed penalty notices were just one tool they use to help combat anti-social behaviour. A spokeswoman for Kent Police commented, “the public expect us to tackle anti-social behaviour.”

News

No charges for Trinity student

Police have said that a student will not be charged after tests confirmed a chemical substance posted to him at Trinity College was not the illegal drug GHB.

The 22 year old student was originally arrested when the package landed onto a porter’s hand, burning him.

Though the chemical GBL, or Gamma-butyrolacton, is not illegal, it is still highly dangerous, with properties akin to the date-rape drug GHB.

Student fined £80 for swearing

A Kent student was fined after a policewoman overheard him saying “fuck” to his friends in a public place last week. He is refusing to pay the fine.

Kurt Walker, 18, was walking across the park to a youth centre where he volunteers. Walker explained: “I was shocked when the female police officer gave me the fine, very shocked. It is not every day you swear and you get fined £80 fine. It is just absurd, really.”

Kent Police said that fixed penalty notices were just one tool they use to help combat anti-social behaviour. A spokeswoman for Kent Police commented, “the public expect us to tackle anti-social behaviour.”

Infra-red CCTV installed in parks

Four high tech new cameras are to be placed on Christ’s Pieces and Parker’s Piece after a spate of stabbings.

The cameras will cost £36,000 for the Council to buy and £4000 a year to run. Cllr Ian Nimmo-Smith, Leader of Cambridge City Council, said that the parks “have histories of incidents ranging from daytime anti-social behaviour to night time mugging.

“Making things more difficult, the trees in these parks limit the amount of surveillance that can be provided by CCTV cameras on the periphery and conventional cameras get ‘dazzled’ by street lighting.”

Overseas admissions rise

MORE OVERSEAS students are being accepted to Cambridge, figures released by the university this week reveal. There are also increases for non-white, state-educated and working-class students. But the overall number of applicants was down slightly on last year.

Overseas students made up 16.7% of those accepted in 2005, up from 13.4% the previous year. Overseas students pay higher fees than UK and EU students, but a University spokesperson denied that this was the reason behind the rise. “We are absolutely committed to remaining a ‘home’ university at undergraduate level and have no plans to alter our student balance. The increase in overseas students this year is just a reflection of the fact that we’re attracting applications from some of the brightest students in the world – they’re winning places on academic grounds.”

The numbers of ethnic minority students, state-school students and students from lower socio-economic groups all rose slightly this year. Black students in particular saw an increase of 48% on the previous year – from 23 to 34. This means they made up 1.2% of those whose ethnic acceptances were whose ethnic origins were known, compared to 4.7% nationally. Ethnic minority students as a whole were up from 13.4%.

CUSU Access Officer Zen Jelenje said, “the increase in the percentage of ethnic minorities shows that more sixth-formers believe that Cambridge is a realistic option for them. However, the comparison to the national average emphasises that there is a lot of work to be done before everyone realises this.”

State maintained schools (including grammar schools) made up 58.1% of students, up one percentage point from the previous year. Excluding grammars, state schools provided 41.1% of home students this year and 40.2% last. But students from independent and grammar schools still have a higher success rate than other students - 12% of applications from independent schools were successful, compared to 27% from grammars and 23% from other state schools.

The colleges with the largest and smallest proportions of students from independent schools were Trinity, with 42%, and Hughes Hall, who only admitted students from state schools, respectively. There was a slight increase in the percentage of students from lower socio-economic groups – 12.7% of successful students were from the four lowest (of seven) groups, up from 12.4% in 2004.

Geoff Parks, the director of admissions, said: “The very high quality and increasing diversity of Cambridge’s student body shows that the sole criterion for admission is academic ability. No one should be deterred from applying here because of misplaced fears that their background will count against them, be it ‘advantaged’, ‘disadvantaged’ or somewhere in between.”

While many universities across the country saw large rises in applications by students trying to get into university before the introduction of top-up fees, Cambridge saw a slight drop from its record high in 2004, with 14,343 applications, 341 fewer than the previous year. A University spokesperson said they suspected they had lost “the longer tail of weaker applicants”. Slightly more students were accepted (3,378, up from 3,293), with a greater proportion (94.0%, up from 92.8%) gaining at least 3 As at A-level, excluding General Studies. Over five thousand applicants who went on to get a place at A-level were rejected.

The sex balance continued to fluctuate, with 51.3% of acceptances going to men in 2005 - it was 47.8% in 2004 and 50.9% in 2003.

The list is long, important and not very glamorous. So why is CUSU so maligned? Try this for an answer - we lack a central union building. Most Universities have one. Bad 1960s architecture, cold and draughty, a café selling slightly sweaty cheese sandwiches, a computer room full of reject PCs from the local primary school, piles of yellowing leaflets about safe sex and most importantly a bar serving cheap pints. Very cheap pints, pints that make your college bar look like La Raza. This is simple Parlovian psychotic conditioning. Cheap pints good. Cheap pints in Union. Union good.

So, when it comes to Wednesday and you need a bit of incentive to vote for the people who will run your Union and be paid with your tuition fees for the next year just call to mind that warm, slightly hazy, pleasantly nauseating feeling you associate with your college bar and VOTE.

Dannacha Kirk tells us to get off our arses and vote

by Donnacha Kirk

Infra-red CCTV installed in parks

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CUSU Elections

continued from the front page

The other part time sabbatical positions are uncontented. Jacob Head is running for Education Officer and Aneca Kelby for Green Officer. Fleur Bradling and Jacob Bard-Rosenberg are both standing for election under the Open Portfolio positions, as Culture and Democracy officers respectively. There are 13 candidates for the 12 NUS Conference delegate positions.

The elections will take place across colleges next Wednesday.
Female academics on the rise

Rich Saunders

MORE FEMALE academics were employed last year than ever before. An increasing number of women are choosing to pursue careers in higher education and more are rising to hold senior positions. Statistics released from the Higher Education Statistics Agency show that the total number of female academics rose by 4.9% from the academic year 2003-2004 through to 2004-2005. This is a significant rise when compared to an increase of only 1.2% in the number of male academics.

The proportion of female academics went up at all levels. The biggest increase was at the level of senior lecturer and senior researcher. The numbers increased from 5,815 to 6,480, a rise of over 11%. The number of female professors also rose from 1,815 to 2,055 in the last year.

Vice Chancellor Professor Alison Richard is probably the best known Cambridge example of a high achieving female academic. Richard was previously employed as the Provost of Yale University. Meanwhile, at Oxford University, moves are being made to address the gender imbalance amongst the higher echelons of their staff. A meeting to discuss "Gender in Academic Appointments" was held earlier this year at which Vice Chancellor Dr John Hood assured that changes would be made to address the imbalance.

Nevertheless, whilst the figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency are encouraging for female academics, a government report released on Monday states that there is still a significant pay divide between men and women in the workplace. The report, by the Women and Work Commission, found that women in full time work were earning 17% less than men. The report also suggested numerous ways in which the situation needs to be improved. These included more government support, improved vocational training and more flexible working arrangements to help women with young children get back into the work place. One of the main criticisms was aimed at the careers advice available for women. According to the report, not enough is being done to encourage girls to opt for 'non-traditional jobs' or take vocational apprenticeships. It seems that many girls are still being encouraged to accept roles in childcare, nursing, hairdressing and other such relatively low paid jobs rather than looking at the possibility of better paid careers in business or industry.

Prime Minister Tony Blair was quick to respond to the report. He started by praising the report as a "ground-breaking piece of work". The Prime Minister went on to say that he was worried by the fact that the country is still "wasting too much talent". On the opposite side of the chamber, Conservative shadow trade and industry secretary Alan Duncan said "Unequal pay based on sex discrimination is completely and totally unacceptable in this day and age. We will do what it takes to stamp it out".
Students get spotted

Julia Bird and Emily Jones with Noel Edmonds

Death threats for Oxford Pro-testers

Joe Engel

ANIMAL RIGHTS activists have sent death threats to the teenage founder of the Oxford Pro-test group, Laurie Pycroft, who founded the group to bolster the continuation of scientific research in Oxford, received a number of threatening and abusive e-mails last week which have been passed on to the police.

He and his family have been issued with personal attack alarms and have improved their home security.

The threats followed dramatic scenes on Saturday as protestors on both sides of the debate staged rival marches through Oxford town centre. Up to 1000 people, many of them students, joined the Pro-Test march. The crowd were addressed by a number of Oxford scientists as well as the local MP and Liberal Democrat science spokesman, Dr. Evan Harris. Iain Simpson, a spokesman for the group, said “It was brilliant, better than we imagined” and added “we’ve sent 40 odd pictures of shop assistants with windows to committing arson."

The money raised will go to three charities: Arthur Rank Hospice, Press Relief Teenage Cancer Trust Appeal, and Wintercomfort for the Homeless.

Shops and businesses in Cambridge are also being asked to display blue spots in their windows, and students will be encouraged to shop there.

You should never give blood if:

1 You carry the hepatitis B virus, the hepatitis C virus or the HIV virus.
2 You’re a man who’s had sex with another man, even “safe sex” using a condom.
3 You’ve ever worked as a prostitute.
4 You’ve ever injected yourself with drugs - even once.
5 Anyone with haemophilia or a related blood clotting disorder who has received treatment.
6 Anyone who has ever injected themselves with drugs.
7 Anyone who has haemophilia or a related blood clotting disorder who has received treatment.
8 Anyone who has sex with men in a high risk category who are barred from ever giving blood.
9 Anyone who has sex with men who have sex with men in a high risk category who are barred from ever giving blood.
10 You should not give blood for 12 months after sex with:

1 A man who has had sex with another man (if you’re a female).
2 A prostitute.
3 Anyone who has ever injected themselves with drugs.
4 Anyone with haemophilia or a related blood clotting disorder who has received clotting factor concentrates.
5 Anyone of any race who has been sexually active in parts of the world where AIDS/HIV is very common. This includes countries in Africa.

The Cambridge Student March 2, 2006

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Information from the National Blood service website www.blood.co.uk
The Cambridge Student

March 2, 2006

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News

Last all female Oxford college seeks men

Amanda Akass

THE LAST all female college in Oxford voted to admit men for the first time last week.

55% of St Hilda’s JCR voted in favour of the student body becoming mixed which paved the way for a decision in Governing Body later this year. The last time collegiate opinion was gauged on the subject was in 2003, when 57% of undergraduates voted to stay single sex. 240 members of the JCR voted last Thursday which is 57% of the total undergraduate body. However the opinion of the Governing Body is believed to be fiercely divided. A two thirds majority is required to change the college statutes. The college was established in 1893 as an all female enclave and has till now resisted following the path of Somerville college which became co-educational in 1992. Students also voted 77% in favour of the college’s academic staff becoming mixed. St Hilda’s currently finds it very expensive funding the salaries of its fellows solely through its own funds as Oxford university does not fund joint appointments which are not open to both male and female applicants. Cambridge does not however wish to keep up the 113 year old tradition of being a centre for female academic excellence. One JCR member opposing the motion concluded “We are Hildabeasts, we are Hildababes, we are Hildagirls!”

The college sent students a report on its future which said; “It is accepted that our current situation places real financial burdens on the college and cannot be sustained under the present arrangement for association with university lecturerships”. Whilst the student vote will not directly effect the College’s decision it could be very influential in tipping the wavering balance amongst the dons. In 2003 the Governing Body twice rejected the Principle’s proposals to go mixed, and one fellow reportedly flew back from China to be involved in discussions of the topic during Hilary term and the outcome is important but will not in itself determine the future of the college. Only the members of the governing body who are the trustees of the college, can vote to change the statutes to admit men and no date has been set for a vote in the governing body.

The college was founded by Dorothea Beale, Head of Cheltenham Ladies College, to provide an Oxford hall for women, who were not technologically allowed to study at the university. Female students were not allowed to take exams and gain degrees until 1920. St Hilda’s and Somerville were only recognised as official colleges of the university in 1959. The college prospectus says “our status as an institution solely devoted to women’s education has not made us invalid; St Hilda’s is the most outward looking and cosmopolitan of colleges. But it has given us a strong, independent character and a history of producing forceful and individualistic women.” The alternative prospectus helpfully explains, “if you want to apply here, the only pre-requisite is that you are a woman”. That may be soon set to change.

Want to see your name in print?

We do.

Be part of the TCS editorial team for Michaelmas 2006

Application forms are available now, and applications for Editor-in-Chief must be in by this Monday, the 6th March.

No experience? No problem. All applicants will be considered.

All applicants for editor-in-chief will be interviewed by the Board of Directors, so you will have a chance to persuade us of your ideas and abilities.

We are looking for applications for absolutely every area of the paper.

Turn to page 13. Look at the team list. See a job you want to do? Apply for it.

Not see a job you want to do? Apply for that one, too. We welcome applications for all positions, even if they’ve never existed before. Just let us know what you want to do.

We don’t care if you’ve never been Union President, a published author, or director of an ADC mainshow.

We don’t even care if you’ve never done journalism before - as long as you really, really want to.

We just want talent, enthusiasm and a passion to make TCS the best it could be.

If that sounds like you, email apply@cusu.cam.ac.uk for an application form.

Not prepared for that much commitment? TCS are also looking for a guest editorial team for the May Week issue.

No experience is required, simply ideas and enthusiasm. E-mail apply@cusu.cam.ac.uk for more information or to apply.
HAVE YOU GOT THE EXC FACTOR?

HUSTINGS

COMES HEAR WHAT THE CANDIDATES HAVE TO SAY AND ASK QUESTIONS

THURSDAY 2ND MARCH
6PM: CLARE HALL, COMMON ROOM
8PM: MAGDALENE, BUCKINGHAM ROOM *
9.30PM: CLARE, LATIMER ROOM *

FRIDAY 3RD MARCH
7PM: HOMERTON, BAR
8PM: GIRTON, GIRTON OLD HALL *
9PM: ROBINSON, UMNEY THEATRE *

SUNDAY 5TH MARCH
10-12: CUR1350 (SABBATICAL CANDIDATES ONLY)
LISTEN ON 1350AM/MW OR ONLINE AT WWW.CUR1350.CO.UK
1-4PM: E-HUSTINGS, CUSU FORUMS
E-MAIL QUESTIONS TO E-HUSTINGS@CUSU.CAM.AC.UK
7PM: PEMBROKE, CORPUS CHRISTI & ST CATHARINE’S,
NEW COMMON ROOM, FOUNDRRESS COURT, PEMBROKE *
8PM: KING’S, CHETWYND ROOM *
9PM: SELWYN, SELWYN BAR

MONDAY 6TH MARCH
12-2PM: ARTS SCHOOL, ROOM A *
3-4PM: CUR1350 (PART-TIME CANDIDATES ONLY)
LISTEN ON 1350AM/MW OR ONLINE AT WWW.CUR1350.CO.UK
E-MAIL QUESTIONS TO RADIOHUSTINGS@CUSU.CAM.AC.UK
6PM: SIDNEY, SIDNEY BAR
7PM: EMMA, QUEEN’S BUILDING *
8PM: TRINITY, JCR
10PM: ST. JOHN’S, JCR COMMON ROOM

TUESDAY 7TH MARCH
12-2PM: LAW FACULTY, LG17 *
6PM: GRADUATE UNION
8PM: WOMEN’S COUNCIL, CHRIST’S, NEW COURT THEATRE *
9PM: CHURCHILL, WOLFSON THEATRE *
10PM: JESUS COLLEGE, FORUM BAR

ALL HUSTINGS OPEN TO ALL CUSU MEMBERS
WHETHER YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THAT COLLEGE OR NOT

RADIO HUSTINGS IN ASSOCIATION WITH CUR1350
* DENOTES ALCOHOL FREE HUSTINGS
VOTE DAVE SMITH FOR CUSU President

Anybody can tell you how much they hate top-up fees, increasing rents, the problem of access, unethical investment and too few green provisions within our University. The crucial question is: “what are you going to do about it?”

As President I will:

* OUTSIDE: Organise a demonstration for the day before lectures begin in Michaelmas – we will not accept Top-Up Fees quietly!
* INSIDE: Continue & succeed in my efforts to gain representation on the University Bursars’ Committee – where these decisions are really made!
* ON THE GROUND: Provide effective information about bursaries & payment of top-up fees. All doom and gloom will do even more to hurt access.
* AT THE TOP: Produce with leading academics viable alternative proposals.

Like so many, I am sick of CUSU wasting time discussing whether motions brought to Council are illegal because they do not affect “students as students”. As President I will:

* Finalise my current negotiations with senior members of the Law Faculty who have agreed in principle to review the legality of motions submitted to each Council. Let’s get an expert’s opinion so we can discuss what can and does matter & make CUSU an effective campaigning body relevant to every last one of its members.
* Serve & facilitate college interaction so they may pursue their goals from a fully comparative perspective & by collective means.
* Use my experience as a JCR member, representative on my College Council & Governing Body and as a member of last year’s CUSU Exec’ to ensure clarity, accessibility and an end to in-fighting in our students’ union.

As President I will:

* Ensure that CUSU conducts extensive consultation into how it should be reformed.
* Address the most important question of all, namely, “how can we make our union more beneficial for every individual student?”
* Make certain that these necessary changes are not drowned in a sea of committees.
* Commit NOW to holding a referendum by the end of Michaelmas 2006 so that effective changes WILL BE IN PLACE for 2007. We need talk – but we also need action.

DEBATE NOT DIVISION

VOTE MARK FERGUSON FOR CUSU President

Access
Prioritise the shadowing scheme making sure it is better planned and better executed, ensuring that the recent problems with the shadowing scheme can never be repeated.

Work more closely with college access officers to increase participation in access schemes amongst all students, irrespective of background. No student should feel excluded from Cambridge, and no Cambridge student should feel excluded from our access schemes.

Ensure that prospective and current students are aware of bursaries that are available to them, both from colleges and the University.

Work with UCCA to increase the number of applicants from minority groups, and encouraging colleges to hold open days targeting sections of society currently under-representated in Cambridge.

Ents
Establish regular CUSU / college joint ents, by working with JCR ents officers to ensure that they are affordable quality nights outside of the usual centre of town venues.

Keep the politics out of CUSU
Continue to argue against the politics of CUSU by a vocal minority.

With Students – Going out into the colleges and speaking to primary students on a day-to-day basis, I will hold a meeting at every college in the first three weeks of Michaelmas term before the first CUSU open meeting.

Between Colleges – work to increase attendance at Presidents’ and External Meetings by finding them at a more central location, and avoiding a more conventional time.

More and better publicity for CUSU Council and Open Meetings – a democratic union is a stable union, and higher turnout for meetings is pivotal for increasing accountability within our union.

Within the Executive – Daily publicising meetings and improved communication with and training for the part-time executive. Each member of the executive should have visible targets and plans which should be presented at each council.

Women’s issues
Work with the women’s officer to address the performance gap between male and female students. Having an equal female/male ratio does not create equality on its own.

Experience
Robinson College External Officer Fighting Against Increased Rents Our 2005.
Active in Access at both college and university levels.
Robinson College Welfare Team 2004-05.

It needs real change. CUSU needs it. It needs to structure to look at its workings of the Executive and it needs to look at its Executi...
FUTURE IN EXPERIENCED HANDS

Grey Baker
for CUSU Services Officer

SOCIETIES & JCRS
- The new union building will be geared to the needs of societies and JCRs. I will also increase the resources available to them by encouraging collaboration.
- I will use the already strong CUSU website to encourage and facilitate more pooling of information and resources. This will mean less work is duplicated by unions and societies.
- I will further improve the societies fair by continuing to re-work the layout and considering the possibility of running it over 3 days to reduce overcrowding.
- I am committed to working for coordination, collaboration and good value services for societies and JCRs.
- As coordinator of King’s College Fair Trade Society, I have worked with CUSU and CUFTS to encourage collaboration between Fairtrade stalls, as well as running several large events.
- I have run several successful gigs for Amnesty International, and booked the indie headliners for The King’s Affair 05.
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ETHICAL POLICY
- CUSU’s Ethical Policy needs updating. With my background in Fairtrade and Amnesty I can deliver this
- As treasurer of CUEG, a group producing a freshers guide. As well as budget management skills my role gives me the experience to produce quality publications for CUSU.

MY EXPERIENCE
- I am a member of the college access committee at CUSU.
- I have a comprehensive knowledge of the college access process.
- I have experience in working with students from all backgrounds.
- I have a good understanding of the issues facing students and their families.
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NEW UNION BUILDING
- Relocation to the new union building in the town centre will be the biggest logistical challenge facing CUSU in 2006.
- I have the experience in large building projects to oversee the work and take CUSU to its new home.
- A central, communal space for students is crucial for connecting students with CUSU. I will propose the addition of a bar or cafe to the new building for this purpose.
- The new union building offers an opportunity to further extend CUSU’s services. I will consult with societies and JCRs on what services they would like as we fit out the new building.
- I will ensure the new building is delivered on time and on budget, and that it connects students with CUSU and CUSU’s services as well as possible.
- CUSU Target Campaigns Officer
- College Access Officer 2 years running
- Member of CUSU Fact
- Author of University questionnaire
- Comprehensive background

What I plan to do
- Use my experience as college access officer to prevent the problems of this years shadowing scheme from happening again (primarily a wholesale breakdown of communication with college access officers)
- Increase awareness to bursaries to quell fear of top up fees
- Break down teacher prejudice (evident from my experience) through communication with unions and teaching supplements
- Encourage colleges to employ interview helpers to ease nerves. This will allow academic ability, rather than calmness under pressure, dictate who gets in. This idea arose after lengthy discussions with my DOS (an interviewee)
- Prioritise campaigning on winnable battles (eg, National Coalition 2010) but continue other campaigns
- Encourage college access officer to visit schools previously untouched. This year I led my college on a trip to Wolverhampton with no history of sending people to Oxbridge.
- Use the results from my university questionnaire to understand the problems of Cambridge access
- Generally, employ my passion, experience and improvements from the college level onto a university wide scale.

SUPPORT, VISIBILITY, ACTION

ASHLEY AARONS
For Services Officer

As a JCR President and member of college councils, I have seen that CUSU doesn’t work in a number of ways, and that it doesn’t have much relevance to most students. As Services Officer I feel I would be in the best position to address these problems directly and to make a real difference to CUSU and Cambridge University. In regards to Services, I will, through consultation, expand current services and better advertise them to all students. As CUSU’s general manager, I will extensively look into how CUSU is ran, and aim to reform it in order to make it more accountable, more efficient, and to improve communications.

The policies I outline here are where I see a significant need now. However Services is a very diverse job covering most of what CUSU does, and I would like the standards of customer service for all aspects of operations from running a great society far, through working the budget, to maintaining, updating and publicising the website, and much more.

SERVICES
- Through proper advertising and marketing, I will make sure all students and societies know what services CUSU currently has and can offer, such as state-of-the-art photocopying, inter-collegiate postage, and minibus rental.
- I will increase services offered, in particular the services that individual colleges can’t provide. These include: college negotiations, lists of all colleges’ fees, rents, KFC, and Formal Hall and rent costs. For Orangle ents, and through speaking to college ents officers, equipment that CUSU loaned usedly rent to colleges will be purchased.
- And any other feasible service that students want. Central unions will be investigated, to make CUSU as useful as possible.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT
- I will facilitate a move as quickly and smoothly as possible for CUSU to its new prospective address on the New Museums Site, and make sure the new offices are used up to their full potential.
- I will address ways that have been proposed to reform CUSU to form a more accountable and efficient union. Key will be improving communications within the CUSU executive, look at the levels of college affiliation fees, and making the sabbatical team and general executive more accountable to CUSU Council and Open meetings.
- I will be in the unique position of allowing all other CUSU officers, and maintaining the highest standards of office operations.

WHY ME?
- As JCR President of Gtton College 2005-6, and before that JCR Councillor. I’ve experience in dealing with college and university institutions, and getting people to participate.
- As a member of the college access committee at CUSU, I have experience in working with students from all backgrounds.
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For professionalism, commitment and coordination...
Aneaka Kaur Kelley - CUSU Green Officer Candidate

CUSU Green is a role that promotes environmental, social and justice development, and is a role that can empower students to take action and act upon these issues of which, I believe, are fundamental to the success of students and human beings.

EXPERIENCE
- I am currently a 2nd year Geography Student in Newnham College.
- I was part of a group that successfully worked to make our school more environmentally conscious.
- I was in my first year when I was nominated to be CUSU Green Officer. Through this role I became very active in college, organizing events and working specifically on recycling efficiency. I have had good grounding on how the college systems work and how to start small things to make them come true.
- I am currently on the Environmental Committee and in the task force on the CUSU Environmental Officer. I believe the CUSU Green Officer role and I have worked closely within the college events over the last year. I have a strong love for the College atmosphere which I want to maintain, and I believe in the momentum of what this committee has built up and what it can achieve.
- I have been involved in a number of activities including the NUS Day of Action last November in which I successfully organized a Climate Change Demonstration, outside Kings and a public speaking event on climate change issues.
- I am widely known for being open, fenced, approachable and believe I have the people skills and qualities to undertake this role.

I believe that my experience of Cambridge over the last year and a half has enabled me with the knowledge, the contacts, the support, the organisational skills and enthusiasm to bring a good job to CUSU Green Officer. I know the way the CUSU Green system works, I think that the current Green Officer has done a fantastic job and I feel I'm building on the momentum of the last year.

WHAT I PROPOSE TO DO:
- I see my main role in keeping the ECO going strong, I believe good relationships between the CUSU Green Officer and CUSU Green Officer's framework are fundamental to the meeting. I think they are currently in the process of preparing for events, which includes events for which they need to be kept, such as events for which they are invited to, events for which they need to be invited to, and events for which they need to be invited to, and events for which they need to be invited to. I also would like to set up some meetings between all the 'green' groups in Cambridge so that the green movement within Cambridge can have greater support.
- I believe the CUSU Green website is crucial in supporting Green Officers, as well as informing those interested in getting involved. I will continue to support the CUSU Green Officer in the current specific role of Fairtrade, Ethical Investment, Recycling and Society and Students' Liaison Officers.
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Everyone has a right to a free education

I am committed to fighting infringements to this right, both on a local and national level. I won't deny that funding for higher education is in a mess, but Top-Up Fees are not a satisfactory solution. I want to work alongside other Student Unions to campaign against the new system.

But Top-Up Fees are happening, so what do I propose we do about it?

The biggest problem with Top-Up Fees is their effect on access. Access in Cambridge is already a big problem and problem that Top-Up Fees are going to make worse. It is important to ensure that people are not deterred from applying for courses because of the fees they need to pay. Perceived financial problems can also have a detrimental effect on access. If your family income is £15,000 a year, a student debt of upwards from £20,000 seems much more than if your family income is £20,000.

What will I do?
- Campaign within the University to make grants and hardship funds available and more widely known about and accessible
- Get literature out to schools explaining the new system clearly so that students understand that coming to Cambridge is possible and there is help available
- Monitor the effect of the new system next year, especially on access so that we can see if it is working as intended...

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CHARLOTTE RICHER
FOR
CUSU Target Campaigns

Why?
- I believe that students from all backgrounds should be given the opportunity, information, and support needed to apply to Cambridge.
- Cambridge is a fair, diverse and exciting university, I want to do more to spread this image and make Cambridge a possibility for more students.

Experience:
- I am a member of CUSU FACT (Funding and Access Campaign Team), actively involved with Access schemes, shadowing, Target Visits, college schemes, and open days.
- I created a support system for university applicants at my Sixth Form.
- I am keen, genuinely enthusiastic, and good at admin!

Aims:
- Make Target talks easier for volunteers: introduce a target talk pack including sample talks, visual aids, alternative prospects, and detailed information and set up a pairing system for volunteers not wanting to work alone.
- Open, regular communication between CUSU Access and colleges by revamping and promoting the Acess Web Forum to allow easy, public, open feedback in both directions.
- Make use of a central Access volunteer list to promote both CUSU and college schemes.
- Improve website: complete currently empty sections.
- Look into organising a teacher conference, listen to, and counter, their concerns – teachers can have the most influence on students, and their support is essential to the success of Target schemes.

Any questions, please don't hesitate to ask! - cr330@cam.ac.uk

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FLEUR BRADING
FOR
* CULTURE OFFICER *

The Problem:
- Cambridge has, and historically has had, one of the most vibrant art and music scenes of all British universities, producing some of the most talented and successful actors, comedians and musicians.
- At the moment there is no continuous input of information which students can access easily which includes:
  1. The different cultural events taking place within the University and Cambridge.
  2. Auditions or artistic vacancies e.g. for set designers.
- Few students.

The Result is that students are missing out on possible artistic opportunities as they are not involved in Cambridge’s artistic life.

The Solution:
- The creation of a post of Culture Officer who is responsible for communicating and organising all the various cultural activities taking place within and around the University to students.
- Information is then spread through:
  a. A free student online culture listing describing upcoming concerts, exhibitions, creative companies, concerts, recitals, speakers, exhibitions, advertising taking place in Cambridge.
  b. A website containing current information and links to links to other relevant websites such as about artistic societies or interested groups or people involved in Cambridge’s artistic scene.
- The Culture Officer can be contacted with any queries in respect to publicity events or publish advertisements.

The Results:
1. A network of artists and interest groups is created.
2. This will inform students of events they may wish to be involved in, or go and attend.
3. It will allow access to be aware of another’s work and hence will create inspiring and greater artistic possibilities.

The Manifesto for Open Portfolio as CUSU Democracy Officer
Jacob Hard-Rosenberg (Robinson College)

It is currently the case that there are some radical undemocratic elements of CUSU. That is not to say that CUSU is an inherently undemocratic organization but that I believe that there are elements of it that can easily change so as to affect it in the way that it is, and indeed that would it would be more accountable to its constituents, but its constituents would find it easier to be involved. CUSU must both be democratic as well as appearing democratic to its members. Currently it is neither, and when one succeeds the other fails.

In my mind, the only way to solve this issue is through mass consultation, that is, to make CUSU what its students want it to be, as opposed to what it leads that students want it to be. I would advocate a period of consultation on the scale that has not occurred in the recent history of the organization.

Issues that I feel are of great importance that we discuss in the next year are:
1. Means of Consultation
   Within this area the chief issue in need of discussion is the lack of direct contact with constituents, the fact that there has not been a single quorate Open Meeting in the last year, whether or not this is the consequence of Open Meetings being essentially impotent, and if more members are adequately represented at council.
2. The role of committees
   CUSU currently has five committees (not including the executive). There is currently no mention of how they run in Standing Orders. I would like to investigate the accountability of committees, the interactions between the committees and council, democracy within the committees (especially with the consideration of the last few months), and the means by which committees can interact with grassroots members.
3. The accountability of the CUSU Executive
   The democratic nature of Council
   With particular reference to what a representative democracy means for a protective pressure group.
4. Finally, whether CUSU publicity is adequate for getting the grassroots members involved.

In order to attempt to solve these I would like to put into practice a rather systematic method of writing discussion papers on these matters, taking them to various committees for revision, and then to schedule a forum meeting at which the paper can be discussed, and then I would write up the results of the discussion and present them to concerned committees, council, and put them on the CUSU website.

The papers that I would currently like to write are: Consultation, Council, Accountability and Power Structure, Policy Making Structures, Campaigns, and Sustaining CUSU. Of course these would be free to change depending on what issues people feel that there is a need to address.

If I were to be elected there would be a few things that I would like to be achieved as a result of my position on the committee. Most importantly I would like to get more people actively involved in CUSU. I would like to make people feel that they really are involved as much as that feeling being played out at every meeting. A result of this work would hopefully be fulfilled by a greater number of people standing for election, a more diverse range of people sitting on committees, and CUSU having a more in depth view on what its constituents feel about structure, to be used when it happens that there is a need for structural reform.

I honestly believe that this role is needed on the executive, and that I am the right person to carry it out, having sat on CUSU Development and Planning Committee (DPC) for half a year, and having attended council for a year (though having a vote), as well as having been active on my JCR committee last year. I have also been attending executive meetings in the last term as a general member.
NUS CONFERENCE DELEGATE CANDIDATES

JACK PREVEZER
MAKING SURE YOUR VOICE IS HEARD

NADIA KHAN
COMMITTED TO STUDENTS

ABHISHEK DESHPANDE

JENNI WOLF
CUSU ANTI-RACISM OFFICER

MARK FERGUSON
VISIBLE EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL

DREW LIVINGSTON
CUSU ACADEMIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

THOMAS LALEVEE
INDEPENDENT

UHMAR AHMAD
UHMAR AHMAD

VICKI MANN
TAKING CUSU WELFARE TO NUS

SOFIE BUCKLAND
EDUCATION NOT FOR SALE

DAVE SMITH
REPRESENTING CAMBRIDGE

DAN SWAIN
STUDENT RESPECT - TROOPS HOME

MERAV LEVITEN

VOTE IN THE CUSU ELECTIONS

MARCH 8

IN COLLEGES
Harry Joll talks shop with one of Cambridge's largest second-hand book sellers.

AND THEN the other thing we are trying to do, get someone to eat a book! Have you heard about this? Now you have. Michael Cahn, one of the largest second-hand book sellers in Cambridge, warns to his theme as he describes a recent idea to attract some publicity. Somewhere out there lurks a student who would volunteer for a literary lunch, “with or without sauce. Someone who is good at hocus pocus, like a magician, may also be invited to apply.” The media would be invited, tickets sold. “There is, by the way, a whole tradition of books and eating…a salmagundi of many terms in textual genres that refer to things you can eat. And the whole notion of understanding, reading, taking in, consuming, digesting” Michael wants a philosopher to prepare the audience “with a little presentation on how books read are books eaten.”

On a metaphorological basis, Salomagundi, metaphorological? Dr Michael Calm (PhD, Habil) earned all those letters in his earlier incarnation as an academic.

After a book on the history of rhetoric, “duly pulped by the publisher when he lost track of me”, and a brief professorial appointment in Germany, he relocated to Cambridge. Browsing boot sales on Sundays gave Michael the beginnings of a library – finally, acceptance of some valuable 17th century books from a retiring academic persuaded Michael to make the jump from collector to seller. Plurabelle was born (named after a character in Finnegan’s Wake). Remember all those fears about the digital age displacing the book? Turns out the rumours of its death may have been greatly exaggerated. In 2003, UK book sales were an estimated £3.78 billion; since 1999, the market has grown by 16% at a rate that is expected to continue and even increase. The Internet is partly responsible, being a logical medium through which large second-hand book sellers can ply their trade. However, vast sites like Amazon and Abebooks have a ubiquity which is something of a double-edged sword. They give dealers a reach far beyond that of their own resources; Michael likens the internet to “a big library catalogue with a shop associated with it.” You can locate and buy books in ways that would have been unthinkable two decades ago, collectors can build up specialist libraries in months rather than lifetimes. As for the punters, they can pick and choose, promised a certain level of efficiency and service.

There is a heavy-breathing dark side though. Few sellers can afford to bypass the empire, so they must submit to its rules and control. Abebooks recently announced (because they don’t need to ‘ask’ for these things?) that they will no longer give sellers credit card numbers. Ruth, Michael’s crack co-pilot, was pleased to be rid of her duty tapping in numbers, the card numbers. Ruth, Michael’s crack co-pilot, was pleased to be rid of her duty tapping in numbers, the card numbers. You know where to apply…

“Shakespeare, no, he does not sell. Shaw, forget it, pulp it straight. A maths schoolbook from 1950: yes, any time.”

Holocaust denier David Irving - at any price

The man himself, Michael Cahn.
in the current climate of Golden Globe and BAFTA winners and the build up to the Academy Awards, it is hard not to, in a moment of procrastination, prevent your mind from wandering into the fantasy world of today's cinematography. Classic cartoons like "The Lady and the Tramp" or "The Prince and the Pauper" thrive on putting opposites together. Generally, these opposites are initially distrustful; they share an adventure or two and finally, in a cheesy musical climax, discover that, deep down, they're not so different. But is this reconciliation of opposites possible with scientists and films? Search the IMDB (Internet movie data base) for titles containing "scientist" and you will find only 6 partial matches come up. The word carrot has more.

A more careful examination of these titles reveals such cinematic gems as "Mad Scientist 2000" these titles reveals such cinematic partial matches come up. The scientists and films? Search the search for the title of Shelley's most famous novel, that the image of scientists as dangerous meddlers, attempting to take on godlike powers, goes back earlier than that. Prometheus himself, is almost the stereotypical mad scientist, defying the gods by creating man, and bringing him fire from Mount Olympus.

One modern film that has followed in this tradition is the relatively more recent flop, "Van Helsing", which features vampires, werewolves and, again, "Frankenstein", the monster. My brother was forced to watch this film in his RE class under the justification that it addresses subjects such as cloning. Why any RE teacher could get away with claiming that a film about a monster vampire babies had any relevance to cloning is beyond me. The fact that it features Dracula in the role of a 'scientist' breeding new vampires is a worrying insight into Hollywood perspectives towards scientific research.

Cloning, itself, has an astonishingly bad press. In addition to the dubious commentary that "Van Helsing" may provide, other films, most recently "The Island" have focused on this subject. This film, although avoiding a sensationalist horror rhetoric, which portrays all clones as mutants, still demonises the subject. Disconcertingly clones are bred purely for organ donation. The scientist in charge is, of course, evil (which is indicated to the audience by the British accent). Therapeutic cloning is a highly controversial and morally complex concept, which surely deserves more attention.

However even "The Island" treats cloning more sensibly than many films, such as "Godsend", in which it is suggested that a clone could have flashbacks to the life of its DNA donor. Identical twins, after all, are natural clones, and although twins separated at birth have occasionally lived slightly similar lives, no one has ever suggested that they share dreams. Genetic research features at the forefront of several current blockbusters. A good example is "Jurassic Park", another film where the creator cannot control his creation, which in this case is a pack full of dinosaurs. The source novel by Michael Crichton was actually inspired by the revolutionary invention of the PCR process which enabled small amounts of DNA to be amplified for the first time. In real life this process has found uses in genetic fingerprinting, and is fascinating in itself, involving enzymes extracted from thermophilic bacteria, versatile organisms that can live in deep ocean vents at temperatures of well above boiling.

But "Jurassic Park" also gives us a clue as to how the Movie-Scientist gap can be breached. It provides both of the two exceptions where scientists can be portrayed positively. Firstly, your field research should be based in the great outdoors, like Sam Neil's paleontologist. The other is to be a genius, whilst still anti-establishment, a type personified in Jeff Goldblum's Ian Malcolm character, leather jacket and all. In fact, being a mathematician of any type is a fairly good bet in movie universes - you may suffer delusions, a la John Nash in A Beautiful Mind, but your story is likely to finish happily, and, who knows, you may even stand a chance of getting the girl. "Proof", out in cinemas now, is another film with an incredible total of 3 humanised, relationship-multiplying mathematicians! The moral is clear - if change is to happen, it has to be scientists who make the first move. Cambridge scientists, mathmos and compscis must unite, throw off their lab coats and embrace the outside world (or start writing on nearby windows). Only then can Film and Science attain their own Hollywood ending, and walk into the sunset together.

The female scientist in Hollywood will certainly be scantily clad, big breasted and sure to be nacked by about the one hour mark

As the bleary-eyed English student bounces painfully from wall to wall of her college corridor in a desperate attempt to reach the kitchen, her morning coffee ritual is once again impeded by the manly strides of her neighbour: the Boatie. "Gosh, up late again are we?" booms the exasperatingly lively voice of Charles Wynyard Croitten-Biggy. Without waiting for a reply he heartily slaps the semi-conscious girl on the back, begins stripping off his steaming all-in-one, and enters his room whistling an irritatingly lively tune that he recollected the Novices piling on the splash tops over their hoodies whilst they moaned about the cold and the barely existing lycra atrocities they were made to wear. They havn't capiszed in a scull off the coast of an Outer Hebridean island at night in the middle of winter! Ho, THEN, yes, THEN they'd know what cold is!". Charles has been rowing since the tentative age of 13 at Public School. His room is littered with protein drinks, free weights, medals, Vaseline-chested 'Men's Health' magazine posters and of course, at centre, his darling Concept II.
A Tale of Two Cities

Sam Pearson visits the epicentre of German tacky-chic

I have to admit, rather predictably, that I've always loved to hate all things German. Perhaps it was all those episodes of Dad's Army as a kid or an evil German step-Grandmother whose Rottwelier was all those episodes of Dad's Army as a kid or an evil German step-Grandmother whose Rottwelier always loved to hate all things German. Perhaps it is a city which boasts the colossal techno institution of the Love Parade, where calling a taxi at 4am is locked upon with scorn by fellow clubbers and whose nightlife certainly makes Cindies seem more like a tea party at a nursing home.

A tale of two cities: it is a capital that effortlessly transforms itself from a ghost-town by day to a hedonistic thrill-seeking excuse for carnage by night. The one hundred thousand boosted up English football fans planning to descend on Berlin this summer for the World Cup might have finally found their match. It is a city which boasts the colossal techno institution of the Love Parade, where calling a taxi at 4am is locked upon with scorn by fellow clubbers and whose nightlife certainly makes Cindies seem more like a tea party at a nursing home.

The hefty sheets of ice floating down the central River Spree, testament to the previous week's temperatures of minus 8 degrees, could of course be one of the main reasons why the tourists had stayed away that weekend. But then where were all the Germans? As a city covering an area almost seven times the size of Paris but with only a third of its Germans? As a city covering an area almost seven times the size of Paris but with only a third of its people, perhaps the eerie silence of Berlin's streets should not have come as such a big surprise. On a dutiful sightseeing trip around the central district of Mitte, the reticent atmosphere which lingers at the Ish Hotel Adlon, sitting in pride of place next to the Brandenburg Gate, only gains a mention in the tour after Michael Jackson made the mistake of dangling his baby from one of the third-floor balconies.

The recently constructed Holocaust Memorial around the corner from here is perhaps one of Berlin's most unforgettable, if not controversial, tributes to the city's recent turbulent history. From the bullet holes in the classical colonnade of the Altes Museum, to the remnants of the Wall, now ironically protected by an even sturdier barbed wire fence, the city often seems like one big apology. Even the lavish Hotel Adlon, sitting in pride of place next to the Brandenburg Gate, only gains a mention in the tour after Michael Jackson made the mistake of dangling his baby from one of the third-floor balconies.

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The inside of the Reichstag glass dome, looking down to the Plenary Hall of Parliament.
Anna Leach talks to Quentin Thomas, Chief Film Classifier and owner of the most-viewed signature in Britain

When is nudity strong? How can peril be moderate? Or natural catastrophes mild?

How much sexual innuendo is too much for an audience? If an actor snorts coke on a cinema screen and then has a good time, is the film promoting it? How frequently can ‘fuck’ be used in a 12A? The British Board of Film Classification exists to make such fine distinctions. And to make really obvious distinctions too: between films as diverse as Curious George (U) and Hard Candy (18), both classified this week. Hard Candy ‘contains strong sadistic violence’ – it’s a psychotic thriller involving sword-fighters, apparently, while Curious George ‘contains no sex, violence, or bad language’. (George is a monkey – but this still raises the question as to how curiously they can have been).

The Board of Film Classification (the BBFC) puts films into one of eight ‘ratings’ – particularly suitable for pre-school children; to R18 – a ‘legally restricted classification primarily for explicit works of consenting sex between adults’. The BBFC can demand cuts in the film sequences, or it can reject films completely, effectively banning them in Britain.

Sir Quentin Thomas is the President of the Board of Film Classification. He has a staff of sixty, about twenty-five of whom are engaged in watching and judging the bulk of the films that come in for classification. He directs policy and judges border-line cases. His signature appears on the black film certificate screen that appears before every film shown in Britain. Quentin went to Caius and read English. When I ring him up, he’s in Italy, and I’m on the Lensfield Road. The phone line echoes a bit, and fire engines pass to and fro beneath the window, but we have a good conversation. He is informative and witty, but a careful talker. What he says is guarded and precise – perhaps flavoured by a long, successful career in the Civil Service, a significant part spent negotiating with Northern Irish terrorists. His predecessors in the post of BBFC president have mostly been media types, so Quentin’s bureaucratic background and great intelligence got him characterised as ‘dry’ and out of touch at the time of his appointment. ‘One suspects he hasn’t seen much of his fellow Quentin, Tarantino’ someone from the Sunday Times quipped in an 2002 interview. But as Quentin (Thomas) points out, the BBFC’s classifications are not really about the individual tastes of the president: there are guidelines, and there’s a process.

I ask him why films should still get classified. I bandy about suggestions of morality and decency a few times. ‘I haven’t used the word “moral”’, Quentin Thomas replies. He hasn’t, and doesn’t. Film classification, BBFC-style, is not about imposing moral standards on the makers of Spiderman, or inculcating certain values in the next generation. It provides guidance, attempts to protect viewers from harm and ensures that films, DVDs and video games comply with the current legislation on obscenity and animal cruelty etc. The BBFC offers a consumer service, helping cinema-goers and their children to. The Board’s 2005 vision statement defines its role as ‘A Trusted Guide to the Moving Image’. Friendly. Just like the non-capitalised acronym of the logo ‘bbfc’ in gradations of denim-blue.

The BBFC haven’t always been this relaxed. Up until 1984, it was still the Board of Film Censorship. And way back in 1916, four years into its venerable ninety-four year history, the BBFC director would delete scenes from films if they included: ‘the unnecessary exhibition of underclothing’ or, if they became ‘excessively passionate’. Obviously, these days, things are a bit different. ‘None of us like intervening in a film’ he says, but sometimes film-makers aiming for a particular audience will accept cuts so they can get the rating they want for their work. These days, however, Quentin tells me that the majority of the cuts that the BBFC makes are in films that end up in the restricted R18 category. R18 films ‘are all about pushing the border lines’ so they often tend to stray into the territory of unacceptable film content.

Not many films get completely rejected, but sometimes it happens. Quentin tells me about two recent videos that have been refused classification. Terrorist Killers and Other Wackos features a jaunty pop-music soundtrack paired with a montage of news footage: mostly from African civil wars, involving murders, mangled bodies… etc. ‘It was stomach-churning’. Sometimes his staff get so traumatised by the things they have to watch that they end up in counselling. The Board refused Terrorist Killers a certificate because they considered it was likely to be watched by people looking for ‘titillation’. Difficult call? Bumfights, another amateur American video, also got banned. From Quentin’s description, it sounds like a hardcore version of Jackass or Trigger Happy TV. Bumfights involved the film-makers plying tramps and roughsleepers (‘bums’ in American) with alcohol and money to make them run their heads into walls or fight each other. ‘It made a lot of money in the States’. That got rejected because of the Board’s responsibility to prevent harm to society. Bumfights is the sort of thing that could be easily imitated and ‘perpetuate that sort of lunacy’ as Quentin puts it.

Sexual violence is a recurrent sticking point in film classification. It provokes more problems than either issue separately. The boundaries around the 18 and R18 categories reflect this preoccupation: ‘Portrayals of sexual violence which eroticise or endorse sexual assault’ is one of the two specific factors that takes a film out of the 18 classification and into the restricted one. Explicit sex is the other one. The boundaries try to reflect public opinion rather than controlling it. The BBFC holds surveys, roadshows and is sensitive to responses from upset viewers and media responses. An investigation commissioned by the BBFC got people to respond to films like Baise-moi and I Spit on your Grave, and it was the sexual violence in each that caused the most distress and discomfort. One interviewee in the 2002 report said: ‘if it’s sexual violence… you tend to take it a bit more personally, whereas like, as you said, somebody walking around and spraying bullets, you watch it and you don’t bat an eyelid because… you’re used to watching it and it’s like an element of fantasy. But where’s there’s sexual violence it’s brought more home to you.’ Some moving images can be harmful. This is a long way from the days when judgements were based on the ‘exhibition of underwear’, but the same issues of protection come up. How much do we need to be protected?

The BBFC has to tread on sensitive territory. Survey results suggest that most people do want guidance when it comes to films. A near unanimous 87% of adults found it useful when choosing films for their children. However, as I ask Quentin, doesn’t the easily accessible nature of porn, for example, on the internet just render all this careful age-grading of films irrelevant? Not yet, is his first response. But he admits: ‘it is possible to construct a scenario when film classification is irrelevant.’ In which case, he suggests, it is up to the public to decide whether they still want the BBFC.

When appointed, Quentin Thomas got asked by the press to list his favourite films and only named works dating from before 1948. A choice he suffered a lot of stick for. But he found Jarhead, (an action drama about American soldiers in Iraq) and Brokeback Mountain interesting and recommends Lars von Trier’s Manderlay and its prequel Dogville to me. Manderlay isn’t out yet, but I devote what turns out to be a large proportion of my Saturday night being alternately bemused, bored and brutalised by Dogville. Nicole Kidman enters a back-end of nowhere town, sets about helping people, until she gets gradually taken for granted and then progressively abused by the inhabitants. The set consists of white lines taped onto a black stage and the dialogue is all improvised. I’m quite hooked by the end though. It’s not exactly mainstream.

It is, however, a 15 and ‘contains sexual violence’. Of course this tells very little about the misanthropic and stylistically bizarre Danish production as a whole. But then that’s not what the classifications are there for.

As Quentin says when I ask him about quirky classifications decisions: ‘we don’t make quick decisions’. It’s not up to the classifications to be quirky, interesting or particularly significant – that’s what the films do.

Classification only measures a limited range of issues. So Curious George may hardly feature on the BBFC’s scales of bad language, sex or violence, but can be a meaningful tale of an exploitative monkey nonetheless.
Making free with speech...

It seems that once again Freedom of Speech is on everyone’s tongues. From Holocaust-denial to Professor Sir Roy Meadows’ expert (or ‘expert’) opinions on cot-death, it seems people need to be more careful these days about what they say. So what has happened to our most precious of freedoms, and do we really care?

Richard Braude
“Freedom of speech is the very essence of all that should be held dear by society”

Freedom of speech is the very essence of all that should be held dear by society. Art and science, so often seen as at war, both rely on this beautiful principle. The fundament of rights is that as human beings, as intelligent, sentient, equal creatures, we mutually allow each other certain freedoms.

The first and foremost of these must be freedom of speech - thought need not be a right, as it the ability to think is a requirement of these rights. Speech is the process of spreading these thoughts, of letting others be aware of one’s own thoughts. We so often stand up for freedom of speech when it concerns political dissidents in fascist or communist countries or corporate whistleblowers, while simultaneously arguing against this right when applied to fascists and radicals in our own society. This makes a mockery of the concept of freedom. As explained above, the whole idea of rights rests on our equality and a shared recognition of this. If we only grant people free speech on the basis of what they believe we skip the entire moral argument for rights.

Those among us who then advocate both human rights and the curbing of free speech always inevitably stress that there is a ‘limit’ - i.e. they become scared of the implications of their own logic. A world is envisaged of burning buildings, massacres, mass uprisings - Abu Hamza murdering WWII from a mosque basement. These, however, would not be the results of free speech, but of action, based on the decisions of a sentient, intelligent species. We have laws governing actions - murder, theft - and again these are agreed by a concept of mutual allowance. Curbing freedom of speech because we think that we’re right is a most dangerous philosophy. Strangely enough, we haven’t heard every idea yet, despite thousands of years of history, and so long as we continue to justify curbing freedom of speech we continue to live in ignorance.

Give people a chance to think and they will talk; give people a chance to talk and they will discuss. And through discussion we might, just might, learn something. You may think we have nothing to learn from terrorists and criminals, but we have a duty to allow speech for all, whatever the consequence.

Greg Muller
“Cultural subversion should not only be tolerated, but actually defended”

Post-war politics in Britain has been continually marred by a dirty cloud of petty moralists that has taken any opportunity possible to curtail not only our freedom of expression, but mass of our other personal freedoms. Bigotry, as part of the national psyche, seems to follow a cycle of revival and derision. Punk was the culturally subversive response to the socio-economic stagnation of the late seventies, where the need for mass anaehtasia manifested itself in pop culture through saccharine displays of artificial joy. On the other hand, John Major’s elevation of bourgeois family values followed the AIDS scare of the late eighties and early nineties, where deviance itself had taken the popular semblance of an infectious disease.

Without having to draw a strict opposition between subculture and bourgeois culture, it should be said that most arts of cultural subversion, by definition, inevitably contrast what is perceived to be the mainstream dominant culture. The phenomenon of religious extremism has targeted youth by offering it a sense of identity, one which is not set against cultural norms, but which instead hyperbolises already existing structures of moral and social conformity. The strength of evangelism in the States, but also increasingly in Britain, threatens the liberal consensus.

What is crucial, in my view, is that cultural subversion should not only be tolerated, but actually defended by the political elite. For example, a subculture such as the London electro scene, which thrives on its carnivalesque aesthetics of gender transgression, glorification of the perverse and the concept of “trash”, can potentially provide a balance, particularly within the spectre of youth culture, against the weight of religious fundamentalism which aims to demonise anything outside the heterosexual patriarchal archetype. In other words, offending people is good because it encourages debate, and where there is debate fundamentalism cannot dominate.

Ambrose Corst pauseine
“The whole gamut of the Cambridge political spectrum offered no opportunities”

Being the well-connected sophisticate that I am, I was the natural first choice of the Focus Editor to procure him a novel, gentle and (above all) eloquent writer. The topic: freedom of speech. The angle: whatever the writer chose, though, as I was told the other two Authors this week leaned in favour of free speech to the point of insanity, I suspected that I was required (or at least the editor was desirous of me) to produce someone of the opposite camp. Now I am a moderate fellow – I do not know any crazy Torres, who quaff age-old port in the family pile, while quietly and (in the most dignified way, of course) mourning the insobriety of the modern pleasure seeking modernity, I sought to look on the mind’s minds, lost in a muffled outrage at the death of the Old Order. Nor was I acquainted with the blazing firebrands of the Left-wing, the stalwarts and bastions of No Platform, and ardent silencers of the ever-increasing (or so they would tell you) Neo-Fascist malaise; or indeed anyone further Right than Krischelius.

The Liberals, of course, I dismissed at once: rampant pro-freedom loons to a man, and most likely to have a vaguely homosexual fit of apoplexy at the very mention of any utilitarian curtailment of civil liberties. Rumour tells of turncoat John’s economists, who may be persuaded to betray their ‘liberal’ ideals for cash or glory. But I can hear myself be expected to search out, from under their felonious rocks, such odious specimens now, can I? And the Labour Club? Well their political ideals have shown themselves in no way overly attached to the idea of civil liberties. But alas, here I must confess that I, not a cowardly man by nature (I think nothing of tackling the common man at the vans in rude debate), failed in strength of morale. I investigated as to the prime movers and ‘thinkers’ of the Centre-Right. I even went so far as to scour facebook and jackdaw for their email addresses (the Labour Club home page a step too far I think). But I simply could not overcome that rising sense of nausea as I began to type. For that, dear readers, I must apologise.

And so you see the whole gamut of the Cambridge political spectrum offered me no opportunities for the snaring of a valuable writer. I suppose I could bend my mighty intellect to write. But then, I hope to use my freedom not to speak.
How will Welfare fare?

The CUSU elections last year all too clearly displayed the apathy of the majority of students which affects, and hinders, politics within the university. Though three candidates stood for president, none stood for either Target, or significantly the full-time position of Access Officer. Recent weeks have seen political conflict within CUSU, culminating in a vote of No Confidence in president Laura Walsh in CUSU Council. Yet, it seems, even these events have not been enough to politicize and encourage students to stand, in the belief that they can do a better, or different, job. While the three candidates again running for CUSU President, and the fact that the position of Services Officer will now be contested this year, are positive revelations, these are outweighed by the drop in the number standing for Women’s Officer - from four to one - and worse still, no candidates at all standing for Welfare.

Though many may thankfully never find themselves in a situation whilst at Cambridge where they need the support that the Student Union, and more specifically the Welfare Officer, can provide, this is by no means a reason to forego about it and leave it, in the hope that someone else will stand. Moreover, in leading welfare campaigns, the Welfare Officer has a direct impact on every student in the University and their well being.

In this column last year TCS urged anyone who was keen, but too nervous or worried to stand, to come forward and run for Access Officer. This time round, we urge anyone who values the contribution to the lives of those around them, to come forward and run for the position.

TCS believes that it is the executive who must lead the fight and stand for the position. It is the executive, none stood for either Target, or significantly the full-time position of Services Officer will now be contested this year, are positive revelations, these are outweighed by the drop in the number standing for Women’s Officer - from four to one - and worse still, no candidates at all standing for Welfare.

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Food and Drink

Variations on a theme of risotto

RISOTTO IS PEASANT FOOD. It does not require expensive ingredients. If you cannot afford forty minutes of therapeutic stirring then do not read on – for you are truly poor and I pity you.

There are a few things you need for any risotto (with exceptions) – risotto rice, good stock, butter, parsley and good parmesan or grana padano.

There are many types of risotto rice; the standard popular rice outside of Italy is Arborio, whilst apparently Carnaroli is the best choice for simple risotti whilst apparently Carnaroli is the best choice for simple risotti. Don’t worry, these vICES and Vialone nano for garlic without many complicated fla-

tions – risotto rice, good stock,

Before we get started, I urge you to make your own stock. The best things for stock are skin, bones, and connective tis-
sue. It is a crime to throw away a chicken carcass and bones after they have been stripped.

To make stock: Add the carcass to a pan and in with that throw; one onion (cut in half – don’t worry about peeling it, and stick one or two cloves in the onion if you have any), a couple of celery sticks torn into bits and a few carrots. Steal some bay leaves from someone’s front garden if you don’t have any and put one of them in.

Pour over boiling water and simmer slowly (covered) for three hours. Substitute a chicken carcass for any other left over bones for another animal’s equiva-

lent – if it’s a dirty animal you may have to skin a little. I find the water used for boiling ham makes some of the best stock. Never, ever add salt to your stock when you are making it – you can add salt when you are using it later if need be.

Plain parsley Risotto for 4

1 large glass of white wine
100g Parmesan, (give or take)
A small handful of parsley
Butter
Olive oil
Salt and Pepper to taste

Warm your stock, and chop your onion and garlic into small pieces. Fry in oil and butter over a moderate heat, then add the rice (do not be tempted to rinse it – we need that starch) and keep it moving until all the grains are coated and shining with the oil/butter. Pour in the white wine. Keep moving the rice slowly (use a wooden spoon so as not to damage the rice too much), the heat needs to be slightly below in the lower half of the capa-

bilities of your hob. No vigorous bubbling, a mild splitter will suffice. When the wine looks mostly absorbed add a ladleful of stock. Keep stirring and adding the stock – the aim is to heat until the rice seems to be about to begin to stick before adding more stock. The constant stir-

ring should massage the starch out of the rice and facilitate the rice absorbing the stock, creat-

ing a creamy consistency. If the risotto seems a bit tame, and you want a deeper flavour add some beef stock in the latter quarter of the cooking process. After some time, the rice will be cooked with a small amount of bite, so keep tasting at 20 min-
utes, 30 minutes, 40 minutes and now stir in butter (20–40g), the parsley (chopped), the parmesan (grated). Of course you have been seasoning throughout; you are a cook.

Remove from the heat and REST for 10 minutes or so. This is essential for the risotto to find itself. I find it helps to tell people the food is ready only when you have taken off the heat, rather than before – then they can’t cuss about getting knives and forks, pouring wine etc. and by the time they are ready the risotto will have rested.

If that’s a little plain for you, here are some additional ideas –

Add saffron – (no need to soak it, just add early on) – you’ll almost have Risotto alla Milanese

Dry white vermouth instead of or in addition to white wine. (I haven’t tried this but friends like it)

Asparagus is great in risottos.

Chicken risotto – use up the leftovers from your chicken with the stock you have made from its carcass. Perfect!

Follow the plain risotto rece-
ipe, but fry some mushrooms roughly chopped and some finely chopped rosemary with the onion and garlic. Add a chopped pepper at this stage as well if you like. Include the left over chicken at a short time before the risotto is cooked.

Mushroom risotto – As with the Chicken, but without the chicken.

Follow the chicken risotto recipe, and remember, some dried porcini mushrooms allowed to soak in hot water make an excel-

lent addition, and of course the water they were soaked in must be added with the stock.

Prawn Risotto – One of my favourites, although prawns are expensive, so it’s perhaps a little less peasant-friendly.

Again, follow the plain recipe, omit most or all of the parmesan, but feel free to include a pepper. Add a squeeze of lemon juice at the end.

Alternatively, add some canned vongole for a seafood risotto.

Barney Seaborn

Food and Drink

Colourful food at the Rainbow Café

IF YOU’RE not a vegetarian, vegan or susceptible to some of the food allergies the Rainbow Café caters to, you might well have missed the rather dingy entrance on King’s Parade. Don’t be scared away if you’re liable (as I am after a trip to the trailer of life), to nightmares of being kidnaped by organic farmers who’ll force-feed you sprouts – this place may recently have played host to a programme by Dr Gillian McKeith, but don’t hold that against it. It didn’t win the Vegetarian Society Award for Best Vegetarian Café 2005 for nothing.

It’s called a café, I suspect, as its interior can’t really pass for a restaurant – it’s very small, rather basic and isn’t really aiming to look fancy in anyway – think friendly, though maybe not romantic. Fairylights and candles on the tables do give the atmosphere a lift in the evening though, and it’s not without its charm. The fact that it’s underground prohibits any windows and means a constant hum from the ventilation system, but this disappeared into the background after a while.

The food and the cost, however, is really more like what you’d expect in a restaurant. Main courses are all £7.95, a little pricey perhaps but we agreed this seemed fair considering that all foods are sourced locally where possible, giving you the environmentally-friendly glow you just can’t get from eating in Hall. In addition, your meal is prepared in full-view – the waiter’s smiling explanation of the dish when it was served at the next table looked very appetizing.

We didn’t try any of the organic wines, but I opted for the mysterious guaranábua juice, which reminiscent of a lemon liddy of your youth, and the lime and lemon grass pressé was very refreshing.

The Rainbow Café is further famed for its desserts – Nigel Slater having described the carrot cake as the best he’d ever tasted, and the cheesecake, the flavour of which changes every week, is obviously popular. We tried both and found them equally good – the carrot cake is moist with a not-too-sweet topping; the chocolate-chilli cheesecake was more unusual but delicious. The latter was served with a scoop of all-natural vegan ice-cream which, while perhaps not quite comparable to most dairy ice-creams, was excellent for what it was, probably a sensation for sweet-toothed vegans.

The staff couldn’t be friendlier, more helpful, or patient with picky customers (as demonstrated by the waiter’s smiling explanation to the rather vocal table next to us that it was a little tricky to serve the spinach lasagne without any spinach, and his willing trip to the kitchen when one customer asked to see the packaging of the chocolate used in the cheesecake).

It might not be the best place in Cambridge to get a steak, but it’s hard not to like the food, atmosphere and service at the Rainbow Café and is worth a visit even if you’re not a vegetarian.

Em Parry

Rainbow Café, 9a King’s Parade, (01223) 321551

The Cambridge Student March 2, 2006
If you wanna be in my gang

Feel that your potential artistic outpourings are being repressed? Dissatisfied by an illiberal academic system in which your only creative output is a doodle on a lecture handout? Then establish yourself a commune...

Artists since time immemorial have naturally gravitated together, as much to share ideas as for moral and creative support, coming to form the communities, schools and movements which have defined the history of artistic development across the world. Whether it was the Fauvists smearing their canvases with lurid colours, the Beat generation leapfrogging into their cars and careering across America for drug fuelled literary high kicks, or the Dadaists doing, well, whatever exactly it was the Dadaists did, revolutionary artistic collaborations demonstrate that strength sometimes does truly lie in numbers; if you've got others thinking and working along the same track as you, anything seems possible.

Many groups, however, are merely arbitrary classifications, imposed by a society anxious to identify whatever random insurgents are currently threatening the status quo. Whilst some may actually define themselves as a movement, baptising themselves with a name, shack up in garrets together and publish manifestoes and the like, actually define themselves as a movement, baptise themselves with a name, shack up in garrets together and publish manifestoes and the like, it is rare that a group has the conscious strength to naturally gravitated together, as much to share ideas as for moral and creative support, coming to form the communities, schools and movements which have defined the history of artistic development across the world. Whether it was the Fauvists smearing their canvases with lurid colours, the Beat generation leapfrogging into their cars and careering across America for drug fuelled literary high kicks, or the Dadaists doing, well, whatever exactly it was the Dadaists did, revolutionary artistic collaborations demonstrate that strength sometimes does truly lie in numbers; if you've got others thinking and working along the same track as you, anything seems possible.

Many groups, however, are merely arbitrary classifications, imposed by a society anxious to identify whatever random insurgents are currently threatening the status quo. Whilst some may actually define themselves as a movement, baptising themselves with a name, shack up in garrets together and publish manifestoes and the like, it is rare that a group has the conscious strength and integrity to establish their own self-sufficient artistic community. The Black Mountain College, which was founded in 1933 in a relatively isolated rural location in North Carolina with the intention that it would be an 'education in democracy', was arguably the dream of the artistic commune proper; a fully functioning experimental institute boasting complete self rule, founded on ideals of creative liberty.

Black Mountain College, and the artists who studied, taught and practiced there, provide the focus of the present exhibition at Kettle's Yard, entitled Starting at Zero. Founded by renegade academic John Andrew Rice, students at Black Mountain were encouraged to learn by developing their imaginative initiative, rather than by absorbing turgid reams of information. There were no required courses, and each student prepared with his advisor an individual plan of work and was expected to complete a well-rounded course of study, dramas, music and fine arts were considered to be an integral part of the life of the college. Graduation was based on the achievement of a project in the student's area of specialisation and tailored examinations. A farm was begun in the first year of Black Mountain's life by one of the students, and the whole college was based on the principle that the development of the individuals creative powers went hand in hand with the assumption of practical responsibilities in the development of the intellect, so that students helped out on a range of jobs and maintenance, each assuming a position of responsibility in the college society. Rice was joined in his project by Josef and Anni Albers, who came straight from the creative zeitgeist of the Bauhaus movement in Germany, providing a European link which was fundamental to the innovations of the college.

Between 1933 and 1957 the College formed a meeting point for some of the most exciting and innovative artists of the time. Students included the painter William De-Kooning, the composer John Cage, the dancer and choreographer Merce Cunningham. It was there that the architect Buckminster Fuller first demonstrated his geodesic dome, and guest lecturers included Albert Einstein, Clement Greenburger, Bernard Rudofsky and William Carlos Williams. Some of the developments and relationships, such as that between Buckminster Fuller and Kenneth Snelson, and John cage and Merce Cunningham, were to have a lasting influence on the post war American art scene, whilst the Black Mountain Review, published between 1954-57, printed the writings of many influential authors including the beat writer Allen Ginsburg.

The visitor Teri Dick Modin felt that 'at Black Mountain one was seemingly free to practice one's art without interference', and although after 1949 divisions began to emerge between the founding members, the project remains one of the most effective attempts ever to have grown from abstract creative ideals of freedom and experimentation, coming closer to the dream artistic utopia of liberated thinking than any other initiative of its sort. What separated Black Mountain from other communities and movements is that it was consciously organised, never exclusive and consistently produced work of genuine artistic merit. There are many lessons to be learnt from such enterprises, and it is difficult not to agree with Herbert Read when he said of Britain; 'we need Black Mountain Colleges in this country, several of them.'

The exhibition at Kettles yard combines paintings with models, scores, photographs and film to explore both the productions of the artists and the development of the community, and runs until 2nd April 2006. For more information on the exhibition and related events visit www.kettlesyard.co.uk

Catherine Spencer
THIS YEARS Spring Revue offer- 

of circus, written and di-

rected by the now established trio of Toms: Kingsley, Sharpe and Williams. The show opened with a song, the Abba hit Mamma Mia was adapted to include the lyrics “Yeh-but-Margaret. Where- 

has-my-flu-jab-gone? It’s-been, 

stolen-by-the-circus”!

In the manner of what we have come to expect from the Footlights crowd the evening consisted of a succession of sketches, twenty four of them to be exact. Despite the pace being rapid this lack of a clear plot structure and storyline at times inhibited continuity but not comedy. The style of writing from Tom’s was on balance witty, daring, original and done justice by the cast. As the show gathered momentum the vocal appreci- 

ation from the packed audience in the ADC theatre increased accordingly. Particularly well received was Anna O’Grady as a vanilla ice-cream cone who gives 

the dictates of mur-

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received was Anna O’Grady as 

a vanilla ice-cream cone who 

gives 

innuendo aplenty. Acrobatics 

were used innovatively in 

conquerors to invade him.

The lighting, by Ella Belsham, 

is 

perfect antidote to these. They 

roll up, roll up!

Cally Squires sees a circus like no other...

Ten little indians, going out to dine...

One choked his little self - then there were nine. Daniel Bolger is relieved that he avoided the salmon mousse...

A SLEW of men and women, most with secrets in their past, find themselves lured to an island off the English coast by a mysteri- 

ous correspondent. Two military men, a physician, a young playboy, married couple looking after the island for the absent ‘U. N. Owen’ (‘Unknown, geddit?!’), a young secretary, a righteous old bag, a high-court judge. Over their first meal the dandy sniffs it ‘beauty bad luck’ – and the remaining guests write it off as suicide. But 

bad luck’ – and the remaining 

creatures of exotic animals with various com- 

plexes, an Irish fortune-teller, a human cannonball who dislikes physics, acrobats and a clown. Other links to the circus theme were slightly more tenuous. Take 

Matt Bethell as the town of Hastings, a promiscuous blonde who keenly encourages French conquistadors to invade him.

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larly well received was Anna 

O’Grady as a vanilla ice-cream 
cones who gives


drop.
Doing it Greek-style

Lawrence Hooper is witness to the war zone, this play wot Berkoff wrote...

THE EIGHTIES are terri-

bly fashionable at the moment aren’t they? You can barely flick

open the pages of your sister’s copy of Grazia without seeing

Paris Hilton swanning about in leg-warmers and drainpipe,

sorry, skinny jeans. So it would

be easy to accuse director Alex

Spencer-Jones of jumping on

the bandwagon by reviving

Stephen Berkoff’s 1980 verse

drama Greek. Certainly Spen-

cer-Jones’ production is atten-

tive to the niceties of fashion,

with said skinny, sorry, drain-
pipe jeans on prominent dis-

play. Moreover, the production

bi...
The function of Cambridge Amateur Theatre

Not a CLA yet? Maybe it’s time to get going. Feature by James Smoker. who has left his horses, high or otherwise, at home...

BEFORE ANYONE accuses me of being on my high horse, the reference to Matthew Arnold in the headline is a) wanky, and b) not in any way designed to demonstrate that I am writing a world-shattering manifesto of any kind. I just want to start a debate, or rather, get in print a debate which is already happening in the seedy recesses of the ADC bar.

Back where I come from, amateur theatre is for fun. Well, it is and it isn’t. It’s quite a lot for ageing queens who resent not having made it pro, and a little bit for thugs who weren’t getting in print a debate which is almost happening in the AGM and waving a banner outside the box office. Oh, I could actually agree,

As maintainer of the CUMTS mailing list, I’ve had more than one request from people wanting to be removed simply because “I’m not good enough – I’m only Grade 6!” Although there are admirable schemes in place to encourage new people to get involved (including schemes run by the ADC – see http://www.cuadc.org/find.php?item=...), I don’t think they can counteract the inherent belief that Cambridge acting is for fun – not just for – and not, I think, do I want that belief changed. So what can I say? Give it a go, I guess; you’re probably better than you think, who knows, you might be the next Sam Mendes or John Cleese – but you’ll never make it without the ADC. Discuss...

No one can deny, at least in the inner sanctum of Cambridge drama, that there are certain people who are “famous”. No matter than 90% of Cambridge’s population doesn’t go to the ADC and b) doesn’t give a shit even if it does...
**A comedy... really?**

**Hannah Laing**

IF YOU are looking for a night of belly-rumbling laughs, then The Merchant of Venice is not for you. Do not be deceived by finding this problematic play listed under Shakespeare’s comedies, for although there are humorous interludes and everyone does end up – sort of – happy and at least in full possession of body parts, modern audiences are unlikely to find it as rip-roaringly funny as the Elizabethans did. Ade O’Brien’s production barely faces up to the difficulties of staging this starchy comedy, and although it obviously cannot compare to the recent high-profile productions of The Taming of the Shrew or Measure for Measure, there is no doubt that he has made full use of limited resources (performing it in Jesus College Chapel certainly adds an ironic undertone). The crucial problem with The Mer- chant of Venice is how to balance its two distinct plots. On the one hand we have the romantic tale of beautiful, wealthy Portia (Ellie Watson), in love with – and loved by – skint Bassanio (Alexander Jackson), but destined to marry whichever suitor picks the correct casket: of gold, silver or lead. On the other hand there is the dark account of the infamous Shylock (Luke Thompson) who demands a pound of flesh from Bassanio’s friend Antonio (Thomas Johnson). The strength of this production lies in its ability to make us feel sympa-thetic towards Shylock, even as he dozes his butcher’s apron and bears down on Antonio with gleaming knife. Luke Thompson succeeds in portraying Shylock as a decent man who, after a life-time of bulb- ling at the hands of arrogant Venetians, is finally pushed over the edge by his daughter’s elope- ment. Thompson’s rendition of ‘Hath not a Jew eyes?’ is stirring, however at other points he has a tendency to swallow his lines. O’Brien’s staging, particularly in the court scene, makes effective use of an uninteresting space but the scenes are not as hard put to look less exciting when broken as the last lines of a scene are drowned out by a set change. The audience’s favourites were clearly Spencer Hughes and Matt Harrison, who stole the show as Portia’s unsuccessful suitors. Whilst these two captured the spirit of Shakespearean comedy with fantastically over-done mon-o logues bursting with hyperbole, the rest of the cast failed to get on board. The heroines (Ellie Watson and Emily Orton) were attractive and charismatic, but it was hard to see why they were quite so en- amoured of their husbands (and indeed Bassanio would have been hard put to look less excited when they were added to the mix). All in all, the laughs could be counted on one hand, but in that it sent me cycling home wondering whether I’d rather Shylock actually had cut out the callous Christian’s heart, it is clearly well worth seeing.

**Pulp fiction**

THIS WEEK sees the open- ing of Tomato Pulp, the Corpus fresher’s play written by Stuart Bell. It starts when a lift breaks down for three hours trapping the seven inhabitants. The lead is Heidi (Puffin O’Hanlon) a posh mediocre, B actress who exudes self confidence and just won’t stop talking about her Conrad but you just know that really, deep down she is lonely, and that fame is not fulfilling her. Next is Evelyn (Rhonda Nicholl), the upright middle class house wife who is run- ning late for her tea party. Nina (Madeleine Teahan) and Tyke (Ryan Harper) the seemingly oh so in love couple. Klara (Cathe- rine Scott) the heartbroken poet who goes slightly mad with a tomato for no apparent reason – must be something to do with the title. Finally, Sam (Sam Hindes) the random German guy and Mister X (Peter Was- sion) who the one with a heart condition. The concept is good but fails to make use of the situ- ation or develop the characters, which seem like stereotypes and remain one dimensional throughout.

Given the space restric- tions at the Corpus playroom, the unusually high number of extras (making the cast total seventeen) was unnecessary. For a venue of this size, the number was too high and with virtually a new face for every second scene it made following the plot and working out who the central characters were difficult. This bombardment was too much and a smaller number of actors donning a multitude of costumes would have been better. The act- ing was of variable standard but O’Hanlon was central to keeping the pace going, but

**Smorgasboard ya?**

**Mariana Sanjurjo**

SHOULD YOU wander into the Corpus Playroom on an evening between today and Saturday, you would encounter an assortment of topics and styles that could, in principle, include something for every theatre sensibility out there. Talks shows, student, geopolitics, kings and heirs, dysfunctional sib-lings, creepy eye surgeons, ghosts, and private eyes all have their place in the current edition of Smorgas- bord. There is no doubt that the offer is diverse; whether you find something to your taste is another matter. Presented by The Fletcher Players and Shadwell and billed as Cambridge’s biggest festival of new writing for the stage, the showcase is uneven at best. This has nothing to do with the sparse, black and white set of blocks that get rearranged between scenes, and everything to do with what the material can or cannot accomplish.

The first two of the short plays presented raise a question of relevance. In Talk It Over, by Damian Roberton, a talk show host insists on a line of question- ing that upsets his Hollywood C- list celebrity guest. Directed by Oli Rose, the piece does no more than reproduce, with no sense of irony, a scene that we can get by tuning into entertainment tele- vision any time. Only when we see the characters while they are off the air do we get a glimpse of where the material could have been pushed to, but the text does not venture there. As for Josh Stannick’s Richard I, a reworking of Shakespearean theatre that in Daisy Black’s interpretation comes complete with royal costume, the piece has high ambitions of politi- cal and religious connotations for the present, but falls short of engaging the audience. In addi- tion, because a substantial portion of the play is shaped as a retell- ing, exposition tends to overpower characters. In both cases, it is hard to answer the question we should care about anything that happens to these people.

Second Sight, by McCann’s contribution to the showcase, directed by Luke Gardiner and Imogen Pool, features an odd triangle formed by two siblings and an eye surgeon. The play’s mixture of psychological drama and broad comedy does not feel completely successful, perhaps due to the constraints of the short for- mat. Jamie MacDonald’s math- ematician is interesting if one-dimensional, and somehow seems to escape the tendency towards affection that prevails among the performances in the festival, except for those of The Mysterious Case of Mustafa Hansa. Daisy Black’s text, Making Tracks, which was directed by Damian Roberton, presents a train sta- tion where some potentially mys- terious characters meet. However, the play’s attempt at the fantastic suffers from concealing too much to exposition, all but spelling out how it should be interpreted.

But in this year’s Smorgasboard the best is definitely saved for last. That would be The Mysterious Case of Mustafa Hansa, a send-up of the private detective stories of film noir that uses spot-on vernac- ular to hilarious effect. The text incorporates some play with struc- ture, alternating narration and representation to set the rhythm of the piece. The cohesiveness of the team behind it (Ben Harden and Harry Joll co-write, co-directed and act all parts in the play) shows on stage: they wear the material like a second skin and share good comic chemistry. All this, added to its wilful lightness, results in The Mysterious Case of Mustafa Hansa being worth the price of the Smorgasboard ticket on its own.
Another day, another biopic

Philip Seymour Hoffman's portrayal of socio-pathic author Truman Capote blows Michael Rundle away

OVER BREAKFAST IN November 1959, a New York Times report on the murder of a family in the small-town of Holcomb, Kansas, catches the eye of novelist Truman Capote (Philip Seymour Hoffman). Commissioned by The New Yorker to write a feature about the murders, Capote is moved to Kansas, accompanied by his assistant Harper Lee (Catherine Keener), and begins work interviewing members of the community – and eventually the killers themselves – to discern how the murderers have affected the town. As Capote grows more interested in his research, and as his interviews with the convicted killers become more compelling, his article turns into a book – but as the initial trial and sentencing of the two men expands into a long string of appeals and re-trials, Capote's work is drawn out into a labour of months, and eventually years.

The work Truman Capote eventually produced, the first "non-fiction novel" In Cold Blood, would eventually be received as a masterpiece. The process of writing it would, however, leave Capote a darker, colder and deeply conflicted man, a transformation that is explored with great skill in this delicate and nuanced drama, directed by Bennett Miller.

Best known as the American lead in the low-budget hipster romantic comedy Shooting Fish, screenwriter Dan Futterman tells his story with depth and subtlety. Like Capote's own literary work, Futterman successfully and tensely combines familiar ideas into something much more unique that the sum of its parts, at the heart of which is an absorbing dilemma of life and death: To find fuel for his work, Capote needs to win the trust of the two killers – now on death row. Eventually, he does so – "It's like we grew up in the same house", he says. "And one day he went out the back door while I went out the front." However, Capote also knows that the two men will have to face execution, and as quickly as possible, so that he can finish his book. Unable to complete his work, Capote experiences his own personal disintegration, growing bitter and resentful at every stay of execution of his 'friends', whilst at the same time presenting them with the hollow, opportunistic pretence of trust. The eventual result is a horrifying confrontation with the consequences of his – and their – actions.

Philip Seymour Hoffman, as Capote, is the key to this film's success. His voice – an operatic, delicate, fragile near-soprano – is compelling, but has taken too much attention away from the other aspects of his performance, and throughout Capote, Hoffman demonstrates that he is a brilliantly flexible and intuitive actor. He is able to portray his subject as both the heavy drinking, charismatic socialite Capote was in public, and the guilt-ridden, sensitive sociopath he became in private – and that Capote's onscreen dilemma remains as compelling as it does, means that Hoffman probably deserves the awards and nominations he has so far received.

The supposed revitalisation of 'intelligent' Hollywood cinema is easy to overstate – and it is easy to overstate the importance of 'Capote' as well. For those already sick of awards season biopics and gay romances, the film's tendency to linger too long on the ponderous dilemmas of its central characters, will inevitably be a drawback. Moreover, in a film as dramatic as this, it is surprising that neither the horror of the murders in question, nor the examination of the convicted killers, really have the impact they should. The relative lack of depth in these aspects of the film, mean that the backdrop to Capote's collapse is not as convincing or as interesting as Hoffman's performance requires it to be.

Remembered ultimately as a great but wasted talent, who never finished another novel, Truman Capote still holds a powerful reputation in American literature. This is an enjoyable, nuanced and impressive film that, whilst it will surely reawaken interest in Capote's work, will probably do more to confirm the reputation of its leading actor. It is his excellent central performance, more than anything else, which makes Capote a must-see.

Lots of gloss can't hide that it's dross

Joshua Davis regrets trekking to Cineworld to see Aeon Flux

IN A FILM where the imagination of the designers far outstrips the imagination of the writers, the plot suffers. Visually stunning, in the end this film falls down because of a storyline that is at once overcomplicated, disconnected, conventional and boring.

Charlize Theron is the eponymous character in Aeon Flux, the most powerful agent of an underground rebellion – the Monicans – against the repressive government of Bregna, the only surviving city on Earth after a major war. Flux is one of the most intriguing andbracht of the population of the planet. Set four hundred years in the future, she is assigned to kill the Chairman of the city, Trevor Goodchild (Marton Csokas), who also happened to save the planet from the deadly disease, by her handler (Frances McDormand).

Her mission is driven by the execution of her innocent sister, Una, the only stabilising influence on her life. The story is certainly derivative, bearing traces of The Matrix, Equilibrium and The Island.

The film's convoluted plot really gets everything bogged down. This is made worse as, right from the start, Aeon finds herself in the midst of the action, making it nearly impossible for the audience to take stock of what is happening. No sooner are we introduced to her irritatingly cheerful do-gooder sister than she is killed, making it rather hard to sympathise with her sister's devastation. No time to worry about that though, because she is storming the staunchly defended citadel of the city practically single-handedly. Why Aeon is possessed of superhuman strength, the ability to walk like a scorpion or the aiming powers of a sharpshooter is never explained, except in a passing reference to her 'good DNA'. This is not a world where such trivialities need to have reasons. The action must keep moving, which means that there is another illegal twist coming up to distract you from the inconsistencies.

What makes it worse is that the plot is tis as well as tortuous. The idea that love survives everything, even the cloning process, is simply sickening, and made worse since Aeon's love interest, Chairman Goodchild, is so impressively dull. He spends most of the film running around being generally useless. His only noticeable feature, aside from...
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THE PRESS PACK FOR CROSSING THE BRIDGE: The Sound of Istanbul describes the music as Award-winning director Faith Akin's musical odyssey, taking us on a unique and absorbing journey through Istanbul. And that's about as close to a description as this energetic interesting music doc will allow me to make. Following a near blink and you'll miss it introduction to the city itself with our German narrator (and erstwhile bassist with 'Einstrznende Neubauten') Alex- ander Hache, we are taken deep inside the multicultural, multi-textured musical underground of Turkey's sun-drenched capital.

Following the fortunes of such local bands such as the excellent 'Baba Zula' and contemporary rock rebels 'Duman', it's an unforgettable intimate trip through a musical scene as varied as the many faces of the city.

Close to the beginning of the film two of the elder exponents of this said scene tunefully explain that Istanbul 'is neither east nor west', and that 'we try to be European but are not constrained in our art by these geographical boundaries.' It is this disarmingly open approach to making music, and discussing it, that Akin seems determined, in his own words, 'to capture on his hard drive'. With such obvious genuine interest and dedication to the subject matter by the director and with such soulful involvement from the artists themselves it is difficult not to be taken up in the passion on-screen. And with the untainted honesty of this piece it is ridiculously easy, for 90 minutes, to be transported from the tail end of the cold British winter to somewhere else entirely.

Of course, as a film about music, the standard on show makes a big difference and the quality of it here varies. Akin has laboured to illuminate virtually every aspect of the Turkish scene and this is admirable, but it also leads to a lack of focus on any one style. Indeed, ultimately it is more interesting to engage with the Turkish variations on existing western techniques such as the ridiculously fast Hip-Hop of 'Replicas' and the overbearing Rock and Roll of 'Duman' (both of which, in this region have yet to be watered down by corporate concern), than to stare somewhat passively at the more ethnic stylings of 'The Istanbul Style Breaker,' or 'Seskin Aki'...

When the film, for large sections, turns to these subjects, it seems to lose connection with the audience and we more 'mentally' turn to these subjects, it seems to lose connection with the audience and we more 'mentally' than the phenomenally gifted Hurt's film. From the Belgian character acting to the world's conscience, to theWHY THE WHITEST HANZABEATRICE...BRITISH AUDIENCE WHEN CONCENTRATING ON THE REGIONAL TUNES ARE ARTFORM RATHER THAN EXPRESSION. A BEAUTIFULLY DETAILED CHRONICLE OF A RICH...CULTURE WITH A CONCEPT FOR THE ENTIRE DURATION OF THE TRIP.

You can’t shoot an old dog with new tricks

IN SHOOTING DOGS veteran Brit flick master John Hurt plays a priest who runs a school in Rwanda in the run up to and eventually during the 1994 genocide. Twelve years later, this is still one of the first films produced on the subject, and certainly the most uncom- promising, and there is no better actor to use for such a thing than the phenomenally gifted Hurt. He plays Christopher, who along with other Westerners must decide whether they want to stay in the school they operate to help protect thou- sands of ethnic Tutsis (pursued by murdering bands of Hutus) or flee for their lives. It’s a true story that needed telling and is well told. Predictably, Hurt is incredible. Every word he says and action he does happens with total conviction and clarity but his portrayal still feels a man inundated with dif- ficult moral questions he must face. The supporting cast are a wonderful backdrop, though little more, since this really is Hurt’s film. From the Belgian UN peacekeeper to the Hutus friend who is later found brandishing a blood stained Machete with one of the death squads, they all fill the audi- ence perfectly on the who’s and the whys of Rwanda. To its credit, it holds back on telling the whole, three month story of the genocide and focuses on the characters it introduces us to in the opening scenes throughout. Bravo, what could have easily been a de facto documentary on the matter is instead a heartfelt story of a handful of people involved.

It’s impossible for a film about genocide, particularly one still so poignant and heavy on the world’s conscience, to side with anyone but the vic- tims. As the film progresses, this becomes more and more emphatic. The film’s moral take is heavily intertwined with Christopher’s CHRISTIANITY, which implies at least partially that the two are in- separable.

It was perhaps inevitable that the maiden films on a topical subject such as this would overdo its political undertones a bit and this is perhaps slightly necessary. With films becoming even more political, they seem a highly preferable method of communicating ideas and his- tories. Rwanda was long overdue for its turn and Shooting Dogs is as good as it can be with a right to expect. When it is carried away with its trag- edy it can feel patronising, and a one dimensional message never does a film any good artistically. That said, if films are to be a way of transmitting and articulating opinions and positions then it’s about time an event of such magnitude was given the silver screen treatment and the attention it deserves.
“WHAT ARE you doing this summer?” I’ve been asked this at least twenty times in the past week. Every time I have to hide behind “I’m not sure yet.” I haven’t got an internship lined up, I haven’t planned to go and “find myself” in the Far East or douse up on the milk of human kindness in the third world. I haven’t even planned to get myself a tan on the Côte d’Azur. But this summer is not going to waste for one very simple reason: I live in the UK. This isn’t a jibe at the rest of the globe. This island isn’t some wonderful land where I can earn £1,000 pounds a week building wells and communing with myself, but it does have some damn good festivals that people come a long way to see.

But where do I start? Well the logical thing to do would be to start at the beginning of the summer. Back in late January, planning a festival road trip: logic – unless severely twisted – is the fastest way to limit the whole operation. I’m planning a Fear and Loathing style voyage and the last thing I want to be worrying about is if anything makes sense.

So I’ll start big. The problem this summer is the jewel in the UK’s festival crown is taking a year out. After threats of licence revocation due to ‘excess of capacity’ and last year’s flood-ing, Glastonbury is fallow land for a year. However, 2007 promises to be just as monstrous, fant-tastic and strange as before (i.e. memories of a druid skipping around holding brownies and UV painted madman danc-ing to a strobe light).

Next on the list is Home lands – a massive one day event sched-uled for 27th May that promises to cater for just about all tastes. Set in a chalk bowl, the intrepid raver can damage his vertebral column jumping to drum ’n bass or hard house, go mainstream in the big tent with the likes of the Chemical Brothers (2002) or Groove Armada (2004), or just look sexy hopping around to funky house. It’s all there: just get on a train to Winchester and for £50 your weekend is made. As is many a pub conversation for years to come.

T’up North, on the other hand, Global Gathering pro-vides an insane experience in an abandoned airfield. Stratford- upon-Avon may seem far away to those who live South of the Pennines, but three days of roar-ing bass, inspiring chill-out and 30ft inflatable animals should really make even the most claustrophobic train journey well worth it. The gates open on Friday 28th July and tickets are currently £90 including camping: all you need after that is enough cash to keep your spirits high and to buy the occasional salmonella-in-bun meal.

Another Goliath whose shadow it is well back in in comes in the form of the almighty Creamfields. Moving from Liverpool to the slightly more democratically situated Cheshire, this is dubbed “the friendliest large dance festival around”. Whilst the event’s overriding theme is undoubt-edly dance music – in the vein of house, trance, funky house, drum ’n bass and anything else evidently dance music – in the vein of house, trance, funky house, drum ’n bass and anything else you find in a decent club – the organisers do pride themselves on live acts as well. Prodigy will be playing this August (26th), and again this is an affordable day out at around £55. If you like fast happy music and bouncy happy people in their thousands, get your ass over there – you’ll come back a better person.

Of course everyone needs their downtime, and I intend to have mine at Eastnor Castle. No it’s not a health farm – it’s a bloody nice castle in Herefordshire around which a moat of mostly really relaxed people forms to all relax a bit more.

The theme is definitely chill out (funny that, what with it being called the Big Chill ‘n all) and the beautiful grounds boasting lakes and wood allow you to do just that. It’s almost as if the 60s never ended – alhuh... Although the whole weekend (4th-6th) August is priced alongside the absent Glastonbury at £120, it is, in essence, the sister-festival. Glastonbury lasts a weekend but you need a week to pull yourself back together. The Big Chill lasts a weekend but you need at least two weeks to pull yourself apart again. So forget about long baths with lavender oil. Go to Herefordshire, take a deep breath and say thank you TCS for your excellent advice.

To those of you working in an office this summer, I salute you...from an arena packed with 50,000 intelligent people, all having the time of their lives.

...But make sure to ‘dance your tits off.’ Ed Grouse explains what summer loving is really all about in the UK.

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Music

Get Muddy. Get Sunburned...

The infamous DJ Sunbed

The Chemical Brothers (2002)

Pendulum

IT’S OFFICIAL: Pendulum are the best thing to come from Australia since Rolf Harris’s side project with Men at Work. Eagerly anticipated, deservedly hyped, the infamous Pendulum DJs Anscenic and Speed ripped Fedz apart on Sunday with a set featuring highlights of debut album Hold Your Colour as well as drum ’n bass classics from 1990 to the present day.

The night warmed up with Fedz’s regular DJs Barrington, Concrete, Dynamic and Kye, accompanied by MCs Firealive, Phantom, Navigator and Inja – all blatantly aware of the occasion and responding accordingly.

“We drop bombs” barked MC Firealive – disturbingly fit given that Fedz resembled something of an illicit Middle Eastern arms-trader hideout in temperature as well as venue when Pendulum took to the booth. It certainly wasn’t just drum ’n bass enthusiasts who were there on Sunday. Thanks to promo-tion from John Peel, Mary Anne Hobbs and (significantly) Zane Lowe, Pendulum have really been able to push their music beyond the parameters of the Drum and Bass Arena with an album that undoubtedly falls within the ambit of Intelligent Dance Music (IDM). With their gift for clever production, musical manipulation, and a discernible intimation for catchy riff and melody (or “Choohoo!” as it’s known on the dance floor), they occupy the same sort of public position as Four Tet does in electronica.

This said, the live face of Pendulum puts aside all intellec-tual pretence and just delivers. To compare them to the Prodigy isn’t an exaggeration. Indeed, their tes-tosterone-charged remix of the infamous Voodoo People – whose distinctive riff raised its raving head at various moments through the night – never failed to send the crowd mad. Other album high-light s, such as Tornadosta, Pagan Your Sexuality, and the wistful Hold Your Colour, seemed much more dirty and brutal than on record. So much so that an over-enthusiastic crowd was treated to the presence of a man-mountain security guard in the middle of the dance floor as the festivities threatened to become a little vio-lent.

If £17 sounded a little expen-sive for six shots of vodka, then Pendulum maybe were a little expensive for Fedz. Host night “Warning!” usually takes place once a month in the Junction: the cramped Fedz club and its weedy sound system were obviously a compromise for the Ort zo’s tour ing schedule. But the crowd didn’t seem to care. As the MCs spat, lights cut up the crowd and the whole place dripped with sweat. Faster your seatbelts indeed.

Brian Cantwell

Beth Orton

BETH ORTON is the first properly grown-up gig I’ve ever been to. A concert for adults, and not just adults in silly hats (I cast my mind back to the Bell and Sebastian faithful) but normal looking ones who don’t heckle or pour Stella onto the heads of the unwitting crowd.

Yet whilst I remained in awe of the highly adult audience – some of whom grew very passionate about the cor-rect seating order – and the sudden middle class smugness all round, upon appearance I found it hard to be swayed by Ms Orton herself, her white dress and cowboy boots, her little voice cracking jokes to the audience – “What do you call a cross between a clown and a goat? A silly billy!”

Cue the lights and a shim-mering halo reaches out to the audience as if from behind her. Although Beth in album form does have its benefits (like being able to skip the track dedicated to the feral children of the Isle of White), I suddenly got the point of the live gig.

The Corn Exchange acous-tics are of course ideal, yet I had never fully realised exactly how well they could work for one girl and guitar. She confuses she can only hear the old stuff if she plays some of her new stuff around it, and so the band disappear every couple of songs, and she takes requests.

A dusk descends upon the audience, settled in their cor-rectly numbered seats, married only by the occasional cry (by the same man, in the same slightly disconcerting voice): “We love you Beth!”

“It’s OK,” she says, she likes the quiet. But tonight there’s something wrong about it; for some reason, she “isn’t quite feeling it” “Should I say that?” she adds, and the audience perk up and clap around their mineral water. They were in midst of embracing what was to become a five-song encore when this reviewer decided it was way past her bed time. It’s not that I didn’t enjoy the gig: Beth Orton has an amazingly pure voice, well-suited to the venue, and all her best songs were there. I just guess I’m just not quite grown up enough yet to appreciate quite that much of her.

Vicky Flood

Corn Exchange 26th February 2006

B E T H O R T O N has an amazingly

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Fez Club

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Pendulum

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Corn Exchange
LAST WEDNESDAY, Coldplay’s ‘Speed of Sound’ became the billionth song to be legally streamed from Apple’s iTunes Music Store. Legal music downloading may be commonplace today, but the significance of this achievement should by no means be dismissed, especially in light of the troubled beginnings of online music distribution.

The iTunes Music Store first appeared in the crossfire between the music industry and illegal file-sharing networks. If The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) saw Shawn Fanning’s Napster (and its derivative services) as an unassailable evil needing to be destroyed at all costs, their fears were without doubt exaggerated by the simultaneous popularisation of CD-writers, MP3 players, and broadband internet access. Suddenly everyday consumers could quickly and easily rip any album for free, without making that all-important trip to HMV in search of the expensive version. As a result, RIAA panicked. The result? A widespread attempt to stamp out networks by suing creators and users, whilst branding music fans as criminals in the process. While their arguments are valid, this knee-jerk overreaction ultimately proved both unsuccessful and unfair, giving people the lack of any attractive legal alternatives.

Thank god for Apple. Finally recognising the potential for actually increasing sales through music downloads and the attraction of instant access to music in unprecedented quantities, Apple set their sights on making the first major online music retailer. Although there were legal download stores before iTunes, they were crip- pled by extremely limited choice of songs and draconian restrictions on what the listener could do with their music. However Steve Jobs and co. managed to negotiate landmark deals, with pricing and fairness that the countless competitors following in their lead have failed to replicate. Helped along by an adroit and user-friendly interface and something called ‘iPod’, Apple’s success single-handedly proved that people did not just download songs because they could do it for free: a mainstream legal marketplace was both possible and desirable.

So why is the sale of one billion songs so important? Firstly, it marks a significant milestone in the crossover period between legal and illegal music downloads, illustrating that people are willing to pay when given the option to. It proves that we are not all ‘criminals’: we just want instant music gratification, and a pain free way to find rarities and sample new artists. The colossal dimensions of the online music business today starkly contrast its humble beginnings on Mac. When the deals between Apple and record labels were originally signed, the RIAA (and its international equivalents) did not seem to envisage the medium reaching sales of such astronomical propor- tion. As a result, users got fair prices and relatively generous digital rights, such as being able to copy the music to other computers, or burn multiple CDs. However, now that the industry has proven its worth, it is becoming increasingly likely that these contracts will be renegotiated. The record labels want more money – they won’t hope to restrict the freedom users have in controlling their music files! Recently opened iTunes stores have already hit with such problems. In Japan more popular songs come with premium pricing; the Australian store, on the other hand, did not originally feature any artists signed to Sony BMG due to ongoing pricing disputes.

The crucial problem is that the recording industry refuses to recognise that the main reason illegal file sharing has gone down is because of the availability and fairness of legal online music. The illegal peer-to-peer networks are certainly still there, despite the RIAA’s best efforts, and they are as easy to use as ever. If the major recording labels see the billion milestone as an opportunity to up their profits at the expense of the consumer then they will deservedly see an exile from the legal stores back to the copious illegal alternatives – a turnaround that would surely represent a significant step back in the evolution of the digital music business.

YOU CAN’T fault the basic idea of The Like. Three attractive females with some kind of attitude, wielding guitar, bass and drums is generally a formula as achingly brilliant as it is simple. For some reason, ‘Are You Thinking What I’m Thinking?’ never really excites in the way you would expect. You could put it down to their somewhat privileged roots, as all three are daughters of well placed music industry types, this assuring their accordingly swift rise to prominence. Signed to a major the minute they finished high school, they had a song on a teen movie soundtrack (Dazed) and support slots for utterly-shit-but-massive types Maroon 5 and Phantom Planet before the release of their debut album. This evidently doesn’t happen to most bands. It doesn’t really have much to do with the music either. That’s not to say they need to put their background to criticise them, and I’m only really doing it because I’m jealous and can’t help thinking that maybe if my dad was in charge of A&R at Geffen maybe one of my shifty bands would have got signed. The real problem with The Like is that they never really seem firm about where they are going musically. They don’t know whether they want to be an indie-pop band or shit-kicking rockers, and that indecision leaves them uncomfort- ably stranded. On the one hand, The Like don’t have enough bite to their music to be full on ragg- etts; on the other they seem too pos-faced to write decent pop songs. There are some rea- sonable moments here - debut single ‘June Gloom’ being proba- bly the best - with thumping drums and an angelic verse, but they don’t last, and every- thing tends to resolve itself into a kind of turgid college rock. ‘Are You Thinking What I’m Thinking?’ ultimately lacks the fizzle and energy required to push it beyond the status of just a tolerable listen.

The Like: Resonance

ROOTED IN the harmonic and improvisational language of jazz and folk, Acoustic Triangle embrace more ambi- tious compositional forms and wide-ranging, natural soundscapes. Resonance is their third album (the second with the current line-up), recorded as part of a tour of the inspiring, if challenging acoustic spaces of British churches and cathedrals. Cressell’s warm, clean tone (a sign of his dual classical/jazz pedigree), Garland’s swooping, gill-edged threads of melody, and pianist-of-the- moment Simcock’s sparkling yet sensitive dexterity deflect the dangerously generous acoustics of the location. The musical material is equally well-judged, deploying clear textures and a harmonic language that, while avoiding banality, is rarely densely chromatic.

Despite the specific demands of the performance space, the album never risks lapsing into ultra-spacious mood-music. The arrangement of Allegri’s Missere Mei avoids plastering the original melody, as a cheap façade, onto a standard swing-plus-soupy-jazz-harmon- ogy formula, but rather demon- strates a respect for mood, texture and form within a sub- tile modernisation. Pandero, one of Simcock’s originals, retains an unfussy Latin rhythm at its heart, with fleeting moments of unusual syncopation or harmonic diversion. Kenny Wheeler’s ‘Everyone’s Song But My Own’, seems already suited to the group’s collective voice, yet Cressell’s delicate, scanner- ing introduction, and the elu- sive mixture of harmonic styles in the piano-sax dialogue of the coda, gently impair the trio’s interpretation onto the music.

Those who prize improvi- sational wizardry might com- plain that, as a recording of a live performance, there is a lack of radical, in-the-moment experimentation. There is cer- tainly a sense that the spontane- ity is channelled by somewhat restrictive musical and archi- tectural parameters. However, the group’s invention and acute musicianship express creativity through both the prepared and unprepared elements of the per- formance. The treacherous path between classical and jazz ele- ments is, somewhat unusually, navigated to great effect.

LIFE IS full of surprises. Armed with a swathe of cli- matic insults, I happened to look through the Fall Out Boy press release. It seems the band are- and I quote- ‘darkly comical’. Now it all makes sense. Think about it: nobody could seriously put their name to industrial strength bulldogs like the Rakes. If, you know how we, the enlightened few who get the joke, can chuckle at the expense of all those black- hooded kids who will buy this now and then sensibly dispose of it when they finally get a friend / girlfriend / job / house / baby / like. This is one of the more highly evolved section of the population once mocked the men who thought Spinal Tap were a genuinely kick- ass rock band. So a round of applause please for Fall Out Boy. Unless, of course, they are just yet another shit emo band, in which case, this is just another shit song by one.

John Mersey

RICHARD HAWLEY, front- man of Pulp, has been a jazzy-tinged guitar virtuoso with all-round Sheffield Indie scenester since before the Arctic Monkeys could read and write, but his solo career is a relatively recent development. This may seem somewhat strange, given that influences Scott Walker, Roy Orbison, Sinatra and Johnny Cash - whose ‘Long Black Veil’ he covers on the B-side of the single - are as old as the hills. But anything that lacks in original- ity it makes up for by being a cracking little pop song, with country guitars and pretty melodies topped off by Hawley’s deep, crooner voice. There’s nothing essentially wrong with a bit of a croon, and it’s certainly a refresh- ing change from the pain- fully unimaginative London Indie bands still clogging up the pages of the NME (that music seems to me, to be a lack of power - on principle - to the Northern musical misfit, and to Richard Hawley, whose niche on the Radio 2 playlist awaits.

John Mersey
**Fashion**

**Statement**

‘THE SUN has got his hat on’—well, in the fashion world at least. With throngs of models sent down the catwalks squeezed into bikinis, the rest of us are still stuffing ourselves with the last of the mince pies—Fashion is always ahead of her time.

Whilst London Fashion Week smugly predicts the must-have items that we will be gawping for come September, we are still awaiting the belated appearance of Spring. The High Street has huffed, puffed and finally caught up, deciding that, in the immortal words of Nelly, ‘It’s getting hot in here’. Despite the fact the bitter Cambridge wind still snags angrily at our heels, it is never too early to start thinking about shedding your winter skin.

Say goodbye to jumpers, thick woolly tights, and hello to shorts, dresses, skirts, and, showing a bit of leg. Replace your knee-highs with some funky ankle boots. The thought of stripping off after months of concealment beneath cosy, all-concealing layers will bring terror to many a soul, but barring all needn’t be a revelation of gorilla-esque proportions. The most important thing is to banish all hair; it is, alas, no longer the Summer of Love, nor are we German: nobody wants to see those wintery werewolf legs you’ve been cultivating. Be sure to exfoliate and moisturise, and lose that aperting grey shade your legs have acquired over recent months. Take the risk with fake tan if you like, but beware becoming too tan-happy: your legs will resemble two cheesy Wotsits in relation to your otherwise rosy complexion.

Once your legs are buffed and raring to go, the rest is easy. Fashion’s main inspirations this season have been the exotic; Hawaii, Japan, India. So the clothes are made for showing some skin, and the shops are full of shorts, mini-dresses, floaty tops and legs’ best friend, the mini-skirt. Choose a mini with funky and alternative detail so that you don’t look like an extra from Hollyoaks. Beads, from a selection at Accessorise & Mikey

*Lauren Smith*
### Film

- **Trinity Films Society**
  - **Manhattan**
  - **Saturday March 4**
  - **8.30pm, Winstanley Lecture Theatre, Trinity College**
  - **Entry free.**
  
- **Double Bill: An Andalusian Dog and Metropolis**
  - **Saturday March 4**
  - **8.30pm, Winstanley Lecture Theatre, Trinity College**
  - **Entry free.**
  
- **With live piano accompaniment by James Sherlock, Trinity’s Senior Organ Scholar**

### Theatre

- **Greek by Steven Berkoff**
  - **Wednesday 1st - Saturday 4th March**
  - **ADC Theatre**
  - **11pm**
  - **£4/£3**

- **Catz Freshers’ Play**
  - ‘Habeas Corpus’ by the lovely Alan Bennett
  - **The Octagon, St Chad’s**
  - **7.30pm**
  - **Thursday 2 March - Saturday 4 March**

- **CUSU Women’s Union presents**
  - **Vagina Monologues by Eve Ensler**
  - **Sunday 5 - Monday 6 March**
  - **The Octagon, St Chad’s**

- **Beckett Shorts**
  - **One night stand**
  - **Tuesday 7th March**
  - **ADC 11pm**
  - **£4/£3**

- **4:48 Psycosis**
  - **By Sarah Kane**
  - **Tuesday 7th - Saturday 11th March**
  - **Homerton Auditorium**
  - **7.30 pm**
  - **£4**

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### Music & Ents

- **Cambridge University Brass Band annual concert**
  - **Friday 3rd March, 7.30pm**
  - **Wesley Methodist Church, King St.**
  - **Tickets £5/£4 with proceeds going to RAG.**

- **SCA Battle of the Bands Final**
  - **Featuring: Cadenza**
  - **Clare Cellars**
  - **Saturday 4th March, 9pm**
  - **£4 - proceeds to charity**

- **University of Cambridge Philharmonia presents: Mozart Symphony no. 40, Haydn D major Cello concerto.**
  - **Thursday March 9th, West Road Concert Hall, 8pm. tickets@ucpo.org.uk**

### Societies

- **Cambridge University Thai Society**
  - **Thai Night 2006**
  - **T aste, View and Feel authentically Thai in a friendly atmosphere**
  - **Saturday 4 March, 6.30pm**
  - **Rank Room, Wesley House, Jesus Lane**
  - **Ticket prices: £13 (non-alcoholic), £18 (with two cans of Singha beer). Free admission for children under 5.**
  - **Tickets: thainight2006@yahoo.co.th**

- **Interested in earning a bit of extra cash to fund your May Week? Want to enjoy an event without forking out for a ticket?!**

- **Come and work at Emma June Event on Sunday 18th June!! For information on the work and pay packages checkout our website www.emmaevent.com and click on the ‘jobs’ link**
Sport

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Richard Bramble, Head of Recruitment

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Gymnastics

Marianne Chilvers

LAST WEDNESDAY a condensed version of the Cambridge women’s gymnastic team, took to floor, vault and beam once again in Birmingham. The women fought strongly in the University friendly competition, after their confidence boost of winning the women’s Varsity victory over Oxford 10 days earlier. Although the team of three was greatly out numbered by other University teams, the women proved Cambridge University gymnastics meant business, with each competitor finishing in the top 20, and Claire Nixon (Homerton) performed exceptionally well on all three pieces, securing fourth position overall... Marianne Chilvers (Homerton) started the competition on the beam. After falling off on her mount in the Varsity Competition 10 days earlier, Chilvers flew onto the beam in Birmingham with ease. Nixon competing second on beam, had an early fall and became nervous, but completed her routine with style and elegance.

The Eagles were beaten 2-1 in a close-fought match.

The Cambridge women’s football Blues came away worthy 3-2 winners last Saturday in a varsity match that went right through the first half. Oxford striker Mouche Pearce capitalised on the Blues’ momentary lapse in concentration to pull the scores level going into half-time. With everything to play for, the second half remained a very open game with numerous chances falling to each team. The Oxford goalkeeper was called upon to make a crucial save as Cambridge’s Rachael Watson curled a free-kick towards the goal. Alas, victory was not to be as Oxford’s Eijio Oviri struck with less than 10 minutes remaining to seal Oxford’s victory.

From the start of the Blues game, the two sides looked evenly matched: tensions were high, the opposing protagonists’ crowds were hyped, and, Oxford, buoyed by a 2-1 win to their second team in the first half, soaked up the early Cambridge pressure. It was not long however before Cambridge asserted their authority on the game. A pulverising midfield of Clare Rustad and Emma Hagen combined well with hardworking wingers Hilary Soderland and Lisa Grimes to set up several attacking opportunities. It was on set pieces that Cambridge had a clear upperhand. Their first corner, belted in by Canadian international Rustad was met perfectly by Hagen, who crashed through a heaving penalty area to hammer in a header from point blank range to put Cambridge 1-0 up. The celebrations were passionate but dramatically short-lived. Seconds after the restart Hagen, chasing back, was adjudged to have brought down an Oxford striker inside the area and, despite protests, the decision stood. Geogeneity Acos, a Cambridge penalty saviour on previous occasions, showed lightning reactions to push the ball onto the crossbar. With Acons floored though, the Oxford striker Courtney Hostetler was quick to react. Tucking away the rebound it was 1-1.

It was the pace of the Oxford forwards along with the vision and dribbling of Oxford Varsity veteran Ann Harvey that threatened to cause problems for Cambridge throughout, but the solid pairing of Claire Hollingworth and Kate Rustad calmly wrapped up a superb hat-trick of set pieces with a curling free kick just under the bar, which easily eluded the Oxford keeper and emphatically killed off the Dark Blues with moments to spare.

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As the final whistle went, Cambridge bagged their 14th victory in 17 years with an impressive performance at Merton Road.
Ospreys celebrate new clubhouse

Karen Pearce and Eimear Neeson present the trophy

Sarah Walker

LAST WEDNESDAY saw junior and senior members of the Ospreys committee gathering, along with invited guests, to celebrate the opening of the Vice-Chancellor Alison Richard of the new Osprey’s clubhouse on Jesus Lane. Despite having been in existence for more than twenty years, unlike their male counterparts, the Hawks, Cambridge’s premier sportswomen have never had a permanent base as a society.

The acquisition of their current premises represents the culmination of many years of tireless work by both the committee and the Osprey’s membership as a whole in promoting the profile and achievements of women’s sport within the university, and signifies a large step towards parity with their male counterparts, the Hawks, Cambridge’s premier sportsmen who have never had a permanent base as a society.

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Who are Oxford League?

C A M B R I D G E DESTROYED Oxford, taking home the Rugby League trophy in a record-breaking 44-0 victory. The Oxford team started on the defence, and never really broke back into the game, buckling both morally and physically under the strength of a formidable opposition.

Despite making a few close breaks in the first half, Oxford tired quickly under the persistent pressure of the fast and agile attack, subbing almost every time they took possession for a more than viable second. They had been out classed on all fronts; twenty minutes in Cambridge had already won the psychological victory. Thus, for the entire middle stretch of the game Oxford grit their teeth and threw all their energy into defence, rarely pulling past the mid-way line. Tries from Shearman, Drysdale, Gohu and Gluck rolled in, leaving the score a very formidable 22-0 at half time.

At the start of the second half Oxford where visibly reduced. A few nasty injuries derailed the otherwise unflagging Cambridge team. Instead of lowering play and cruising to a comfortable finish, Cambridge kept up a spirited performance. If anything they increased in energy and intensity, giving a few exceptional displays of athleticism and agility. The scored mounted steadily up, thanks to a further try from Drysdale, and subsequent efforts Bulley, Quarterley and Pitchford. A series for four show piece conversions from Ali Robertson punctuated the teams’ building confidence. In the ending minutes Oxford pulled a few dramatic but half hearted last ditch attempts, but where blocked all too easily.

Cambridge's 7th Annual Varsity Match in Specatular Style

The race took place as part of the Gourick spring series in Crowthorne wood in Berkshire, a familiar stomping ground for the Oxford riders who only travelled an hour from home to race. Pre-riding of the course revealed a twisty, technical course with several short, sharp descents and many slippery tree roots to derail the unwary. After expressing disappointment that not even the BBC had come to broadcast such a significant race, but with a team of three dedicated supporters, the Cambridge team lined up next to Oxford for the mass start. It was immediately clear that if nothing else that Cambridge had certainly outnumbered them in rather fetching “Colgate-green” race kit.

A fast paced start saw Oxford’s race captain and last year’s winner Lloyd Pallett leading alongside Andrew Cockburn and Si Bereton from Cambridge. An early attempt to break away by Lloyd was quickly chased by Andrew and Si as they caught the back end of the previous race category and began working their way through the field. A combination of heavy rainfall and over 200 riders quickly turned the course into a quagmire, making the technically demanding course resemble the Battle of the Somme in places. Cambridge riders Chris Pedder and Soren Brage followed Lloyd closely through the first two laps of the four lap race until he was unlucky to crash heavily on the third lap.

All riders then held position resulting in a final 1,2,3,4 for Cambridge, their strongest victory for several years in a sport where they have dominated since 2002. Andrew Cockburn, in his 5th and final Varsity race, won in a time of 1 hour 42 minutes in his usual style, 9 minutes ahead of second placed Si Bereton and an amazing 19 minutes ahead of the first Oxford rider. Chris Pedder clinched third position meaning that he, Andrew and Si have all fulfilled the first of two qualifying requirements for a half blue.

This was another great result for Cambridge, surely testament to regular training and the cycling club weekend trips away. The team are now preparing for their next Mud, Wet and Gears

Mark Holt

LAST SUNDAY saw the University Mountain Bike Race Team win their 7th Annual Varsity match in spectacular style.

A fast paced start saw Oxford’s race captain and last year’s winner Lloyd Pallett leading alongside Andrew Cockburn and Si Bereton from Cambridge. An early attempt to break away by Lloyd was quickly chased by Andrew and Si as they caught the back end of the previous race category and began working their way through the field. A combination of heavy rainfall and over 200 riders quickly turned the course into a quagmire, making the technically demanding course resemble the Battle of the Somme in places. Cambridge riders Chris Pedder and Soren Brage followed Lloyd closely through the first two laps of the four lap race until he was unlucky to crash heavily on the third lap.

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Robert Shaw

THIS YEAR has seen the loss of several members of last year’s indomitable Men’s and Women’s Blues teams that remained undefeated all last season; both winning varsity (the men by the biggest ever margin), and their respective BUSA leagues and finals. Unsurprisingly, this year has presented something more of a challenge to Cambridge’s finest swordsmen. When one considers that Cambridge still lacks a coach and has had little in the way of funds in order to improve their equipment (in comparison to Oxford who had recently received a £1 million donation), one may understand how hard Cambridge teams had to work this year. As four teams travelled down to Oxford, both the men’s and women’s blues went into their matches having won once and lost once against Oxford already this season in the BUSA league.

The afternoon saw the 305th varsity match open with the Women’s Blues and Men’s Seconds. The Men’s Seconds fought a courageous battle against an only once defeated Oxford seconds team. The foil team was beaten, although definitely improved on last year’s performance. Captain Stuart Clark then led by example in the sabre match, fighting well in all 3 fights along with his team-mate Chris Jones. This left the epee team with a difficult but possible target. However, Oxford were just too strong and took the match 135 - 90.

In the meantime, the Women’s Blues match was a very closely fought affair. The foil team, under the leadership of captain Anna Robinson, fought like lions against an Oxford team strengthened by the arrival of two international fencers, to lose by a narrow margin. The sabre match followed, which Cambridge also lost, leaving Cambridge to fight back in the epee, traditionally Oxford’s strength. Despite a heroic effort by freshers and international fencer Mary Cohen, the final score of the match ended 119-115 to Oxford. Incidentally, owing to problems with the equipment provided by hosts Oxford, they were able to go 4-0 up controversially. In a spectacular display of sportsmanship, Oxford decided to keep this unfairly gained advantage, which ended up the winning margin.

Sadly, Oxford added this match to their tally of victories of the day, taking the match 90-52. This left the Men’s Blues match as the only thing stopping an Oxford rout of the Cambridge side. To compound the loss of many talented fencers in the Cambridge side, Oxford gained no less than four junior GBR internationals, of which one was the senior national foil champion. The light blue team of Rob Shaw, Dom O’Mahony and Ewan Galloway drew first blood in the foil match, but found themselves quickly behind an internationally experienced Oxford side. From this moment on till the very end, Cambridge were never in the lead. Oxford took the match 45-21, but not before O’Mahony taught their best fencer a lesson, 7-5 in the last fight.

The foil was followed by the sabre. The team of Danny Ryan (captain), Robin Allen and Nick Rumney needed to pull off a big victory in order to give the light blues a chance to win. They got off to a shaky start leading only 30-28 going into the last three fights, however these last three fights were a spectacular tour de force, with Danny closing out the match 45-32.

This left the light blues trailing by 11 hits, going into the epee match. The beginning of the match saw the fight see-saw between Oxford and Cambridge, as TG greensides and Andy Culling and Rob Shaw struggled to pull away from Oxford. What followed, however, in the next six fights was nothing short of ideal. All three of the Cambridge fencers hit form virtually simultaneously, taking hits off of the weaker Oxford fencers and keeping the stronger ones at bay. The penultimate two fights saw strong performances by Shaw and Culling leaving Greensides needing two more hits to put Cambridge back in the lead. The first few hits saw equal exchanges, until suddenly Cambridge pulled ahead and Oxford tactics had to change. As the atmosphere grew tenser and tenser, the crowd fell into a deathly silence, which was broken by a sudden cacophony whenever a hit was scored. With the overall score level, 44-33 in this match, the pressure grew too much for the Oxford captain, and as he stumbled the final hit came from the Cambridge side which brought forth a thunderous cheer from the Cambridge side, as we won 111-110.

There are few things sweeter than watching Oxford faces drop as they see their captain crumble and watch as Cambridge’s 6-year run of victories is extended to seven. To single anyone out would be wrong, each member of the team fenced out of his skin to deliver this epic and meaningful victory. Everyone did what was asked of them, and more, and when one finds themselves in a match as close as this, every hit, every inch, counts. Our attention now turns to making sure we maintain the BUSA trophy for the 6th consecutive year.