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Cambridge Alumni Magazine
Issue 57 Easter 2009

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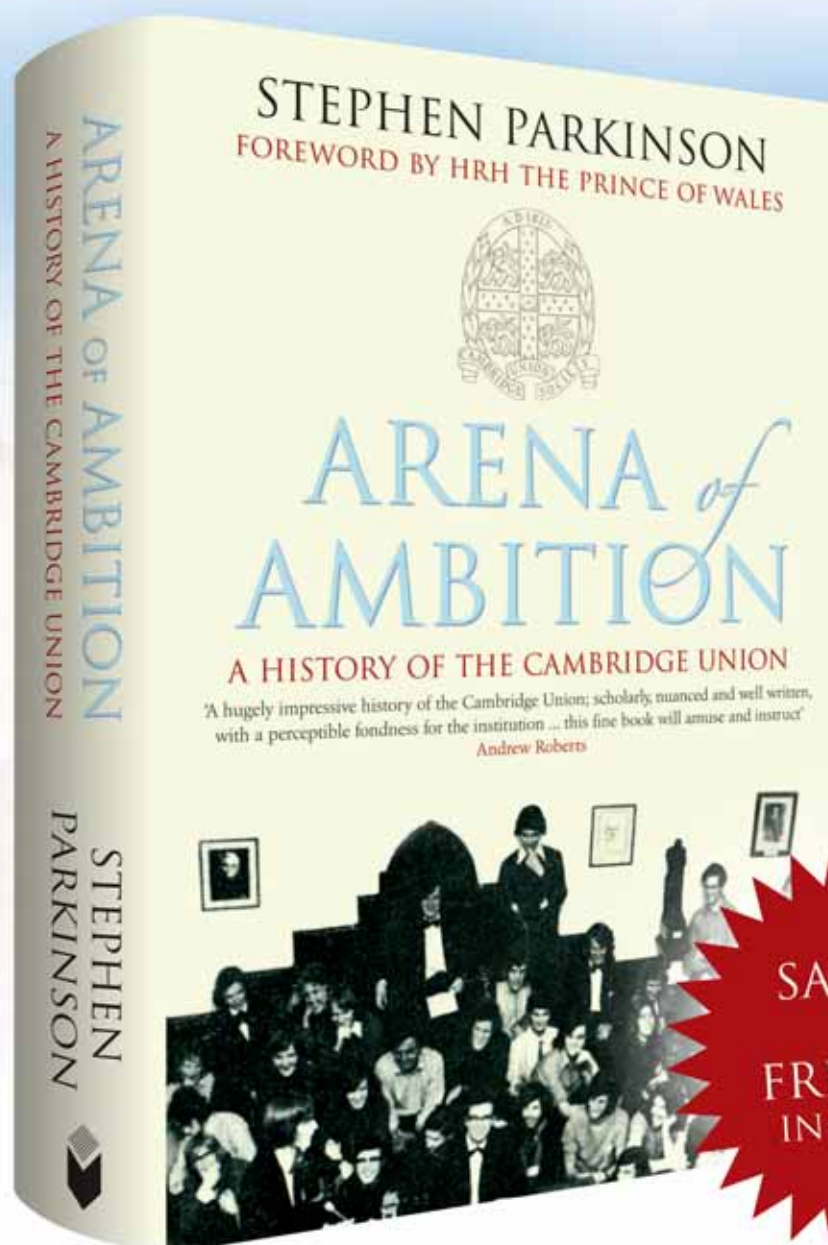
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CAM

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CAM 57

CAM
Cambridge Alumni Magazine
Issue 57
Easter Term
2009

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CAM is published three times a year. The opinions expressed in its columns are those of the writers concerned and not necessarily those of the University of Cambridge.

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Michael Bywater and Emma Hutton looking out of the window of G2, New Court, Corpus (My room, your room on p12)
Photograph by David Yeo.

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What is it like to become a research student at Cambridge?

A new look for CAM

Welcome to the Easter edition of CAM – and to a new design, which incorporates much that you will recognise, such as Don's Diary and big features, and new regulars such as our student column, The Best, and My Room, Your Room.

Many of you have written to say that you'd like to see more of the 'ordinary' graduate in the pages of CAM, so I hope you'll enjoy another of our regular features, History of a Friendship. If you'd like to take part, do get in touch. A similar number have requested a permanent (and prominent) letters page – as you can see, opposite, I was delighted to oblige.

One of the greatest pleasures of editing CAM is getting to speak to so many fellow alumni. Copies of CAM are sent all over the world; our youngest reader is 21, our oldest 102, yet when I meet fellow graduates I am always reminded of what we share. For me, this is a way, not of seeing the world, but of understanding it: an intellectual lens, if you like. There's the quickness, of course, but also a fierce curiosity, a willingness to be challenged, an appreciation of the informed and the expert. It is the essence of a Cambridge education – and something I hope is reflected in this issue of CAM.

Lastly, I hope you'll find this new format will survive the rigours of your briefcase or bag, and that its layout is easier to read. But most of all I hope you'll find CAM to be entertaining, informative and perhaps, just occasionally, infuriating. Whichever it is, we look forward to reading – and publishing – your letters.

Mira Katbamna

(Caius 1995)



“One of the entries that gave me most pleasure was very short from an elderly alumnus saying: ‘It’s been a quiet year. Had a new hip fitted in September.’”

Crossword crazy

Fantastic that CAM now carries a prize crossword – I hope this is a permanent fixture. Doubly fantastic to kick off with a puzzle from Schadenfreude – what a coup! Very much looking forward to the next issue.

Neil Talbott
(Trinity 1999)

What a splendid surprise! CAM with a crossword! And not any old crossword, but a genuine Schadenfreude crossword. I hope it will be the first of many. I've always enjoyed Schadenfreude puzzles (Listener, Crossword Club and elsewhere) and I am sure that lots of crossword fans among CAM readers will be as pleased as I am.

Bob Tyler
(Jesus 1952)

A tale of ordinary folk

David Hepper's [Letters, CAM 56] declaration that the arrival of CAM prompted "mixed feelings of excitement and inadequacy" and his request that CAM might "devote a small corner to those who, like me, are unlikely to move the world, let alone shake it" resulted in a flurry of letters.

I loved the second letter [from David Hepper] on the letters page of edition 56. While I also find it interesting to read about the achievements of Cambridge alumni and dons, it's possible to have too much of a good thing.

I have the same experience with the old pupils' publication from my public school. One of the entries in it that gave me most pleasure, among all the screeds from recent pupils who had done this and gone there and were running merchant banks in Hong Kong and who knows what, was a very short entry from an elderly alumnus saying: "It's been a quiet year. Had a new hip fitted in September."

Kersti Wagstaff
(Newnham 1980)

I share David Hepper's [Letters, CAM 56] feelings when reading CAM, but must add another: disappointment that there is little or no mention of climate change and peak oil. David Mackay, 'Solving the UK's energy problems' is a start, but may I request much more on these issues and perhaps a lively debate in the letters page as to the pros and cons of various solutions suggested?

As a contribution to this debate, may I ask what are the carbon footprints of the Colleges and University buildings and what steps, if any, are those who manage them taking to reduce these figures?

Don's Diary

Professor Nicola Clayton specialises in comparative cognition – the interface between animal behaviour, experimental psychology and neuroscience – at the Department of Experimental Psychology.

I hope this deliberately provocative question will produce some constructive answers and lively debate about what I believe to be the most urgent environmental challenges that we face today.

John Tomblin
(*Fitzwilliam 1961*)

A Commanding Officer writes

It was with great delight, together with much surprise, that I read the story of the removal of the Maori flagpole from HMS Excellent to the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

My last appointment in the Royal Navy was as the Commanding Officer of HMS Excellent and I remember the flagpole – or totem pole as we called it – very well. Nobody quite knew what to do with it, but I managed to fend off those who wished it to be ‘got rid of’ and I am exceedingly glad I did!

It was in fact very well looked after (it didn't really ‘languish’ as you suggest) and although somewhat out of place in a naval establishment it added to the extraordinary history of Whale Island on which HMS Excellent stands.

I am delighted that a proper home has been found for this wonderful carving and I look forward to seeing it in its new environment on my next visit to Cambridge.

Commodore Roger Parker
Royal Navy (Retired)
(*Trinity 1963*)

I suppose you could say that my Cambridge life is split into two parts. As Professor of Comparative Cognition in the Department of Experimental Psychology, I run a fairly large research group investigating the development and evolution of intelligence, particularly in birds. But when I'm not in the lab, I'm in the studio, practising or performing salsa and Argentine tango, as well as taking weekly jazz classes and a bit of ballet. And this term, as a result of collaboration with the Rambert Dance Company, the two sides of my life have come together.

For the last few years, my team have been pioneering new procedures for the experimental study of episodic memory and future-planning in non-linguistic animals and pre-verbal children.

This work has been important for our understanding of animal cognition because it challenges the commonly held assumption that only humans reminisce about the past and plan for the future. But it also has important implications for human memory and cognition, and how and when these abilities develop in young children.

Together with my husband, Dr Nathan Emery, I have been developing a theory that intelligence evolved independently in apes and in corvids (members of the crow family, which includes jays, rooks and ravens). Our current research examines how these birds perform similar cognitive operations to apes – despite their much smaller brains and strikingly different neuroarchitecture. I love the creativity and curiosity involved in studying cognition, particularly in birds whose minds and brains may be so different from our own, coupled with the challenge of finding ways to tap into their intelligence in the absence of language.

My fascination with birds developed at an early age: ever since childhood I have been intrigued by how their minds work and why they engage in such enchanting and elaborate displays. But this term, my admiration for the birds has led me in a very different direction.

In addition to my University and College responsibilities I am working with the Rambert Dance Company on a ballet, called *Comedy of Change*, to mark the bicentennial of Darwin's birth and the 150th anniversary of the publication of *On the Origin of Species*. It is a collaborative project that combines my interests in birds, evolution and cognition with a passion and appreciation of dance. Working with Mark Baldwin, the artistic director of the Rambert, who happens to share my passion for birds and dance

(not to mention shoes and sports cars) has been tremendously rewarding. It is a huge honour and pleasure to be part of his exciting project.

“Darwin and dance?” I hear you say. But there is a connection: and it all comes back to the birds, with their vivid colours and speedy, flashy movements. Steven Pinker referred to the songbirds as “Charlie Parker with feathers” but the blue manakin of Argentina (*Chiroxiphia caudata*) goes one better, with performances to rival Fred Astaire and Rudolf Nureyev!

The male blue manakins are reported to spend about 90% of their time dancing: in fact, they dance for nine months each year, spending a good eight years perfecting their dancing techniques by learning from the principal. As only top-notch dancers get to mate, they illustrate perfectly Darwinian principles of ‘survival of the fittest’ (although ironically this was not a term coined by Darwin himself, but by the psychologist and philosopher Herbert Spencer). Often this trait is not directly beneficial to survival but driven simply by the female's whim, for the simple sexiness of her beau and/or for his good quality genes, a special form of natural selection that Darwin called ‘sexual selection’.

At any rate, for me, this is an opportunity of a lifetime: for who would have thought I would have the chance to combine my scientific interests in evolution and cognition with my love of dance. And watching the birds triggers my passion for both. I find many similarities between science and dance: there's an elegance about the two, which comes from dedication, discipline, determination, and perseverance.

All the while I am thinking of birds and dance and science, however, Cambridge retains its hold on my time. As Graduate Tutor at Clare College I am busy supporting and nurturing graduate students, helping them to negotiate the rocky roads of research, and to develop their academic research skills and scholarship in an environment where they can flourish and which they can genuinely call ‘home’ during their time at Cambridge. And then, of course, there is the next set of lectures to prepare – as the curtain goes up at Sadler's Wells, or on the Downing Site, the show must go on!

Comedy of Change, 3–7 November 2009, Sadler's Wells. Visit www.sadlerswells.com for more information and tickets.

We are always delighted to receive your letters and emails. Email CAM at alumni@foundation.cam.ac.uk or write to us at CAM, Cambridge Alumni Relations Office, 1 Quayside, Bridge Street, Cambridge, CB5 8AB. Please mark your letter ‘For Publication’. Letters may be edited for length.

UPDATE EASTER TERM



Darrian Gilie

The Great St Mary's bells at the foundry in Loughborough

800th ANNIVERSARY

Great St Mary's is ringing the changes

A new set of 12 bells has been cast at Taylors, Eayre and Smith in Loughborough for the University Church, Great St Mary's, to mark the 800th anniversary – and to preserve their signature chime. The new bells are a gift from University benefactor Dr Dill Faulkes.

In 1793, the Reverend Dr Joseph Jowett used five of the bells to compose the 'Cambridge Chimes', which were later copied for Big Ben and renamed the 'Westminster Chimes'. Although the five bells on which the chimes were written will still be used to ring out the famous motif, the full set has become so worn that they are to be withdrawn from general use.

Great St Mary's has the only peal of 12 bells in the Ely Diocese and the full set is

in almost constant service. As all students resident in the vicinity know, they are used up to three times on Sundays for services and University Sermons; on Monday, Tuesday and Friday nights for practice and teaching sessions and on Saturdays for weddings. As a result, during the last 300 years, they have had to be recast, retuned, replaced and even welded back together. Structural problems, including the sway of the church tower, have also made ringing them difficult. Happily, work to install the new bells is scheduled to finish in June.

Reverend Canon John Binns, vicar of Great St Mary's, is confidently predicting they will cheer the hearts of campanologists. "It will be a peal of bells of which the church, University and city can be justly proud," he said.

EVENTS

CRASSH conference questions the state of the humanities

The big questions about the changing role and significance of the humanities will be debated in July at the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH).

This major international conference on the role of the humanities will see Onora O'Neill (President of the British Academy), Martin Rees (President of the Royal Society), Stefan Collini, Quentin Skinner, Mary Beard and Peter Hennessy examining the role of the arts and revisiting the Two Cultures controversy first sparked by CP Snow and FR Leavis in 1959.

Changing the Humanities/The Humanities Changing, 15–18 July 2009. For more information, visit www.crassh.cam.ac.uk



Professor Alison Richard

VICE-CHANCELLOR

Wanted: a first-class candidate

The search is on to find a successor for the current Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alison Richard.

It will be a hard act to follow. Professor Richard, the first woman to hold the post of Vice-Chancellor full time, was headhunted from Yale, where she held the Franklin Muzzy Crosby chair of the Human Environment before being appointed Provost of Yale.

At Cambridge, Professor Richard has launched an ambitious fundraising campaign to secure the University's future, and developed an undergraduate bursary scheme that will ensure Cambridge can continue to recruit the best and brightest, whatever their backgrounds. Professor Richard was appointed for a seven-year term, the maximum time allowed under the University's Statutes and Ordinances, and will step down in September 2010.

Mathmos officially smartest

The 800th Quiz – like University Challenge, but much, much harder – concluded in a thrilling finale hosted by Clive Anderson, pitting the dons of History against those of the winners, Pure Maths and Mathematical Statistics. We daren't ask what this says about the Two Cultures.

New Cambridge Review

Supported by the 800th Anniversary Fund, the New Cambridge Review aims to provide a platform for new and established writers in the University and bring Cambridge into the wider literary world. The first issue, to be published in October, will feature writing from Simon Schama, JH Prynne and Rebecca Stott.

Launch of POLIS

The Department of Politics and the Centre of International Studies are combining forces to form a new Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS), uniting their much-respected undergraduate and graduate programmes. New initiatives include the creation of a Centre of Governance and Human Rights, under the direction of the David and Elaine Potter lecturer.

EVENTS

A festival to stimulate the mind

Whether you're keen to see Dr David Starkey talk Tudors, hear Dame Gillian Beer and Professor Rosamund McKitterick ask where ideas come from, or attend a children's workshop with Michael Morpurgo and Patrick Ness, there's something for the life of every mind at the University's Festival of Ideas.

Now in its second year, the Festival, which runs from 21 October to 1 November, celebrates the arts, humanities and social sciences, opening department doors to students, alumni and the public. Over 100 events, including debates, talks and lectures (most of which are free) take place in University lecture

halls, museums, art galleries and other venues around the town. Highlights include Cambridge's finest economists looking into the recessionary crystal ball, an inquisition into the history of glamour and the debate 'Becoming Barbie' which promises to investigate the pros – as well as the cons – of female stereotypes. But the biggest day of the Festival promises to be Family Day (24 October) when intellectuals of all ages will be invited to take part in events across Cambridge that organisers hope will stimulate, spark ideas and surprise.

For more information, visit www.cambridgefestivalofideas.org.



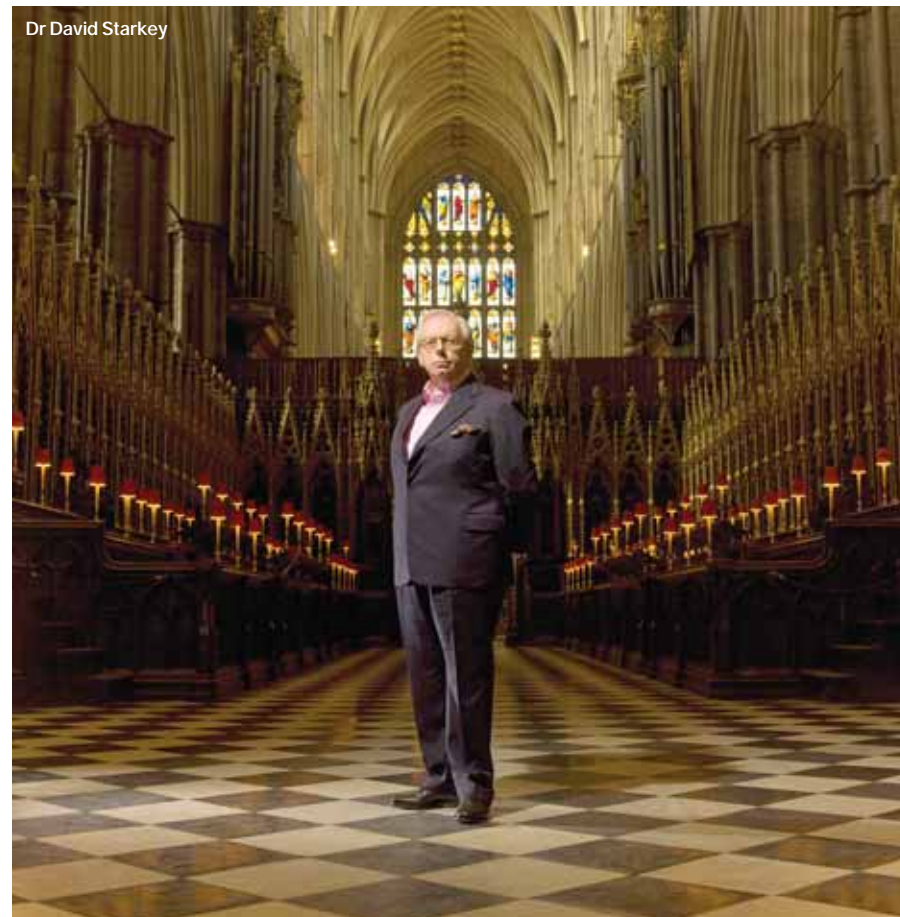
CAREERS SERVICE
Class of 2009 ask alumni for their support

The last weeks in Cambridge are a blur of exams, hangovers and, eventually, a visit to the Careers Service (or, before 1985, the Appointments Board). Haven't got a clue? Never fear: the Stuart House team of experts – along with banks of information on different sectors, hundreds of vacancies and access to Gradlink – will see you right.

Sadly, being without a clue is not an option for the class of 2009. Gordon Chesterman, director of the Careers Service, says Stuart House is inundated. "In Michaelmas Term over 2000 students visited us in just one week and 11,000 alumni have registered on our website." Chesterman points out that tapping into the alumni network is key. "It isn't going to be easy for this year's cohort so if you are willing to become a GradLink, helping current students by offering advice and information, or know of graduate-level vacancies in your organisation, please let us know," he says. "Jobs can be any industry – we have as many students interested in media, publishing, 'not for profit' and academia as we do in finance, consultancy and FMCG – and in any part of the world. Vacancies are advertised free of charge and graduates make an application direct to the employer."

Lastly, don't forget that the Careers Service is open to all graduates, no matter how distant your Cambridge days may seem. Stuart House offers a range of services to those thinking of changing their current career – and is, of course, completely independent.

To get in touch, email enquiries@careers.cam.ac.uk or visit Stuart House, Mill Lane, Cambridge CB2 1XE. www.careers.cam.ac.uk



Dr David Starkey

Courtesy Channel 4

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Courtesy Tate Britain

Henri Gaudier-Brzeska,
Bird Swallowing Fish, 1914

EXHIBITIONS

Kettle's Yard takeover at Tate Britain

Anyone who spent a year in Cambridge living with a significant work of 20th century art hanging on the walls of their student room is either very well insured or – more probably – familiar with Kettle's Yard and its astonishing student loans programme.

However, what students and alumni often don't realise is that this museum-in-miniature holds a collection of national importance, something that was recognised this term when Kettle's Yard took up residence in Gallery 23 at Tate Britain.

Jim Ede, the founder of Kettle's Yard, was the first modern art curator at the Tate Gallery through the 1920s and 30s. His collection includes paintings by Miró and sculpture by Moore and Hepworth, but its power resides in the way pieces are

displayed: paintings and sculpture are interlaced with furniture, glass, ceramics and natural objects.

'Kettle's Yard at Tate Britain' combined highlights from the Kettle's Yard collection with new works by Edmund de Waal and Gary Woodley. Both artists responded to the architecture of the gallery – Edmund de Waal with installations of pots and Gary Woodley creating a geometric 'impingement'.

The display reflected several of the friendships Ede formed with artists, and includes works by Brancusi, Ben Nicholson, Miró and David Jones, as well as his acquisition of the estate of the French sculptor Henri Gaudier-Brzeska.

Kettle's Yard at Tate Britain until 14 June.
www.kettlesyard.co.uk/exhibitions/tate

HONORARY DEGREES

Ten to be honoured in June

This month, the Chancellor of the University, His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, will confer honorary doctorates upon ten eminent individuals. The award recognises the work of truly outstanding people and this year the University will honour philanthropists Bill and Melinda Gates, whose Gates Foundation has made grants worth over \$20 billion since inception, and composer Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, who is widely regarded as one of the most influential British composers of the 20th century. Leading Liberal Democrat Baroness Shirley Williams and distinguished economist Professor Amartya Sen will also be awarded honorary doctorates, as will Shah Karim al-Hussayni (the Aga Khan IV), Brigadier Sir Miles Hunt Davies, Professor Wang Gung Wu, Professor Sir Peter Crane and Professor Wallace Broecker.

ENTERPRISE

Launch of Cambridge Discovery Fund



Cillian Blaise

We all know that Cambridge scientists are brilliant. But what if a world-changing idea needs funding to get off the ground? This term, the University launched the Discovery Fund, an evergreen seed fund to provide pre-licence, pre-seed and seed investment. The Fund is managed by Cambridge Enterprise

Limited, the University's commercialisation office.

In previous years, University seed funds have supported companies such as Enval, whose technology enables the economical recycling of materials such as Tetra Pak, and OrthoMimetics, who make products for the regenerative repair of cartilage, ligament and tendon injuries. Enval grew out of a project in the Department of Chemical Engineering; OrthoMimetics from research in the Department of Materials Science and Metallurgy.

The Discovery Fund has already attracted over £1 million in donations. On average, in previous years, every pound invested by past seed funds has attracted follow-on funding of £45 and funded companies employing over 1700 people.

For more information about the Discovery Fund visit www.foundation.cam.ac.uk/800-home.php

DIARY SUMMER/ AUTUMN



SPORT Varsity Match

Thursday 10 December, Twickenham

Pride will be on the line this year as Cambridge takes on rivals Oxford for the 128th Nomura Varsity Match at Twickenham Stadium. Kick-off is at 2.00pm.

CURUFC is a wholly amateur student rugby club, but offers a rugby environment as 'professional' as it can be. There are three regular teams; the Blues, the LX Club and the U21 XV, together with occasional fixtures for the U21A XV and the Colleges XV. The Blues have a strong midweek fixture list incorporating top professional clubs and universities, while the LX Club and U21 generally play at weekends.

The Varsity Match, however, is unique. A titanic clash between the two universities for the Bowring Bowl is the highlight of the Varsity calendar and should not be missed! Register your interest in the alumni event for the match by emailing alumni@foundation.cam.ac.uk

EVENTS Save the date!

Saturday 21 November 2009, The Hub, Edinburgh

'Evolution and Adaptation: From surviving to thriving in your career'. More details soon.

ALUMNI WEEKEND

Mists of mellow fruitfulness

Friday 25–Sunday 27 September 2009, various Cambridge locations

Meet up with old friends, enjoy the last of the summer Pimms, tickle the grey cells with a lecture or two: it's no wonder that the annual Alumni Weekend is one of the most popular events in the Cambridge calendar. The first alumni weekend, almost 20 years ago, was attended by just 230 people, and while the style of the event has hardly changed (ambling around Cambridge never goes out of fashion) its scale certainly has. This year, almost 2000 guests are expected – and as well as enjoying Cambridge at its most beautiful, punting and reminiscing, many will attend some of the scheduled events.

This year, Charles Darwin takes centre stage, with events including tours of the Botanic Garden, the Herbarium and the Fitzwilliam Museum and a lecture by Professor Jim Secord, director of the

Darwin Correspondence Project, entitled 'Global Darwin'.

Alternatively, if you fancy exercising your vocal chords, why not join the scratch choir at the Come and Sing event (the choir will be singing Haydn, Mendelssohn, Purcell and Handel)? Other musical events include a concert to celebrate Haydn's 200th anniversary at Clare Hall and Professor Roger Scruton's lecture on 'The Meaning of Music'.

In fact, this year, the University will host almost 200 events, including garden and College tours, lectures by leading academics and alumni and concerts: if you'd like to find out exactly what's on and where, visit the website or phone to request a brochure. Friends and family – over the age of 12 – are, of course, welcome. www.cam.ac.uk/alumni.



Every Friday

Strictly come dancing

The Cambridge University Dancesport Team has defeated Oxford for the third year running – if you'd like to find out how they did it, join the Cambridge Dancers' Club general session, held every Friday at the University Centre. Alumni dancers of all levels are welcome, whether resident in Cambridge, or just down for the weekend. www.cambridgedancers.org

5–10 July

Darwin Festival

What do novelists AS Byatt and Ian McEwan, opera singer Susan Gritton and philosopher Dan Dennett have in common? They are all appearing at Darwin 2009 Festival in Cambridge from 5 to 10 July. Tickets are selling fast! www.darwin2009festival.com

Every month

Cambridge alumni monthly drinks

Come and meet old friends and perhaps make some new ones at our drinks night, held the second Tuesday of every month, for alumni based in Cambridge. We look forward to seeing you and of course, please feel free to invite friends and other alumni. No need to book, just turn up! Visit the events page at www.cam.ac.uk/alumni.



MUSIC

A night at the Proms

Wednesday 22 July 2009, Royal Albert Hall, London

Celebrate the University's 800th Anniversary with a unique 'Cambridge Prom', part of the BBC Proms, at the Royal Albert Hall, and featuring composers and musicians with Cambridge connections. The concert will be broadcast on Radio 3. The evening will celebrate the rich history of music at Cambridge with the world premiere of a new BBC commission, Ryan Wigglesworth's *The Genesis of Secrecy*, and performances from sixteen College choirs, soloists Simon Keenlyside (St John's 1980) and Thomas Trotter (King's 1976), and conductor Sir Andrew Davis (King's 1963). The programme will also include music from Vaughan Williams's *The Wasps: Overture* and *Five Mystical Songs*, Stanford's *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis in A* (both written while Stanford was at Queens' Jonathan

Harvey's *Come Holy Ghost*, Judith Weir's *Ascending into Heaven* and Camille Saint-Saëns' *Symphony Number 3 (Organ)*.

The atmosphere in the Royal Albert Hall is expected to be electric with the spirit of Cambridge. All seated tickets for this event have now sold out; however, up to 1400 standing places (priced £5.00) will be available on the door. These tickets cannot be booked in advance so you so you must join the queues on the day (early queuing is advisable).

If you would like to know more about how to get on-the-day tickets, please contact Royal Albert Hall directly at www.royalalberthall.com or by telephone on 0845 401 5040.

Register your attendance with CARO by visiting the events page of our website. Friends and family are very welcome.

Remaining tickets: book now!

MUSIC

Orlando at the Palace

Saturday 22 August 2009

A few tickets are still available for what promises to be a magical performance of Handel's *Orlando* at Drottningholm Palace, Stockholm, conducted by Nic McGegan (Corpus 1969). The event includes a backstage tour of the astonishing Drottningholm Slottsteater 18th-century stage machinery, which ranges from wave and thunder machines to a magical flying chair. For tickets contact Gail Pearson on +44 (0)1223 766203.



Contact CARO

www.cam.ac.uk/alumni

alumni@foundation.cam.ac.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)1223 332288

Cambridge Alumni Relations Office (CARO)
The University of Cambridge
1 Quayside, Bridge Street, Cambridge, CB5 8AB.



A CRUISE WHERE YOU'RE INVITED TO ASK WHAT THE POINT OF IT ALL IS.

If you've sailed the sparkling waters of the Mediterranean before, you'll know how conducive it is to quiet contemplation.

For this reason we thought it would be a good idea to combine a two-week Aegean cruise with an untaxing course in ancient thought.

Accordingly, our Ancient Greek Philosophy cruise takes place from 25 October – 5 November this year. It consists of a series of lectures and visits to sites associated with the most important philosophers and scientists of the Classical world.

It is intended to appeal not only to those who are fascinated by Classical civilization but also to anyone who has ever wanted to learn about the nature of mind and the process of thought. Participants should come away from this cruise knowing much more about the principal thinkers of ancient Greece.

More importantly, perhaps, you will also have acquired some understanding of the eternal questions of philosophy and of their relevance to the modern world.

Naturally more time is spent in Athens than in any other place on the itinerary. No single location or time has ever come close to Classical Athens for the importance and abundance of its philosophical attainments – let alone done so while there were comparable achievements in the visual arts, literature and statecraft. Apart from relevant associations, there is of course a great deal to see and for those who haven't been there for a few years there are some pleasing surprises in store.

Athens, however, is an exception in that many of the other sites associated



Detail of Raphael's *The School of Athens*, 15th century lithograph (adapted).

with the great philosophers are off the beaten track, even for well-travelled Hellenists. The option of guided country walks on the islands of Kos, Samos and Chios further enhances the reflective nature of the cruise.

Nor is it as dry as you might think. In the spirit of Plato's Symposium (which was, after all, a drinking party) we will also be hearing about and sampling some of the exciting wines produced by a new generation of Greek wine-makers. Ontology followed by oenology, if you like.

Central to the whole venture are the lecturers, who are selected not merely for their erudition, but also for their ability to enthral with insight, analysis and narrative. Accompanying us on this cruise will be a professor of philosophy, a medical historian, two masters of wine and a classicist. Their talks will take place both ashore and on board.

Talking of which, the vessel we sail on is small but extremely well-appointed. You'll be delighted to find no casino, no disco, no cabaret and definitely no piped music. Bars remain open till the early hours, but the main source of evening entertainment is conversation with your lecturers and like-minded travellers.

The price varies according to the berth you request, but it's worth remembering that the cost is all-in – flights, accommodation, meals (with wine) and coaches are all included. There are no hidden extras or surcharges to pay.

If you'd like to know more about the Ancient Greek Philosophy cruise, please call 020 8742 3355. Alternatively, visit www.martinrandall.com/philosophy

We may not have the answers to the ultimate questions, but for all other queries we hope we can help. †

MARTIN RANDALL TRAVEL

Highlights of the Ancient Greek Philosophy cruise: Day 1: Fly to Istanbul. Day 2: At sea. Day 3: Miletos, birthplace of Thales and thus of philosophy. Later choose between the standing ruins of Priene and the vast Ephesus, home of Heraclitus. Sail in the evening for Kos. Day 4: Kos, Home of Hippocrates and the first of our country walks. Sail in the evening for Piraeus. Days 5 & 6: Athens. A place unparalleled in history for philosophical creativity. Choice of excursions, including the Acropolis, Archaeological Museum and the Agora. Sail for Samos. Day 7: Samos. Birthplace of Epicurus and Pythagoras, and site of the Tunnel of Eupalinos. Second of our country walks in a setting of astounding natural beauty. Sail later for Stavros. Day 8: Stagira. The little-visited birthplace of Aristotle. Boasts substantial remains. Sail in the evening for Kavala. Day 9: Abdera, birthplace of Protagoras and Democritus. Philippi and its attractive valley site. Sail in the evening for Chios. Day 10: Chios. Possible birthplace of Homer. The third of our countryside walks. Sail in the evening for Didymi. Day 11: Pergamon. The Acropolis and the Asclepeion of the physician Galen. Sail in the evening for Istanbul, passing Assos where Aristotle studied. Day 12: Moor at Istanbul and return flights to London.



Noticeboard

Join CARO on Facebook

Cambridge Alumni Relations Office has recently set up some new groups on Facebook. Become a CARO fan, join the new London group, or sign up to 'Cambridge Alumni in Cambridge' to receive updates on events and activities.

Stay in touch on email

Receive the latest University news, updates on forthcoming alumni events and information on new benefits for alumni with our monthly e-bulletin. Email your name and College to alumni@foundation.cam.ac.uk to subscribe.

ALUMNI GROUPS

Can you help?

We are looking for new volunteer Alumni Group contacts in Manchester and Staffordshire. If you are interested in helping to rejuvenate one of these Groups, please email Gail Pearson on gp305@foundation.cam.ac.uk or call +44 (0)1223 766203.

New network groups

There are over 300 volunteer-led alumni network groups in 96 countries around the world, and new groups are being established all the time. Recent additions include: Afghanistan Northern Territories, Australia, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Fiji, Mauritius, Norway, Slovakia, South of France.

Contact details for all groups, and information on upcoming group events and reunions, can be found on the alumni website, or contact the Alumni Office to be sent a copy of the Alumni Worldwide Directory 2009-2010.

LOST ALUMNI

We have received enquires about the following alumni:

Dave Boggett, Pembroke 1966
Robin Burkitt, Christ's 1960
Dermot Cummings (known as John), Queens' 1981
Sarah L Platts, Caius 2000
John M Richardson, Trinity 1962
Peter Scholten, Jesus 1991
Paul Silk (known as Bill), Trinity 1966
Dr Padmavathy Venkatasubramanian, Queens' 1986.

If you know them, please do ask them to get in touch with the Alumni Office.

New address?

If your copy of CAM is still forwarded on from your last house (or indeed, your parents') and you'd like to tell us your new address, you can update your details online at www.cam.ac.uk/alumni or the old-fashioned way, by letter or on the telephone.

We are always happy to publicise local non-commercial alumni activities on the Noticeboard, website or e-bulletin. Please email mk579@foundation.cam.ac.uk or send announcements to the Alumni Office at 1 Quayside, Bridge Street, Cambridge CB5 8AB.

New alumni advisory board

In February, a new Alumni Advisory Board was launched to support the work of CARO. Chaired by the Vice Chancellor, the 22 board members bring to the University a wide range of ages, expertise and personal experience of Cambridge.

The work of the Board will complement the existing network of over 300 University and College alumni network groups. Representing local areas across the world from Cambridge to Croatia and Chile, group activities range from black tie balls and pub lunches to speed dating and dog sleigh racing. This year a record 14 new groups have been formed.

For a complete list of group contact details, call the Alumni Office for a copy of the Alumni Worldwide Directory 2009-2010 or see the Networks area at www.cam.ac.uk/alumni.

Access alumni benefits with CAMCARD

Do you have a CAMCARD? Benefits and discounts available with the CAMCARD include free entrance to all Colleges (including King's Chapel) for you and your guests, membership of the University Centre, a 25% discount at Scudamore Punting, a 20% discount on CUP publications at the Press bookshop in Trinity Street, 10% off on all book purchases at Heffers and 10% off at a number of restaurants around Cambridge, including: The Chophouse on King's Parade Graffiti at Hotel Felix on Whitehouse Lane and Alimentum on Hills Road (for details, please consult the website).

All alumni are entitled to the CAMCARD. To claim yours, update your details at www.cam.ac.uk/alumni, call the Alumni Office on +44 (0)1223 332 288 or pop in to see us (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm).



An anniversary to celebrate

Mark the 800th anniversary with a gift from a special range of commemorative items, including mugs, umbrellas, charm bracelets, cufflinks, and tea towels.

Most gifts feature the 800th logo and the University crest.

For a very special gift, you might like to treat yourself to the Onoto Pen Company's rather glamorous fountain pen.

Available in acrylic, silver, and solid gold, and topped with the University's crest, the pens are a limited edition, produced exclusively for the 800th Anniversary.

They would make a unique gift.

For more information on any of these products please visit www.cam.ac.uk/alumni or call Katy Miller in the Alumni Relation Office on +44 (0)1223 760150.



MY ROOM, YOUR ROOM

G2, NEW COURT, CORPUS

Interview **Leigh Brauman**
Photograph **David Yeo**

Michael Bywater (Corpus 1972) is a writer and broadcaster, celebrated for his long-running Bargepole column in *Punch*, and for his books, *Lost Worlds* and *Big Babies*. His new book, *A Fine Bromance*, about male friendship, will be published next year.

Emma Hutton is a first-year music student at Corpus. A New Zealander, Emma wisely says you can't plan a creative career, but would love to be a concert pianist or a conductor – or to write political satire, Gilbert and Sullivan-style.

Walking into his old room, G2, for the first time in 30 years, the first thing writer and broadcaster Michael Bywater notices is the piano. “This one’s much nicer, but it’s a quarter of the size of the manky old Broadwood grand I had stuck in the corner,” he says.

From his descriptions of the life-size cutouts of Andy Capp and Flo (created for a May Ball by one Francis Maude), the pink gin, and the basilica incense that burnt in a brazier in the sitting room, one suspects G2 today is a great deal less chaotic than it was in Michael’s day – and that’s just how its current resident, first-year music student, Emma Hutton, intends to keep it. “If my room is



“I was a college tart: Marlowe Society, green nail varnish, the works. I was a real berk, but this was a great room to be a berk in. Berk Central, in fact.”

even slightly messy, I think ‘Better clean my room! Don’t want to write that essay! MUST clean my room!’ So the best tack is to keep it clean in the first place.”

This is not an approach Michael recognises. “I was here in my third year, after I switched from medicine to English. So it was a wonderful time: I was free of body parts, dissecting heads and nine o’clock lectures. Instead I spent my time being a college tart: Marlowe Society, green nail varnish, the works. I was a real berk, but this was a great room to be a berk in. Berk Central, in fact.”

However, he does recognise the bed (“On top it looks lovely, but underneath that is definitely a Corpus bed”) and that G2 is a room for people who like being at the centre of things. “You are so central that people always come in,” Michael says. “In the old days, we just had Hall, where you ate every day, not just fancy dinners. You’d put your gown over whatever you had, so there were about 20 gowns in here, like a bat cave – people would just grab one.”

Emma may not climb in (or hide boyfriends from her bedder, as Michael did his girlfriends) but as musos, the G2 two agree on Messiaen (“it’s like music printed, shredded, put back together, retrograded and then called music,” Emma explains), on the brilliance of Edward Gregson’s Homages and the impossibility of Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto Number 5. “It was my tune for this room,” Michael remembers. “I spent most of my third year trying to learn it but there are these alternating glissandi up, and scales down, and then scales up and glissandi down, and just when you’ve got through that there’s the second movement which is a pig, and then the third movement, to show what he can really do.”

Emma is at the end of her first year and feels very at home in G2. Cambridge, though, was a step into the unknown. “I’m from New Zealand, and I had never been out of the country before this year, so it was a big deal,” she says. Not that she’s homesick. “Corpus is quite a small college so you get to know people and everyone is really cool. There’s no one I’d think, ‘Oh man! I don’t want to live on their staircase!’”

Acclimatising to the weather has taken time, and the culture was a bit of a shock, too. “I would think nothing of meeting someone for the first time and suggesting we go for coffee. Or standing in the post office queue and having a chat,” she says, “and people don’t really do that here. But the real difference is how people deal with stress. ‘Essay crisis’ is the most overused term!”

What would Michael bequeath G2 if he could? “The Andy Capp and Flo cutouts – they really do give a bit of oomph to a room,” he says. Emma is not to be outdone. “I did have some giant polystyrene stop signs in here for a while,” she says. “You see!” says Michael. “The genius locii is still here!”

THE BEST... VIEW IN CAMBRIDGE

Moya Sarnier is a fourth-year languages student at Emmanuel

It might be nothing but a small hillock, but Castle Mound has saved my degree at least three times – and counting.

To passers-by it’s just a mound, and a mound of modest proportions at that. But do not be deceived. It’s a long way up and if you’re not gasping by the time you get to the top, the view will take your breath away. A panorama of towering spires and inspiring towers, King’s Chapel and the University Library seem the highest points in Cambridge.

This motte is all that remains of a castle built nearly a thousand years ago, on the orders of William the Conqueror. The fortress would later play host to a county gaol in the Elizabethan period, to a courthouse in the 19th century, and today, to our very own Cambridge City Council headquarters, in Shire Hall. From this peak, the Normans looked onto a settlement known as Grantabridge; I look onto the University of Cambridge. Now that’s what I call perspective.

And perspective is exactly what I need when my French literature essay is due in three hours ago and I still haven’t finished

the introduction. It’s not ‘just an essay’ any more: it’s a war of attrition, and I’m losing. I write: formalism; structuralism; deconstruction; Beckett ‘must go on’, he ‘can’t go on’, he ‘will go on’ – am I the only one who doesn’t know what’s going on? There is no escape from all those words; my own language pens me in.

The only way out is up. On Castle Mound, I find an awesome sense of openness. The air is crisper, cleaner; every breath purifying. From up here, the towers and spires are far less daunting; so too is my essay. It is liberation.

And so I channel the will of the Conqueror, taking the courage and insight I need to win the war. Those intellectual challenges are once again exhilarating (not just exhausting); my supervisors yet more stimulating (bless those elbow patches); college now feels cosy (who needs floor space anyway?). Bring it on, Beckett!

So here I’ll be, when I feel lost at sea; where I find space and clarity. Such perspective will soon fade, but I can always come back. And I will. Because this is one helluva mound.



Martin Figura

HISTORY OF A FRIENDSHIP



Thrown together at Homerton College in 1959, eight friends started a round robin letter which, as it slowly makes its way around the group, has helped to sustain a 50-year friendship.

Interviews Tracey Lattimore
Main photograph Darren Jenkins

THE GEOGRAPHER Ginnie Parker

Cambridge was very special to us. We all grew up hugely in those two years. We had so many experiences that were far beyond anything any of us had ever done, which bound us together.

The group arrived at Homerton knowing nobody, except me, who knew Maureen from school. So we were thrown together.

After leaving Homerton, I went on to do a geography degree at Birkbeck in London. Then Maureen and I applied to teach in Canada, and I stayed for 10 years.

There hasn't really been one dominant member – that's been one of the strengths. But the jungle drums really get going if one person picks up a piece of sad news. Then the group just comes together.

THE LINGUIST June Sulley

At college we each had our own different mysteries. I had masses of boyfriends, and we were all invited out to tea by one (eventual) husband! I also sang a lot and belonged to lots of different choirs, so I was off doing that.

We started the round robin as soon as we left Homerton. My friends have always been there

for me over the years. When my daughter Vicki was born with Down's Syndrome, I got a lot of support – I was pleased to have people I knew so well around me.

I think it's wonderful that you might not see someone for six months, but as soon as you're together, the years slip away and we're as close and have as much in common as we did when we were young.

When I receive the round robin letter, I sometimes hang on to it for six weeks or longer. I find it very hard to let it go. Over the last 20 years, I've kept the old letters that I've written. I wish I'd kept them right from the start – they form a sort of diary for me.

THE ART STUDENT Judy Grandage

I taught art after leaving college. Five of us got teaching jobs in Watford and lived together. I was probably closest to Carole at the time, but I'm closer to Maureen now as she lives nearer to me.

We lost the round robin once, then thankfully somebody started it up again – I enjoy getting the letters and seeing the photos very much. I think we are a very settled group in a lot of ways. Most of us have lived in the same house for years, and are still married to the same person. I think if we'd moved around a lot more, we might have lost touch.



THE ENGLISH STUDENT Carole Sugden

As a group, we threw ourselves into everything. We went to watch rugby matches, parties, dances and debates – but we had to be invited, as women weren't allowed to be members.

Ginnie and I shared a room and went on a college holiday together to Austria, and that's how I met my husband. Poor old Ginnie ended up being the gooseberry! She was my bridesmaid when I got married.

One of the reasons the letters have continued so easily is that we know each other's families. There's never any feeling that we can't share these issues, or that you have to put on a brave face – we can talk about anything.



Top left (1961)
The eight friends
photographed while at
College.

Above (2009)
From left to right:
Ginny Parker, Anne Elliot,
Carole Sugden, Prue Jones.

THE ATHLETE Prue Jones

We had an enormous amount to do with the University in every way – they were only too pleased to have us. There were only three women's colleges in those days, plus Homerton, so the ratio of men to women was favourable to us!

I loved being out on the football field with the junior boys. I played hockey and lacrosse, and I was also in the ladies' cricket team. My legs are all dented from being hit with hockey balls and sticks.

The friends are a lovely group that you can call on if you need help, support and advice. Everybody's prepared to do their bit of

organising, but no one hogs the limelight. It's always easy to pick up the phone when you're arranging a get-together, and the conversation picks up from wherever it left off.

We're still writing letters because we can't break the chain. When it's near to my turn, I think: I'm sure that blessed round robin should be here by now. And I don't want it two days before Christmas, either, which is very often what happens!

THE HISTORIAN Dilys Gillett

History was my main interest at Homerton. I was closest to Prue, as we shared a room in the house – she was a lovely girl and we got on very well.

Because I live in the north, I don't get the chance to see the group much. But we're going to meet up in September and I'm really looking forward to that.

THE BIOLOGIST Ann Elliott

We gelled very quickly when we met. On a Sunday evening we'd hop on our bikes to Great St Mary's church to hear the University Sermon.

While the others all did PE, I chose to study biology. I love anything to do with nature and the environment.

I shared a room with June, and Dilys and June were my bridesmaids. And although nowadays I see Ginnie and Carole most of all, June will always be very special to me.

I lost a daughter, Caroline, who was killed just over 12 years ago. All my friends were wonderful in their support. But June, who has a daughter with Down's Syndrome, used to tell me that she could feel what I was going through, as she was expecting her daughter to be OK when she was born.

THE GENERALIST Maureen Greenland

We were a close-knit group, and even though I didn't live in the house with the others, it didn't bother me – except when I'd arrange to meet them at the house, as they were never ready!

After college I taught in Germany and Canada, and it's amazing that the letters carried on even when I was abroad.

The round robin takes rather a long time to come round, but when it does, it's lovely. It's so exciting to read other people's news.

If you would like to be share the history of your friendship, please do get in touch with CAM by email alumni@foundation.cam.ac.uk or by post (see page 9).



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TAKE THREE

Gillian Tett (Clare 1986) is an assistant editor of the Financial Times, overseeing the global coverage of the financial markets. She has a PhD in social anthropology from Cambridge and is the author of *Fool's Gold: How Unrestrained Greed Corrupted a Dream, Shattered Global Markets and Unleashed a Catastrophe*, published by Little, Brown.

Dr Vince Cable (Fitzwilliam 1962) is MP for Twickenham and the Liberal Democrat Party's Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer. He read Natural Sciences and Economics at Cambridge University. He has earned a reputation for being the 'sage' of the credit crunch and has recently published *The Storm: The World Economic Crisis and What It Means*, published by Atlantic Books.

Professor M. Hashem Pesaran (Trinity 1968) is Professor of Economics at Cambridge University and a professorial fellow of Trinity College. He received his PhD in Economics at Cambridge. Born in Iran, Professor Pesaran was previously head of the Economics Research Department at the Central Bank of Iran. He is the founding editor of the *Journal of Applied Econometrics*.

Interviews **Dina Medland**

This issue, we ask our three experts: what would have to change for the British banking system to work in the interests of wider economic stability and growth?

Gillian Tett: The ingredient most badly needed right now is simply: common sense. That might sound dull, pious or hippy. In truth, though, it is not. For behind that mundane phrase 'common sense' is an idea of perspective, balance and accountability that has been forgotten in recent years.

Bankers operated with a 'silo' mindset which assumed that each financier could do whatever they wanted and ignore what other financiers were doing, or how this affected society as a whole. Regulators, too, did not try to track the financial system as a whole, or to assess how it interacted. Politicians – and even journalists and consumers – were shockingly lazy in asking questions about what was going on in finance that made borrowing so cheap.

We need more than new rules: greed cannot be eradicated, least of all in the money business. But finance clearly needs to be subject to far greater oversight from regulators, and also from politicians, consumers and journalists. Sunlight is a great disinfectant, not just when corruption or criminality is concerned, but also as a barrier against excess. Most important of all, bankers and non-bankers alike need to remember that finance should only ever be the servant of the economy, not its master. If that relationship gets reversed, then madness ensues – as the past decade shows only too well.

Vince Cable: There are both short-term and long-term issues which need our attention. The banks that have been rescued with public money and guarantees must be held accountable for their behaviour. Banks cannot be expected to rely on taxpayers' support while indulging in the freedom to engage in tax avoidance as many British banks are doing (some on a massive scale) and this just has to be stopped. At the same time the government should be less pathetically passive in directing lending strategy, and must ensure that capital is provided by these banks to small businesses on less onerous terms.

In the longer term the banks will be re-privatised, but it must be within a different



regulatory environment. British taxpayers cannot be asked to underwrite the 'casino' operations of investment banks and other high-risk activities. The banks must be split up, separating retail and investment banking operations, as even the Governor of the Bank of England has now conceded.

Much of the instability of the financial system lies with other, non-bank institutions, such as hedge funds and the world of private equity. We need to ensure that there is proper transparency and capital adequacy for these institutions before we find ourselves in another crisis that might pose systemic risk.

There needs to be an end to grotesque remuneration practices, and we cannot allow bankers to have remuneration systems which encourage them to take excessive risks. The government, through regulators, must ensure a framework for remuneration which makes good sense.

Hashem Pesaran: The recent banking crisis has clearly highlighted the need for a fundamental re-think of the role of monetary policy and the way banks and other financial institutions are to be monitored and regulated.

The capital adequacy of banks must be routinely stress-tested using credit risk models

that take full account of global economic interactions and are capable of dealing with the considerable heterogeneity that exists across different types of loans and credits. Most credit risk models currently in use are deficient in this respect. This criticism equally applies to credit rating agencies and the models they use.

Supervision of banks must be conducted in a macro-economic context and in line with monetary policy changes, and operations of 'shadow' banks should also be brought under the full authority of the regulators. The separation of the supervisory role of the Bank of England in 1997 from its other main functions (setting monetary policy and acting as the lender of last resort) may have to be reviewed.

Collateral rates, defined as the ratios of assets values to loans, need to be set in conjunction with interest rates as policy instruments by monetary authorities. Collateral rates on houses and durable goods – notably cars – need to be increased at times of booms and reduced during recessions. The implicit assumption by central banks that financial markets are efficient at all times and that it is sufficient only to set the short rate of interest rate, requires close re-examination.



Martin Figura

SECRET CAMBRIDGE

THE HERBARIUM

Professor John Parker reveals why On the Origin of Species might never have been written had it not been for John Henslow and the University Herbarium.

There are two great plant collections in Cambridge and we owe both to Professor John Henslow, Darwin's mentor. One is the Botanic Garden, holding living plants for the University. The other is enormous, hidden and unknown: the University Herbarium with one million dried, pressed plants. The Herbarium, in the Department of Plant Sciences, has a special place in the history of Western thought, for the sheets themselves are individual historic documents that represent the radical thinking of Henslow on the species question. My team has been applying database technology to this incredible mass of historic information in the Herbarium to reveal what Henslow taught his favourite pupil Charles Darwin. Our analysis of Darwin's Beagle plants themselves also tells us that he put his mentor's insights into practice on the voyage.

Charles Darwin's is the theory of evolution by natural selection. The history of this deeply influential theory is often presented as if the essentially ignorant Darwin joined HMS Beagle untutored, and arrived back in England having

laid the foundations of his theory de novo. The reality is very different. When he set sail, Darwin already had a deep appreciation of variation in nature, of sampling from populations, of the nature of species, of the role of hybridity in determining species limits, and of the search for laws of heredity and development. All this came from Henslow's vibrant research programme, which has been reconstructed through our studies of his own plant collection.

Henslow studied mathematics as an undergraduate at Cambridge, picking up geology and mineralogy along the way, and had a long-established interest in zoology. His plant collecting began suddenly in 1821, when he embarked on an ambitious scheme to collect the whole British flora. His real purpose was to attack the major problem in biology – the nature of species – and he approached this experimentally through sampling natural variation in wild populations.

Henslow's British collection consists of about 15,000 plants, displayed on 3700 Herbarium sheets. All plants are named,

with the place and date of their collection and name of the collector. Using variation patterns in nature, Henslow defined British species using a unique practice he referred to as 'collation'.

Plants on 'collated' sheets are displayed to demonstrate their variability. Henslow arranged small plants into distinctive patterns depending on size variation, often as a bell-curve, but also showing elements such as different leaf-shape. The Herbarium shows that Henslow was equally fascinated by sudden changes in plant shape called 'monstrosities'. He writes that he was seeking "the laws that govern nature" by studying them. Through collation, Henslow established the species of the British flora. In 1829, he produced his Catalogue of British Plants, used by Darwin the Divinity student on Henslow's botany course in 1829, 1830 and 1831!

So Henslow's research programme was at its height when Darwin fell under his influence. Henslow was a natural teacher who gave wonderful illustrated lectures (the first illustrated lectures in Cambridge), held practical classes and, on student walks, discussed everything he saw. Teacher and student were so close that Darwin became known as "the man who walks with Henslow". In the summer of 1831, Henslow arranged for Darwin to accompany geologist Adam Sedgwick to North Wales to gain field experience. While there, Darwin collected a rare species for Henslow. Naturally, it was a population sample showing variation: these plants are the oldest Darwin specimens.

In August 1831, Henslow recommended Darwin for a voyage around the world on HMS Beagle. Henslow considered him the best person he knew to "note everything worthy to be noted in natural history". Darwin sent all the Beagle samples back to Henslow at Cambridge. Henslow collated the plants and was able to label them in his usual way since Darwin, as a result of Henslow's tutelage, made precise notes (so very different from Darwin's poor records of the now-famous finches). Moreover, Darwin's plants are mostly population samples – we have 950 sheets carrying 2,600 plants. They show variation, and also contain 'monstrosities'.

During the voyage, Henslow carried on instructing his star pupil. He wrote to him, after the first crate had reached Cambridge, indicating how he should deal with plants better. Darwin's later specimens show a marked improvement in quality.

Darwin underwent an intellectual transformation at Cambridge. Henslow gave him the mental framework for studying the natural world through observation and experiment. Henslow recognised the potential brilliance of this young beetle-obsessed undergraduate. It is clear that "without Henslow there would have been no Darwin". We can understand why by decoding the meaning behind the plants in Henslow's University Herbarium.



1 Professor John Henslow.

2 A young Charles Darwin.

3 *Vulpia tenella*. Darwin collected four individuals of this species in a population from Patagonia to illustrate its huge range of variation in size.

4 *Sicyos villosa*. A trailing species of the cucumber family unique to Charles Island, Galapagos. Recorded by Darwin as "in great beds injurious to vegetation". It has never been seen since and so is world extinct.

5 *Scalesia pedunculata*. One of the species of "daisy-trees" unique to the Galapagos Islands, where it forms low forests. Collected by Darwin on James Island.

The Darwin 2009 Festival takes place in Cambridge from 5 to 10 July. www.darwin2009festival.com



Ice under the volcano



The Neapolitan passion for ice cream reveals a great deal about life and culture in the 18th century. Cultural historian, **Dr Melissa Calaresu**, explains.

Vesuvius erupted four times between 1760 and 1794. Grand Tourists from across Europe flocked to Naples to climb the volcano; in the evenings, in the cool of the night, they walked along the seafront, entertained by street musicians and storytellers. And, after the heat of the day's excursion, they often ate an ice cream sold to them by one of the street vendors or bought in one of a growing number of ice-cream shops (or *sorbetterie*) in the city.

It's a wonderful image, but my recent research on ice cream – its production, distribution and consumption – has revealed much more. Naples has a long-standing connection to ice cream, from one of the earliest cookery books devoted to the making of sorbet (*Brieve e nuovo modo da farsi ogni sorte di sorbette con facilità* or *New and Quick Ways to Make All Kinds of Sorbets with Ease*) at the end of the 17th century, to the modern invention of Neapolitan ice cream.

The Neapolitan passion for ice cream in the 18th century is more than a curiosity:



the documents and evidence around the consumption of ice cream not only reveal the importance of the ice trade and the ubiquity of ice cream eating in the city, but also challenge some of the assumptions around luxury and enlightenment in current historical writing.

This association of luxury stems from the particular contexts which have dominated the history of enlightenment culture, in particular, Paris and London. In those two northern European cities, the rising consumption of sugar – a key ingredient in the making of ice cream, along with salt which keeps the ice cold – has often been linked to the cultural as well as economic development of Europe at the end of the 18th century. But in Naples, then the

third largest city in Europe, the availability of alternative sweeteners, such as fermented grape syrup, meant that ice cream was much cheaper to make and buy, and not a luxury at all.

So, while the Bourbon court of Naples commissioned porcelain dishes for the serving and eating of ice cream from the royal factory of Capodimonte, Neapolitans of all social classes enjoyed eating *sorbetto* in the square in front of the Angevin Castle, or, for the better-dressed Grand Tourist, in the gardens of Villa Reale, in the Chiaia neighbourhood.

Documents from the 18th century also reveal a network of ice cream shops which functioned exactly as coffee houses did in this period: they were places to read newspapers,

1 Ice under the volcano. Mount Vesuvius, plate 36 from 'Campi Phlegraei: Observations on the Volcanoes of the Two Sicilies', by Sir William Hamilton, published 1776. Private collection.

2 Achille Vianelli, Sorbet vendor in front of Castel Nuovo, Naples, c. 1825, Aquarelle. Collection Caroline and Robin Weir. Reproduced by kind permission of Robin Weir.

3 Ice cream seller, Italian School (18th century), Museo Nazionale di San Martin, Naples, Italy.



3

exchange news, and socialise. Indeed, far from being inconsequential, in this hotter climate *sorbetterie* appear to be as much centres of enlightenment sociability as coffee-shops in colder climates. This new research on as ephemeral a subject as ice cream actually extends the boundaries of our understanding of enlightened culture in Europe.

British travellers to the city certainly saw the Neapolitan connection. Henry Swinburne, who travelled to Naples in the 1780s, wrote: "The passion for iced water is so great and so general at Naples, that none but mere beggars will drink it in its natural state; and, I believe, a scarcity of bread would not be more severely felt than a failure of snow." Similarly, a 1773 engraving of a sorbet seller by Peter Fabris, an English artist living in Naples, confirms that ice cream was consumed by a wider group of people in the city than previously imagined by historians.

Nevertheless, at first glance, the image seems part of a picturesque tradition in which the Neapolitans are depicted as simple lovers of the

"A contemporary cookery book, *The Steward of Good Taste*, reveals an extraordinary variety of ice cream flavours – from fennel to cinnamon."

good things in life – the kind of image created in the paintings, engraving, and later porcelain, for the entertainment of Grand Tourists at the end of the 18th century. In other words, Fabris's engraving, like Swinburne's comments, seems to tell us more about British perceptions of Italy than revealing any social reality of Neapolitan life.

However, the tradition and power of this trope (which remains present in travel writing about Naples even today) conceals a reality in which 18th century Neapolitans seem to be making and eating a lot of ice cream in the streets, and at home.

A contemporary cookery book, Vincenzo Corrado's *Il credenziere di buon gusto* (or *The Steward of Good Taste*), which was published in Naples in 1778, reveals an extraordinary variety of ice cream flavours, from fennel to cinnamon. The marginalia, added by a contemporary reader in an edition of Corrado's book recently located in a private collection, suggest that ice cream was not only being made in aristocratic palaces but in middle-class homes as well.

Ice cream eating was not just a domestic enthusiasm. An examination of the State Archives in Naples reveals an entire micro-economy centred around the harvesting of snow in the mountains near Vesuvius, and the production and transportation of ice across the bay of Naples to the capital city.

Naturally, where there was trade, there was also taxation. In the case of ice cream, there was an elaborate system of taxation which protected ice as an essential commodity in the Kingdom of Naples in the early modern period (confirming Swinburne's observations). And, later, in 1806, Napoleonic administrators recognised the economic value of ice alongside grain and oil when they reformed the tax

system. These documents also reveal the price of ice in this period, higher in the winter when it was riskier to cross the bay, and rising during the day as it melted and became scarce.

Evidence of the importance of ice is also in the chapels named after Santa Maria della Neve (or the Virgin of the Snow) which were used by the sailors before crossing the bay. It can also be found in the testimony of people today whose grandparents worked in the ice pits (or *neviere*) hidden in the beechwood forests near Vesuvius in which the snow was collected and stored throughout the year until the early 20th century.

This documentary evidence has been supplemented by practical experience. My research has taken me beyond the dusty archives to a course on 18th century ice cream making techniques, where the simplicity and relative cheapness of making recipes such as lemon sorbet – the likely flavour of the ice cream bought by the Grand Tourist and a flavour still sold on the streets of Naples today – became clear.

Dr Calaresu is the Neil McKendrick Lecturer in History at Caius, and is a specialist in 18th century Italian intellectual and cultural history.

Further reading:

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Caroline Liddell and Robin Weir, *Ice Creams, Sorbets, and Gelati: A Definitive Guide* (Grub Street, 2009).

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Reality Checkpoint

Words Edward Hollis

Photography Lee Mawdsley and Steve Bond

Two words scratched onto a lamp-post in the middle of Parker's Piece reveal much about how we understand – and misunderstand – the fabric of Cambridge.

IT IS AN ELABORATE VICTORIAN AFFAIR: four lamps hanging from a tall, cast-iron column ornamented with writhing dolphins. In the early evening, it casts a weak, baleful light over the junction of two absolutely straight paths that slice across a featureless parallelogram of grass.

And there are a couple of versions of the story, both of which have something of the spirit of '68 about them. In one, a lecturer at Cambridge Community College encourages his students to write it. In the other, it was someone walking home from a meeting at Arjuna Wholefoods on Mill Road in 'an elevated mental state'.

The council sent their people along to scrub the lamp-post clean; but the gnomish graffiti kept on reappearing. In 1998, what had hitherto been a scrawl became a plaque. It remained there for six months, until the council removed that as well. For the moment, the words are scratched into the paint at the base of the lamp-post.

But they're on the council's website as well, and they've become the title of a detective novel by Peter Turnbull. You can buy T-shirts emblazoned with the lamp-post; it's become a tourist attraction of sorts.

Two words scratched onto a lamp-post have turned into a little urban myth that generations of students pass on to one another, convinced they saw them first. 'Reality Checkpoint', they read. No doubt you'll recognise the term.



RIS



It's not hard to see why a lonely lamp-post in the middle of Parker's Piece acquired the name. When I was a student, we used to pass by Reality Checkpoint on the way to Mill Road for a curry at the Kohinoor, for secondhand clothes at the Sally Ann, or for a swim at Parkside Pool. Out there, beyond the checkpoint was a world of dusty privet hedges and brick terraces, graveyards and primary schools, takeaways and video rental stores. Mill Road was real life, or so it seemed: it was like everywhere else. It was a place where nothing was really built to last, and everything was patched together, somehow, to make do and mend for the moment.

It wasn't where I lived. Passing Reality Checkpoint the other way, I would return to my home at Sidney Sussex College, to which I'd come in 1989 to study Architecture. I'd climb the stairs to my room, open the window, crawl out onto the lead flats of the College roof, and gaze at the skyline of central Cambridge: a panorama of "cloud capp'd towers, gorgeous palaces, and solemn temples". Even as the College bells struck the hours, the scene appeared like a dream, untouched by the grubby contingencies of the world beyond the checkpoint. No wonder people called it unreal.

Inside Reality Checkpoint, Cambridge looks and feels like one of those paintings of the early 19th century: *The Professor's Dream* of Charles Cockerell, or *The Architect's Dream* of Thomas Cole. The latter was commissioned in 1840 by Ithiel Town, the architect of the Federal Hall on Wall Street in Manhattan, and the painter was paid in pattern books. Town didn't much like the painting, but it came to be regarded as Cole's masterpiece. His funeral eulogy extolled it among the "principal works . . . of his genius", as "an assemblage of structures, Egyptian, Gothic, Grecian, Moorish, such as might present itself to the imagination of one who had fallen asleep after reading a work on the different styles of architecture".

In the painting, an architect finds himself reclining on top of a colossal column overlooking a great port. On a nearby hill, the spire of a Gothic cathedral rises above pointed cypresses in a dark wood; on the other side

of the river, a Corinthian rotunda is bathed in golden light against the brick arches of a Roman aqueduct. This aqueduct has been built on top of a Grecian colonnade, in front of which a procession leads from the waterside to an elaborate Ionic shrine. Farther away the primitive form of a Doric temple crouches beneath an Egyptian palace. Behind them all, veiled in haze and a wisp of cloud, is the Great Pyramid.

It is a moment of absolute stillness. A perspective in time has become a perspective in space, as the past recedes in an orderly fashion, style by style, all the way back to the horizon of antiquity. The Dark Ages partially obscure classical splendour; Roman magnificence is built on the foundation of Grecian reason; the glory that was Greece lies in the shadow of the ur-architecture of Egypt. The array of buildings forms an architectural canon, each example dispensing inspiration, advice and warning to the architect from the golden treasury of history.

All the great buildings of the past have been resurrected in a monumental day of rapture. Everything has been made new, and neither weather nor war nor wandering taste scars the scene. Everything is fixed just as it was intended to be: each building is a masterpiece, a work of art, a piece of frozen music, unspoiled by compromise or error. Nothing could be added or taken away except for the worse. Each building is beautiful, its form and function held in perfect balance.

Thomas Cole's visions still haunts architects. Pick up any classic work on architecture, glance at the pictures, and you will find yourself lost in a similar panorama. Crisp line drawings describe the masterworks of antiquity as new and fresh as the day they were born; blue skies, clean streets, and a complete absence of people lend architectural photographs the timeless quality of *The Architect's Dream*. And it's not just the illustrations: the written history of architecture is also a litany of masterpieces, unchanging and unchanged, from the Great Pyramid of Giza to its glass descendants in Paris or Vegas. The great buildings of the past are described as if the last piece of scaffolding has just been taken away, the paint is still fresh on the walls, and the ribbon has not yet been cut – as if, indeed, history has never happened.



Previous page

Detail: Gate of Honour, Caius.

1 Reality Checkpoint, Parker's Piece.

2 *The Architect's Dream* by Thomas Cole. Courtesy The Museum of Toledo.



The Architect's Dream is a timeless vision because timeless is just what we expect great architecture to be. Nearly a century ago, the Viennese architect Adolf Loos observed that architecture originates not, as one might expect, in the dwelling, but in the monument. The houses of our ancestors, which were contingent responses to their ever-shifting needs, have perished. Their tombs and temples, which were intended to endure for the eternity of death and the gods, remain, and it is they that form the canon of architectural history.

The very discourse of architecture is a discourse on perfection, a word that derives from the Latin for 'finished'. The Roman theorist Vitruvius claimed that architecture was perfect when it held commodity, firmness and delight in delicate balance. A millennium and a half later, his Renaissance interpreter Leone Battista Alberti wrote that perfect beauty is that to which nothing may be added, and from which nothing may be taken away. The Modernist architect Le Corbusier described the task of his profession as "the problem of fixing standards, in order to face the problem of perfection".

In the discourse of architecture, all buildings, in order to remain beautiful, must not change; and all buildings, in order not to change, must aspire to the funereal condition of the monument. The tomb of Christopher Wren in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral in London is a simple affair for so great a man, but the inscription on the wall above the sarcophagus belies its modesty. "Si monumentum requiris, circumspice", it reads: "If you seek a monument, look around you." All architects hope that the buildings they have designed will memorialise their genius, and so they dare to hope that their buildings will last forever, unaltered. I did.

But The Architect's Dream is just that: a dream, an illusion, a flat picture imprisoned in a frame. It's on the wrong side of Reality Checkpoint; and so was my view of the architecture of Cambridge. I imagined that the city was some timeless dream, but in fact it was anything but. The architect Aldo Rossi once observed of his own northern Italian milieu that "there are large palaces, building complexes, or agglomerations that constitute whole pieces of the city, and whose function now is no longer the original one. When one visits a monument

of this type ... one is struck by the multiplicity of different functions that a building of this type can contain over time, and how these functions are completely independent of form."

He could have been talking about Cambridge. Inside Reality Checkpoint, it is a city made almost completely of gigantic palaces, whose original functions have changed out of all recognition, several times over.

The oldest of the Colleges, Peterhouse, dates back to 1284. It was founded, of course, not for the purposes of higher education, but for the office of prayer and the dispensation of charity, and it was designed to resemble an abbey, more or less, with a cloister court, and a refectory hall, and a library scriptorium. The stones of Gonville Court at Caius were actually brought from an abbey at Ramsey, whose present state of ruination bears solemn witness to the success of the College at the expense of its forebear. As they grew, so the Colleges extended themselves in an inchoate matrix over the city around them, drowning houses and shops in their relentless tide, spreading their fingers out into the marshy Backs.

After the Reformation, the Colleges, deprived of their quasi-monastic role, sought to reframe their purpose – and hence their architectural form – in Renaissance terms. Just as humanist scholars set themselves to the translation and emulation of classical texts, so gentleman architects set themselves to the translation of their monastic heritage into the vocabulary and grammar of classical form. The Gates of Humility, Virtue and Honour at Caius were built in emulation of the triumphal arches of Ancient Rome, and they signify an attempt to turn the cloister-like courts of the College into the *cortili* of a grand palace. The chapel at Peterhouse, essentially a medieval building in classical fancy dress, is flanked by colonnades that turn the College's court into an agora for Stoic disputation. Wren's library at Trinity is a great basilica, taken from the Roman Forum, set down in the Backs, and turned to speculation rather than legal process. Cambridge abounds with medieval buildings in Renaissance disguise, transformed by scholars keen to turn their rambling medieval foundations into the courts of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*.

3



4



3 New Court, St John's College.

4 The Gate of Honour at Caius and the Senate House.

5 View over Cambridge from the roof of Sidney Sussex.

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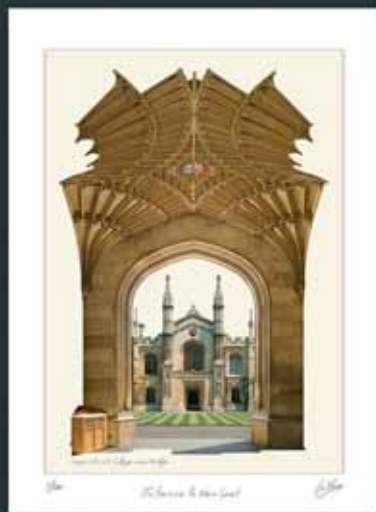
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Trinity

It was the 19th century that rediscovered – and reinvented – the Cambridge of the Middle Ages. New Court at St John’s – a gigantic Castle of Otranto on the Backs – is perhaps, little more than a piece of gothick reverie; but Alfred Waterhouse’s new courts at Caius and Pembroke are muscular, serious essays in the constructional and functional potential of Gothic in a modern age. It was in the 19th century that William Wilkins ‘completed’ King’s College in homage to its chapel with the Hall range and the great screen facing King’s Parade; and it was at this time that Giles Gilbert Scott built the chapel at St John’s in the strictest Early English manner. It was also in the 19th century that architects seriously applied themselves to the restoration and conservation of ancient buildings. The Hall of Peterhouse, for example, is a confection of the Arts and Crafts movement, decorated by William Morris and Edward Burne Jones rather than 13th-century craftsmen. It was only in the 19th century, then, that Cambridge began to look as medieval as it does now.

The Colleges of Cambridge aren’t masterpieces of architecture, for they are far too capricious to answer to any one master. Even King’s College Chapel is a chimera. It was started in the 1440s, and wasn’t finished until the early 1500s, for work stopped and started several times throughout the turbulent years of the Wars of the Roses. The building was never completed as originally designed: Reginald Ely, the first master mason, had no intention of building the fan vaults which roof one of the strangest and most wonderful spaces in English architecture. He certainly couldn’t have conceived of the stained glass, whose muscular heroes and heroines are modelled on the cartoons of Michelangelo and Raphael.

Consequently, the Cambridge College is a constructed model of the structure of knowledge: the founders of the early Colleges hoped their foundations would be like monasteries; and their successors tried to translate them into palaces of classical learning. In the 19th century, the Colleges of Cambridge, restored to a gothic splendour they had never originally enjoyed, became icons of an eternal English culture. *In toto*, however they have become Gormenghasts: incoherent labyrinths in the process of perpetual, if imperceptible change. It’s not, on the face of it, an optimistic model; but it is one that is worth exploring a little further.

Our brief survey of the history of the Cambridge College suggests that the alteration of existing buildings is more pervasive a practice than orthodox architectural theory might allow. Buildings are designed to last, and therefore they outlast the insubstantial pageants that made them. Once they have, they embark on long, eventful, and unpredictable lives, in which they are changed again and again, to accommodate changes in function, technology or aesthetic preference.

“Anyone can be creative”, Bertolt Brecht once wrote; “it’s rewriting other people that’s a challenge.” Every performance is a reinterpretation,

“Even King’s College is a chimera. Started in the 1440s, it wasn’t finished until the early 1500s and the work was never completed as originally designed.”

a rereading and rewriting, of an original script or score. It’s not an analogy we’d immediately associate with architecture, but the problems that face ‘period’ performances of Shakespeare, for example, are very similar to those that faced the preservationists of the 19th century. Meanwhile, ‘modern’ performances, from Karajan’s renditions of Beethoven to the retelling of Jane Austen’s *Emma* as Hollywood’s *Clueless*, may be compared to the operations of a Renaissance architect trying to translate a Gothic chapel into the classical idiom.

It may be objected that the difference between architecture and literature or music is that while scripts and scores exist independently

of performances, buildings are not independent of the alterations wrought upon them. These are always irreversible, and might therefore destroy their ‘hosts’ in a way that dramatic or musical productions of a classic work cannot.

But there is one field in which the performance and the thing performed are inseparable: the oral tradition. If a story is not written down, then the only script that exists for the next performance is the previous telling. This means that the development of every tale is iterative: each retelling sets the conditions for the next, and stories from the *Iliad* to *Little Red Riding Hood* have been both preserved and altered by every narrator until they arrived on the written page.

The classic case is the story of *Cinderella*, which first appears in the European written record in the Middle Ages. The glass slipper on which much of the plot turns is made of gold in German, and is a rubber galosh in Russian. In the German telling of the tale, the ugly sisters even cut off their toes to fit their feet into the slipper, and spatter it with their blood. There is a 9th-century Chinese telling of the tale in which the fairy godmother is a fish, and the palace ball a village fête; but *Cinderella* is still *Cinderella* all the same.

In the same way, every architectural alteration is a ‘retelling’ of a building as it exists at a particular time. When the change is complete, the altered building becomes the existing building for the next retelling; and in this way the life of a building is both perpetuated and transformed by the repeated act of alteration and reuse. In Cambridge, monasteries were retold as palaces and fora, which in their turn became medieval romances, as surely as *Cinderella*’s slipper slipped from place to place, and time to time. Architecture is all too often imagined as if buildings do not – and should not – change. But change they do, and have always done. Buildings are stories, and because they are, we must pass them on.

The protean and enduring Colleges of Cambridge are such stories; and so are the cobbled together buildings of Mill Road. Reality Checkpoint is one such story. It is a miniature urban myth that has been sustained by the simple ritual of a repeated scrawl on a lamp-post in a park. No one knows for sure who wrote it first, or why, but it reappears again and again, a reminder that nothing, and everything, remains the same. ■



6 Main Hall, Downing College.

7 The Senior Combination Room, Downing College.

Edward Hollis’s (Sidney 1989) new book, *The Secret Life of Buildings: from the Ruins of the Parthenon to the Wailing Wall*, will be published in September by Portobello Books.

I HAD HEARD THAT SABINE BAHN had a penchant for pink, but it is not until I mention it in the lift on the way to her research centre, and a woman in hot pink leggings says “Can’t you tell I work for her?” that I begin to see that pink is much more than a mere foible. It is a statement of intent.

Bahn is based in the very angular, very grey Institute of Biotechnology near Downing College. But the Centre for Neuropsychiatric Research is a little different. Bahn has painted the walls of one of the labs hot pink and there are flashes of pink peeking out all over. Half the lab coats are pink. The brightness seems contagious. Crammed into a tiny space, the researchers are a mass of colour. In comparison, Bahn’s small office is subdued, although pictures and a glass mobile add colour and art to what is a hub of scientific discovery.

Bahn, immaculately made up and smartly dressed, describes herself as an “eccentric”. She says this several times in the course of our conversation and when I ask what she means, she replies that she “has her own views and does her own thing”. It is this independence and innovative approach that has attracted the interest of a major global funder in her research field:

neuropsychiatric and neurodevelopmental disorders, particularly schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

For 42-year-old Bahn, who grew up in Germany’s Black Forest, science and the creative arts are not as far distanced as some think. She comes from an artistic family, paints herself, and says that science, too, is an artistic outlet. “It is a creative process,” she says. “You are trying to identify ways of thinking about a problem slightly differently.” Specifically, for Bahn, it is about trying to understand how all the various factors involved in mental illness – from the environmental to the genetic – fit together.

Fitting the pieces together is tough. She quotes one of her colleagues who compares the challenge to “a jigsaw with the pieces turned upside down” because scientists still don’t know what the causes might be. Mental illness, she adds, is not something that can be understood by observing its symptoms, although this is still how it is diagnosed. Consequently, Bahn rails against the lack of progress in psychiatry, saying it is still rooted in the models of the early 20th century.

As she rightly points out, “You’d never diagnose something like cancer by looking at the symptoms.”

Mind games

Dr Sabine Bahn, an expert in neuropsychiatric and neurodevelopmental disorders, is determined to revolutionise the way we diagnose and treat mental illness.

Words Mandy Garner
Photograph David Yeo







c) Churchill – Hall & Library



r) Clare – View from the Backs



r) Emmanuel – Front Court



c) Gonville & Caius – Kings Parade



r) St. Catharine's



r) Corpus Christi – Old Court



r) Darwin – The Granary



h) Downing – View from Kenny Gate



e) Newnham – Clough



f) Peterhouse – Old Court



r) Trinity – Great Gate



e) Jesus – Chimney & Gate Tower



r) Pembroke – Old Court



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f) Wolfson



f) Magdalene – Magdalene Street



c) New Hall – Fountain Court

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CV

1994

Becomes Doctor of Medicine after graduating from Albert-Ludwigs Universität Freiburg, Germany and the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology at Cambridge, gaining the highest grade awarded.

1997

Obtains PhD in molecular biology from the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge. Her research focuses on investigating mechanisms involved in directing gene expression in the brain.

1997–2001

Becomes a Research Fellow at the Department of Psychiatry, Cambridge, rising to the post of Honorary Consultant in 2003 and holding two clinical sessions a week in substance abuse and general adult psychiatry.

2003

Receives her first grant from the Stanley Medical Research Institute to complete an intensive study of over 150 post-mortem brains, looking for differences between patients and matched controls.

2004

Sets up Cambridge Centre for Neuropsychiatric Research "to conduct and coordinate fundamental empirical research into major neuropsychiatric diseases, focusing on biomarkers and novel target discovery and translating the finding from the bench to the bed".

2005

Founds Psynova Neurotech Ltd, with the help of Professor Chris Lowe, head of the Institute of Biotechnology, and a \$5m rolling grant from the SMRI, to develop diagnostic tests for mental illness and new drugs for treating mental health conditions.

2007

Psynova is awarded the Medical Futures Innovation Award in Mental Health and Neurosciences Innovation.

Her passion comes from personal experience. Bahn's father suffered from bipolar disorder or manic depression and this has clearly had a big impact on her choice of career. She doesn't, however, like to talk publicly about this. Her wariness is something that will be familiar to many people with personal experience of the stigma of mental illness. Yet her personal experience means that she has a good understanding about the long-term impact of mental illness, not just on the individual affected, but also on family and friends.

Bahn, a fellow of Lucy Cavendish College, was always interested in understanding the brain, but initially wanted to become a zoologist. It was medicine that she eventually decided to study at the University of Freiburg, though. She says she wanted to be a neurologist rather than someone dealing at first hand with mental illness. "That was too close," she says. She studied neuropathology, examining the brains of dead people, and her PhD was in molecular biology, examining one gene for three years until she realised it was "not for me". "It did not spark my emotional interest," she says. At the same time she became interested in psychiatry and attended an outpatients clinic as an observer. Never one to do things by halves, she decided to train as a psychiatrist on top of setting up her research centre at the University. From 1997 she worked full time as a senior house officer for three years and completed her postdoctoral studies, putting in an 80-hour week.

But she was turned down for a research grant by the Medical Research Council because her research involved looking at postmortem brains. Such research can be, she says, "a bit messy", given that many people with severe mental illness commit suicide. However, she defends the research, saying it is impossible to have any animal model of a depressed person "because you cannot ask a rat if it is suffering from hallucinations".

Nevertheless, two years later (and, Bahn says, quite out of the blue) her appetite for work, as well as her innovative approach to her field, attracted the interest of the Stanley Medical Research Foundation – interest that was eventually made concrete in the form of a cheque for \$500,000 (£288,000) twice a year.

The Foundation was set up by Theodore and Vada Stanley, whose son was diagnosed with severe mental illness. In the last 15 years or so it has invested up to \$60m in research into schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

Bahn says she was "flabbergasted" by the grant. "It must have been a really high risk for them," she says. "I did not have any results published at the time." She was down to her last pennies when the money came in and speaks of "salvaging stuff out of bins" and basically begging for money. Members of the Foundation came to see her and invited her to present her results in the US. "I was so nervous, and then so shocked when they offered me the money," she says. "I felt a bit overwhelmed because I had not actually achieved anything yet." Immediately she started worrying. "Now I had no excuse for failure," she says.

The Research Foundation, which has a huge bank of postmortem brains of people with schizophrenia and bipolar disease, including twins, has given Bahn one of its three largest grants. Professor Fuller Torrey, its chief executive, says simply: "We noted that Sabine is a very creative thinker, willing and able to approach schizophrenia and bipolar disorder in new ways, and not bound by traditional thinking in this research field. We also noted that she is extremely dedicated to this

research and works very hard. I think her research is at the cutting edge of current research."

Bahn went from studying postmortem brains to looking at cerebrospinal fluid in living people. One of the big limitations is that, unlike with other diseases, you cannot cut bits off the brain to study any abnormalities. She surmised that the abnormalities would not be restricted to the brain.

By looking at biomarkers such as body fluids, she was able to identify how these alter in a person who develops a particular mental illness. She says: "We found that there was an alteration in the immune cells in the serum of living patients with severe mental illness. Based on these results we hypothesised that it might be possible to develop a diagnostic test using a surrogate disease model rather than an animal, and that this might be useful for pre-clinical trials."

With the help of Chris Lowe, head of the Cambridge Institute of Biotechnology, she set up a company, Psynova Neurotech, in 2005 to develop the diagnostic test and is already working with most of the big pharmaceutical companies.

She describes Professor Lowe, who is on the company's board, as her mentor and a major reason she has remained in Cambridge. She says his experience as a "serial entrepreneur" was invaluable. "He is a kind and generous person with his time and his expertise." In fact, he not only helped her set up the company, but also came into the lab in the first week to help clean it up.

Bahn says she is pessimistic that scientists will ever be able to pinpoint what has caused a particular person to develop a severe mental illness because there are just too many potential triggers. What they may be able to do, though, is to diagnose the different pathways involved in an individual's illness so that they get the best treatment available to them. They may even be able to prevent the person becoming ill, says Bahn. "We may be able to identify populations who are at risk, for example, those in late adolescence, and provide some form of psycho-education which can help them avoid getting ill."

Psynova Neurotech is working on a blood test which could be offered to people who currently consult their GP about vague symptoms that may only get diagnosed three or four years later. The test could catch the illness at a much earlier stage and prevent particularly young patients getting in with the wrong crowd, dropping out of education and all the other social problems which, when combined with their illness, make them much more vulnerable.

Though Bahn is combining her work in the lab with Psynova Neurotech and working on a drug intervention programme, she has somehow managed to reduce her hours a little since the heady days when she regularly did 16-hour days. "I need to be able to recharge to see the bigger picture," she says. She also has a partner based in Switzerland who she likes to see as often as possible. He is an astrophysicist and has also set up his own company so is understanding of her work ethos as well as her passion.

"Severe mental illness is like other illnesses only it affects the brain," she says. "We have been very much based in the psychoanalytical era. Mental illness is still very much stigmatised as something obscure and mystical. People are ashamed of it. Families feel hopeless and to blame. That has to change." ■

After my hartly commendation, vnto you and to my sister. Sir with
 it is so that you have promised my Cosin Harpe a buik agaynst the
 commencement, And the time draweth so neere, I haue to desire ^{you} because he now
 hath sent for it, and he must needes be at great charges if the messenger carrye these
 vpon his own cost. that you will so use the messenger that he be at ~~not~~
 no cost either for lodginge or meate and drinke whilst he is with you. Besides
 this, if you will show my Cosin at my request so much curtesy that he may
 pay the keeper no fees for the same buik, ye shall both please him and me
 very much. And desiringe you to doe this for me I leave you to the direction
 of God. At Cambridge the third day of July. 1574.

Your lovinge brother
 Francis Bacon

My brother had written vnto you if he by reason of sore eyes had
 not taried at London.

CAMBRIDGE 800TH

LETTERS TO THE FUTURE

Byron, Darwin, Churchill, Plath: Cambridge
 has been home to some of the greatest letter-writers.
 To celebrate the 800th anniversary, the University is
 encouraging the next generation to put pen to paper.

1 Francis Bacon letter:
 reproduced courtesy
 of the Fitzwilliam Museum,
 Cambridge.

2 Darwin letter: by
 permission of the Syndics
 of Cambridge University
 Library.

3 Churchill letter:
 reproduced from the
 Baroness Spencer-
 Churchill Papers, courtesy
 of the Churchill Archives
 Centre and Curtis Brown
 Ltd on behalf of Winston
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4 Lord Byron letter:
 reproduced courtesy of
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 (Newstead Abbey).

From Charles Darwin to Byron and Churchill, Cambridge has been home to many renowned letter-writers over the course of its history. And now, a new group of scribes from around the globe will build upon Cambridge's letter-writing tradition. 800 letters, one for each year of the University's history, will be sealed and stored in the University Library, and will not be opened until the 900th anniversary in 2109.

The 2009 writers are following in what has sometimes been a grand, and at other times rather whimsical, tradition. Charles Darwin was a prodigious letter-writer from an early age, corresponding with colleagues for more than 20 years before publishing *On the Origin of Species* in 1859. His letters and specimens sent from HMS Beagle to his teacher and mentor Professor John Henslow form the basis of a unique collection.

In contrast, one of Byron's letters from Trinity concern the virtues of a new pet bear.

"I have got a new friend, the finest in the world, a tame bear. When I brought him here, they asked me what I meant to do with him, and my reply was, 'He should sit for a fellowship'."

Perhaps the most moving letter in the collection, however, is housed in the archives at Churchill College. Written by Winston Churchill to his wife before heading to the Western Front in 1915, the letter was to be opened in the event of his death.

"Do not grieve for me too much. I am a spirit confident of my rights. Death is only an incident & not the most important which happens to us in this state of being. On the whole, especially since I met you my darling

"Writers reported topics such as 'Friends, family and football', 'Rabbits with floppy ears' and 'Dogs, especially my labrador'."

I have been happy, & you have taught me how noble a woman's heart can be. If there is anywhere else I shall be on the look out for you. Meanwhile look forward, feel free, rejoice in life, cherish the children, guard my memory. God bless you. Good bye. W."

Back in 2009, alumni, local children, staff, students and members of local communities are busy writing messages to their opposite numbers 100 years from now. Universities around the world are also getting in on the act. The Vice-Chancellor has written to more than 150 of her counterparts, inviting them to compose a letter to future post-holders, and institutions from India, China, Japan, Israel, the USA, as well as many from around the UK and Europe, will be taking part.

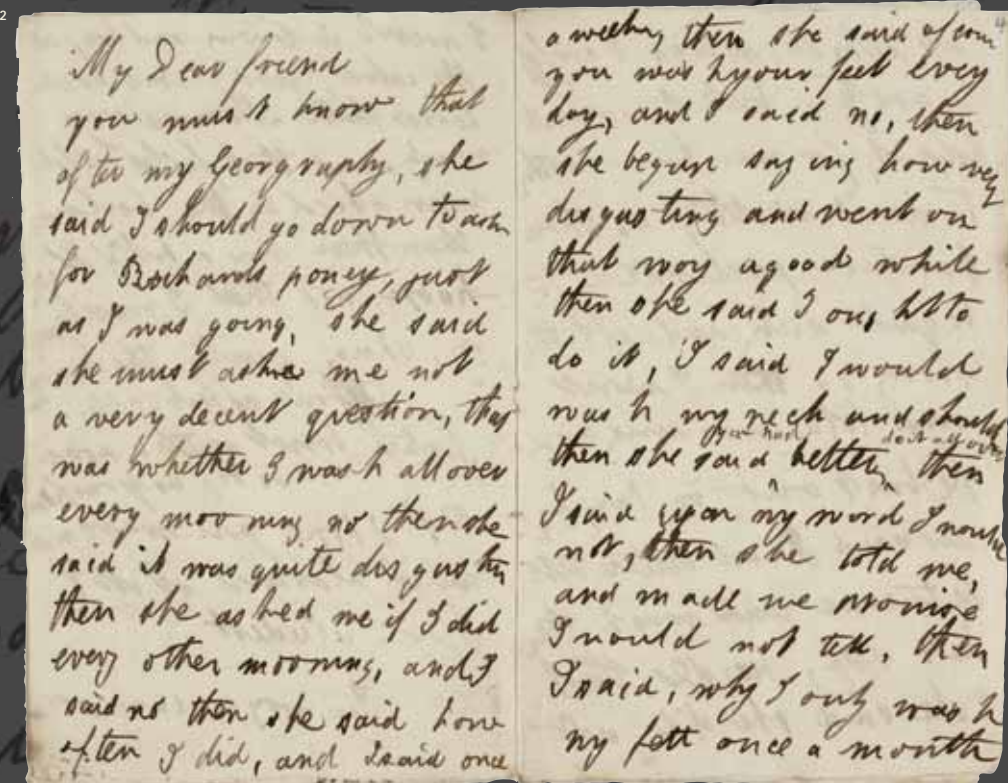
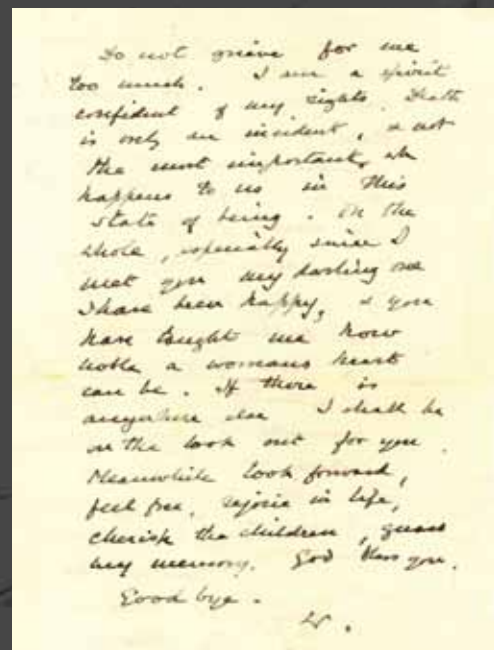
Students from 15 schools in the Cambridge region have been among the first to pen their letters. Students from Years 7 and 8 spent an afternoon at two Cambridge Colleges – St John's and Corpus Christi – writing to as-yet-unborn recipients.

Each letter was personal and confidential so we refrained from asking the children exactly

what they were writing. But writers reported topics ranging from 'Friends, family and football', 'Rabbits with floppy ears' and 'Dogs, especially my labrador' to more serious subjects such as 'Wars and recession' and items they couldn't live without such as 'my iPod' and 'gadgets'.

Each writer will receive a signed and numbered certificate to pass down through the generations over the course of the next 100 years. In 2109, the certificate will be used as a key to retrieve the letter from storage, enabling a future generation to step back in time to 2009.

Alumni are warmly invited to take part in this unique project. Contact the 800th Anniversary Team on 800@admin.cam.ac.uk, +44 (0)1223 761672 or www.800.cam.ac.uk




CHILDREN OF THE STRIKE



The 1984 miners' strike was a defining moment in the Thatcher administration, with far-reaching sociological affects. But 25 years on, what lasting impression has it made on those who formed their ideas in its shadow?

Words **Lucy Jolin**

Main photograph **Lee Mawdsley**



The struggle between the National Union of Mineworkers, led by Arthur Scargill, and Margaret Thatcher's government would last for a year and ultimately lead to the virtual disappearance of the British coal industry.

March 5 1984

The National Coal Board announces it intends to close Cortonwood Pit in Yorkshire, followed by more pits around the country. Miners across the county walk out and the strike begins. Their numbers soon swell to 93,000 miners across England, Wales and Scotland.

March 12 1984

Arthur Scargill calls a national strike, but without taking the issue to a national ballot. Consequently some counties, including Nottingham, refuse to recognise the strike.

June 18 1984

The notorious 'Battle of Orgreave' sees thousands of riot police and miners clash during a picket at the Orgreave coking plant. Hundreds on both sides are injured.

September–February 1984–5

The NUM's hardship funds start to run low. Miners unable to manage without a wage start to drift back to work. Coal stockpiled by the government keeps the country's electricity supplies running throughout the winter.

March 3 1985

As more and more miners return to work, the NUM votes to call off the strike. Over the next 25 years, 158 collieries out of 170 are closed.

Twenty-five years ago: a grey day in a featureless field in Orgreave, South Yorkshire. Police on horseback in full riot gear, waving truncheons. "Arthur Scargill pays our mortgage," jeers one. A rock smacks onto a riot shield. An opposing line of miners, a motley crowd in denim, bristling fury and yellow Coal Not Dole stickers. The miners charge. They slam with stunning force into the police line. Now police on horseback charge through a quiet suburban street lined with small red-brick houses. Miners scatter and regroup, scatter and regroup.

It is an image of the miners' strike we all recognise, but there is something missing: the children. The children of miners, of trade unionists, of politicians, of policemen. The children of pit villages and the children who simply watched the drama unfold on TV.

The main players of 25 years ago may continue to bicker over the finer points of who-did-what-to-whom-and-why. But today, the strike continues to exert its influence, this time on those who were children or teens in 1984. These 'children of the strike' – many of them Cambridge graduates now working in academia and politics – have moved beyond debating obscure points of trade union policy and are instead using their experiences and memories to create their own meanings.

"My uncles were miners. They lost their jobs as a result of the strike and the closures that were initiated in the first wave of the process in 1984 to 1985. My dad was a shipbuilder and he also lost his job. It was all part of the same industrial decline that started from around 1983 onwards," says Dr Katy Shaw, senior lecturer in English Literature at the University of Brighton (Homerton 2000).

"I've always been interested in the agency of the individual, the power of personality to create change and push for change and I think I probably got that subconsciously from my dad and my uncles when I was growing up."

Shaw, whose research interests include working-class literature and the literatures of post-industrial regeneration, was born two years before the strike began. Permeating her childhood was a sense of urgency, of losing everything, of defeat. Families down her street disappeared as the jobs went. One day her next-door neighbours were there, the next they weren't. There was no work. The landscape changed. The pit wheels and hauling gear that dominated the skyline disappeared.

She went to Cambridge to study English literature and started making connections. She studied Tony Harrison's long poem, *V*: "How many British graveyards now this May / are strewn with rubbish and choked up with weeds / since families and friends have gone away / for work or fuller lives, like me from Leeds?" "Something in me just clicked," she remembers. "I thought, my God, literature has actually engaged with these really immediate social issues. I use the poem in my own teaching now. I am the next generation on and I'm interested in how the generation after me reacts to that very immediate history."

But despite the significance of the strike to her own intellectual trajectory, Shaw believes that for most children of the 1980s who weren't directly involved in some way, the strike is just another part of *We Love The 80s* clip-culture: grainy images of grim-faced picketers in the rain flashing up comfortably alongside *Top of the Pops* footage of *Black Lace*. It's not taught on the history curriculum: there's no programme to encourage ex-miners, policemen or managers to visit schools and talk to children. The majority of thirtysomethings are more likely to be able to recount details of Hitler's Germany than Thatcher's



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England. “We are, in a sense, most distant from our most immediate past,” she says.

The children of the strike do not, however, inhabit just one side of the political divide, as Alexander Deane (Trinity 1997) points out. “I remember images of Scargill on TV,” he says. “Not only one of my first political memories – one of my first memories full stop.” Deane, a Conservative commentator, barrister and former chief of staff to David Cameron, believes the post-strike Britain in which he grew up is all the better for the strike.

“I just remember seeing him [Scargill] there and I remember thinking (instinctively or by instruction) that he was in the wrong,” he says. “The unions desperately needed to be fought and beaten. The miners’ strike has been surrounded in all manner of blarney by sympathisers, but the telling facts are that coal wasn’t competitive and the conditions for miners were still awful. Those same miners who droned on about a ‘way of life’ would blanch at the idea of their own sons going ‘down the pit’ – which says it all really.”

That ‘way of life’ has not been lost entirely, however, because – perhaps surprisingly – the job of writing about the strike has been taken up by the next generation. Novelist David Peace used a hallucinatory mixture of fact, fiction and speculation to reinvent the strike as conspiracy in his staccato, violent novel GB84. He was 17 in 1984. Films like *Brassed Off* and *Billy Elliot* used those smaller stories – a pithead brass band, a boy who wanted to dance – as a prism through which to view the lost world of pre-1984 mining communities.

Lee Hall (Fitzwilliam 1986), author of *Billy Elliot*, has spoken about his need to write about what he saw as a defining moment, a political watershed. “Growing up in the north-east in the 1970s and 1980s meant that

“Seen against a background of globalisation, the strike seems less a carefully planned Establishment conspiracy against the unions, and more an inevitable step along a familiar road.”

I thought there was nothing as boring as the mining industry,” he wrote in *The Times* in 2008. “It was pervasive, domineering, a sooty weight on my young shoulders. Getting interested in art meant throwing off the old mantle of banners and ballads and reaching for something different and modern. I was under no illusions that whatever I did it would not dent the consciousness of this ancient world of cloth caps and collieries.”

But by the time Hall had gone through university and begun his career as a writer, he found that the world he’d scorned was disappearing. “What I saw as my permanent inheritance was melting into air and, panicked into an act of cultural retrieval, I wrote *Billy Elliot*.”

While Hall was putting on plays supporting the miners in his local theatre, 14-year-old Andy Burnham (Fitzwilliam 1988), now Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, was passing the picket lines on his way to and from school. “Every day when the strike was on, the school bus would go past Parkside

Colliery and the picket line there. I knew lots of friends at school whose dads were out on strike. I would trace that time as the point at which I became more politically active. It was a political awakening. I remember watching it all on TV, hearing the reports. I was connecting those national images to what I saw going past those picket lines every morning. It was close to home and real for us. My dad wasn’t a miner but he was a strong supporter of the miners and it was discussed every night in our house.

“I think I learned political lessons. I’ve always had a strong sense of unfairness – the way opportunities are unfairly distributed around the country. My constituents in Leigh don’t get the same life chances that others get. That is a burning sense of injustice that I felt then and I still feel now. There are parts of the country that need to see a fair spread of health, wealth and life chances. That’s my politics and I’ve never budged from that view of life.”

Nevertheless, Professor William Brown, Montague Burton Professor of Industrial Relations and Master of Darwin College, counsels against glib talk of generation-defining events. He scotches the myth that Thatcher and the strike were single-handedly responsible for the destruction of trade unions: the coverage of collective bargaining, particularly in the private sector, reached a peak immediately after the end of the Second World War and has been falling ever since.

In fact, seen against a background of increased globalisation, the strike seems less a carefully planned Establishment conspiracy against the unions, and more an inevitable step along a familiar road. “Every country with coal has seen huge, stable communities built around coal mining collapse,” he says. “Coal was King Coal for well over a century. It was inevitable that when something happened to coal it would lead to the death of communities.

“It’s easy to identify change with dramatic events. But that shouldn’t detract from the symbolism of the strike. It’s like discussing the significance of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Hugely significant, yes, but on the other hand it was just the point at which the mighty edifice, which had been crumbling, broke. Sometimes historic events are historic because there can be no going back and they shift people’s mindset.”

Professor Brown sees the strike as one of the factors that helped shape today’s political landscape, believing that it helped discredit the far left and consequently played a part in enabling the Labour Party to reinvent itself. Does Burnham feel that lessons learned from the strike have had a direct effect on the thinking of his generation of decision-makers?

“Yes. I’d stress that it’s important not to romanticise it ... Neil Kinnock’s been speaking about how he felt the conduct of the strike undermined the cause of the miners and that



1 Orgreave Coking Plant near Sheffield, 18 June 1984.

2 Conservative Party Conference 1984.

3 Welsh Office, Cardiff, 30 July 1984.

4 Orgreave Coking Plant near Sheffield, 18 June 1984.



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I think is a very important point. You simply could not lead that kind of an uprising without a clear democratic mandate. We would never see the like of that again. It's incredible that it could have got so far without having democratic legitimacy on behalf of the trade union membership.

“As a health minister, I was often in discussions with trade unions. I've always believed that's the right way to do things – to have the trade unions inside, involved and consulted. If staff are more involved in decisions, then it breeds a much better relations climate.”

Ultimately, it's the children of the strike who have to deal with its legacy – good and bad. Andy Burnham says that the fabled community spirit is still alive. “While the north is portrayed in certain sections of the media as a rather brutalised environment over some of the violence that was around at the time of the strike, the reality was a rather different one, which was people supporting each other and doing anything for their fellow workers and neighbours. And that still persists in places like Leigh. The sense of community is really strong and I think that was forged partially by the strike. It was a common cause.”

But there are also physical, palpable losses. “The jobs that were lost in mining communities still haven't been replaced,” says Neil Robertson (Trinity 2002), a political blogger currently working as a teaching assistant in his home town, and a true child of the strike (he was born in Barnsley, June 1984). “Going out into these communities, you see a lot of poverty. It certainly makes me cringe every time the papers theorise about benefit scroungers and broken Britain. Assuming you can fix quite ingrained social problems by simply cutting off benefits, thinking that's a solution, is something I disagree with because of where I have grown up.”

But Alexander Deane counters this view. “Sometimes, despite all the shades of grey that make up political life, there are clear rights and wrongs, and when that's the case one has to fight for the right. That was the case with the miners and that is what Thatcher did. We owe her a great debt.”

Perhaps the lessons for this generation really are that simple. Thatcher's decision to go head-to-head with Scargill, writes columnist and former Conservative MP Matthew Parris (Clare 1969) in *The Times*, could indeed be an example David Cameron will need to follow if the Conservatives win the next election. Discussing how the strike affected the image of the Conservative Party, he wonders: “But is there any other way? I'm no longer sure that there always is. Two decades after leaving the Tory trenches I've come finally to believe that those surprising bedfellows, Karl Marx and Mrs Thatcher, were right: to an important degree, politics is always and necessarily about the clash of interests. The boss can't be on everyone's side. As Lenin put it: ‘Who whom?’

Orgreave Coking Plant near Sheffield, 18 June 1984.



Who gains and at whose expense? Somebody's got to win.”

Maybe it's right that an event as divisive as the miners' strike should leave behind no easy lessons for those who grew up at that time. You were a miner or you were a scab. Scargill was the devil or the saviour of your dad's job. The police were fighting the enemy within, or they were the agents of a fascist state. It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. Politicians who remember the strike want to move on; writers who lived through it want to keep it alive. And to everyone else who grew up with the strike, it's something that touches their lives and their opinions without, perhaps, their ever being aware of it. The scars on the landscape can be built over; lives and minds aren't so easily dealt with.

As to the long-term consequences, Professor Brown sees younger people disassociated from the ideals of their fathers and grandfathers. “I think in terms of people's perceptions of trade unions it was very dramatic, because although actually very atypical, the miners' union was perceived as being representative of part of the union movement. The strike is something my students are vaguely aware of. I don't think they feel very strongly about what trade unions are or were.”

Andy Burnham is concerned that, along with the ideal of collective action, the idea of the political party as an instrument for change is lessening in importance. “People are just as concerned as they ever were about the security of the planet – what's different is the relevance of political parties,” he says. “Instead, you can go online, form a group and start doing stuff. But I would say that we must reassert the importance of the political party, because it's a very important forum in which opposing views are reconciled. The political party is a stabilising force in society. It encourages people to come together. It's the place where

deals are done and trades are done.

Compromises aren't very idealistic, are they?”

And in the pit villages, reconstruction continues with greater or lesser degrees of success. Easington Colliery was one of the biggest collieries in the country. In the wake of the strike, says Dr Shaw, a new village called Easington Village was built, putting up Barratt homes and a brand new A-road, the A19, to get people up and down the coast easily. But five minutes down the road in the original Easington, nothing was done. Houses still stood boarded up.

“They had erased the pit from the landscape. Now there's just a giant playing field. And when we were being shown round Easington, the guy in charge of the local task force for the area said: ‘Look at that gorgeous big public space that the public can use in the middle of Easington.’ And one of the younger kids said: ‘Wouldn't they prefer some jobs there?’”

In contrast, in Castleford, regeneration has given the area Xscape, a new skiing and snowboarding centre built over the old Glasshoughton pit. You can drink in the Winter Seam bar, named after the main seam in the old colliery. But few of the young people there realise what the name means.

Does it matter? Dr Shaw believes that ultimately, it does. “My generation and the next need to have an awareness of the immediacy of their past, a better understanding of what goes on. People need to know who they are. All these vague references to the past are only pertinent if people actually understand them. The knowledge to interpret those associations is in danger of being lost. I am proud of where I come from and I'm critical of attempts to section off the past. I want to know. I want to find out.” ■



Siza Mtimbiri



Alexis Barr



Dr Alastair Beresford

What's it like to become a research student in Cambridge? Six post-grads explain why spending *more* time in the library can be so rewarding.

LIFE OF THE GRADUATE MIND

Words **Olivia Gordon**
Photographs **Martin Figura**

Whether inspired by a last golden afternoon in May Week or a rising panic that at some point you might have to get a job, most undergraduates briefly considers an academic career. For most that means a taught MPhil or MBA, but for a few the dream is all about pure research. Usually, the realisation that this will mean applying for funding, attempting to get a first and more, rather than less, time spent in the library or lab brings the would-be research postgrad to his or her senses. But what's life really like for the one

in five who follows their dream, stays on and lives the life of the mind as a research student?

For 22-year-old Corpus graduate Neil Myler from Lancashire, who's reading for an MPhil in Linguistics, immersing himself in his specialist subject has been thrilling. "Postgrad work is liberating. Often as an undergraduate I'd have to stop reading something interesting, but now I can pursue things." At school, he had heard about linguistics and wanted to study it, but it was not possible. As his undergraduate degree progressed, he knew "the idea of leaving

linguistics was just too unpleasant. It was always Plan A".

Sarah Leigh-Brown, 22, is halfway through a molecular biology PhD at Darwin College. "I'd always been interested in doing my own research when I was at school," she says. "In my final year as an undergraduate, I found genetics fascinating and I had a real drive to take it further – even a passion."

For Leigh-Brown, the PhD is a rite of passage, crucial to her development as a scientist. "It's a jolt going from the undergraduate process of learning and reproducing to coming up with a way to solve a potentially insoluble problem yourself. It takes a lot more initiative and you get fewer immediate returns – it's tough, but exciting and enlightening."

The transition from undergraduate to postgraduate also opens up a new side of Cambridge. Joined by graduates from universities around the UK and from around the world (50% of graduate students are from overseas), postgraduates experience Cambridge in a new way. Dr Alastair Beresford, a graduate tutor at Robinson who has made the complete journey from undergraduate to PhD student to fellow, says that graduate students in their mid-20s naturally have a totally different outlook from undergraduates of 18, and therefore enjoy a closer relationship with the fellowship.

And although they may be invisible to undergraduates (who, in any case, think the University revolves around them), postgraduates actually know Cambridge far better, since they are here all year. That goes for the work itself, too. Despite the time spent in labs and libraries, you can forget ivory towers: postgraduate life is often very much engaged with the wider world. The current President of the Graduate Union, Siza Mtimbiri, is a case in point, researching the impact of HIV/AIDS on rural primary school children in Zimbabwe, at St Edmund's.



Djoke Veldhuis



Sarah Leigh-Brown



Neil Myler

He intends to return to Zimbabwe to help improve its education system. "Being in a community of learners who are leaders in their field is priceless," he says. "Cambridge is the best place to prepare me for moving our education system forward in the face of the HIV/AIDS epidemic."

PhD student Alexis Barr, 26, of Trinity Hall, who is working on the biology of cancer, notes the challenges of research with no definitive end in sight. "A PhD isn't easy and can be much lonelier than an undergraduate degree where everyone is working towards the same thing and from the same material. When you're an undergraduate thinking about staying on to do a graduate degree, you don't really realise how different it will be," she says. "In most science PhDs you are expected to do a minimum of nine to five in the lab Monday to Friday, which is much more intensive than lectures and practicals at undergraduate level. Also, the lack of terms can be a bit of a shock at first – I remember feeling very tired by summertime in my first PhD year."

In addition, many graduate students take part in the University's Rising Stars programme, which enables Cambridge research – and researchers – to get out into the community. Girtonian and biological anthropology PhD student, Djuke Veldhuis gave a talk on science at a school where lads in hoodies slouched in the back row, and says that the experience was hugely rewarding. "I had, by that point, already supervised an uncountable number of undergraduates. This group was a hundred times harder to keep engaged for an hour, but when they started asking questions the subsequent buzz was unlike any I had felt after a university supervision."

It's extremely competitive to get a funded place. "Even though I got a starred first, it was no guarantee of funding," says Neil Myler. "Loads of people do well and want to stay on. When I applied, I was one of those lucky

The Pigott Scholars Programme



Mark Pigott Hon OBE, is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of PACCAR Inc. He is a generous patron and enthusiastic supporter of the University of Cambridge. In 2008, Mr Pigott made a significant gift for the establishment of the Pigott Scholars Programme.

"For over 100 years, my family has championed education. Young men and women are the future; by providing them with the opportunity to learn about the world, all of society benefits. And that is particularly true of graduate students, who will go on to be the leaders and thinkers of tomorrow.

"The Pigott Scholars Programme will ensure funding for UK graduate students studying in the humanities and arts, enabling Cambridge to attract and support the most gifted young minds. When I read about the lives of graduate students, I am inspired and delighted – by their tenacity, their spirit and their smarts. Consequently, I am pleased to endow a Programme that will make a significant contribution to the lives of our Scholars, and which I hope will enable them to make a difference to society as a whole.

"Cambridge is a wonderful environment that enables students to learn, grow and prosper. But on a more personal level, as something of a polymath (my background is in engineering, business and the arts, and I am an avid bibliophile and connoisseur of the Elizabethan age) Cambridge holds endless fascination. I take so much pleasure in the classic designs of King's Chapel and the Mathematical Bridge, and marvel at the sophistication of the technology employed centuries ago. I enjoy touring the Wren Library and immersing myself in the art of the Fitzwilliam and Parker Library. It is wonderful to be in a position to enable the next generation of graduate students to share in these gifts."

people who got money. I think there is a lot less around now."

Sarah Leigh-Brown's fiancé, also a Fitzwilliam graduate, now works in the City, but in the current financial climate, Leigh-Brown's four-year employment by Cancer Research UK – which funds her PhD with a reasonable stipend – is the ultimate in postgraduate security. Nevertheless, she says that money is not as important as enjoying your job. "A PhD goes with you wherever you are. It's a significant commitment. Sometimes I think it would be nice to have free time and relax on weekends but I get a great deal back from what I'm doing!"

Neil Myler fell in love with "this beautiful brilliant place" from his first day as an undergraduate, and says it will be nothing less than traumatic for him to leave. "There are moments when I still can't believe I'm here. Cambridge's beauty never gets old for me." ■

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Richard Wigmore is a distinguished musicologist, specialising in the Viennese Classical period and *Lieder*. He writes regularly for Gramophone, BBC Music Magazine and the Daily Telegraph and is the author of *The Faber Pocket Guide to Haydn and Schubert: The Complete Song Texts*.

University Matters

Post-grads are high priority

Professor John Rallison
Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education

Undergraduate issues might attract the most media attention, but the intellectual life of the University depends in large measure on the 2200 or so graduate students admitted each year to follow research degrees: in the library and at the bench, departments would be nowhere near as productive if not for the efforts of these students. We need them as much as they need us.

Despite its low public profile, graduate education is in flux. Government and the Research Councils are changing policies and our research students are telling us more about their needs. The University must respond if we are to continue to attract the best postgraduates from around the world. Graduates are therefore central to my agenda as Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education.

One of the biggest developments of recent years has been an increased emphasis on transferable skills and employability, and while that might sound like government jargon, the outcomes are concrete. For example, supervisors are no longer likely to say, "Here's a problem, go and investigate it; see you in three years." There is far more emphasis on maintaining regular contact between supervisors and students. Similarly, through the development of 'graduate schools' (currently in life sciences, and there will be more) we are able to provide research skills and funding opportunities more efficiently.

A brilliant research supervisor can be life-changing, intellectually and professionally. But that key relationship can, on occasion, break down, with painful consequences for both parties. We are now moving to a system where every graduate has a supervising team, or at least a supervisor and an advisor in their specialist area, so if supervisor and student fall out, the student has someone else to turn to.

Another major issue is the time it takes a student to complete a PhD. Where in the past attitudes may have been relatively relaxed, funding authorities are increasingly keen that people should complete in good time – putting additional pressure on both the students and the academics who supervise them.

The majority of our graduate students don't go into academia, but the life skills they are learning are vital for their future careers. It would be naive to suppose that the entire system should be constructed for the rather



“How will an increasingly structured approach to research education affect the truly brilliant? I think there are positives and negatives.”

smaller proportion of students who become academics.

However, no change is without consequence. How will an increasingly structured approach to research education affect the truly brilliant? I think there are positives and negatives. The very best students rarely need a terribly structured environment, so there is the anxiety that they become frustrated in their ambition and creativity. My observation is that those younger academics who have come up through a similar system in some of our peer institutions (particularly in the US) don't see this as much of a problem.

It is also true that life for many research students has changed: they now often work as part of a larger team, and the opportunities for an individual to follow their nose are necessarily reduced in a more formal structure (the same structure that for others provides a welcome security). It may well be the case that mature, self-motivated research comes at a later stage than it used to, post doc, rather than during a PhD, but on the other hand, fewer people drop off the edge. Overall, I think that's a good trade.

Last summer, the government made the decision to stop funding the Overseas Research Studentship scheme, which had previously provided funding for overseas graduate students. Around 50% of our post-grad population are from overseas, so the implications could have been quite considerable, especially because we are in competition with the US for the best international students. The importance of this challenge was quickly recognised across the University: we have moved to mobilise resources, in partnership with the Cambridge Trusts, for the new Cambridge International Studentship Scheme. This year 85 PhD students have been offered funding in time to match offers they have from US peers. The new scheme, together with the success of the Gates Scholars, (now in its ninth year) and other donor supported studentships, goes some way to ensure that funding barriers do not impede access to Cambridge for potential research students.

A second issue for international students will be equally challenging for the University. Changes to the immigration system mean that meeting visa requirements will be much more difficult. Decisions on who we admit will have to be made several months earlier and there may be difficulties with the authorities about students 'overstaying their welcome' when writing up a thesis takes longer than anticipated. More effort on our part will be needed to ensure that the best students are able both to come and to complete their studies here.

There is, however, no question in my mind that the effort is worth it: graduate students, are, in the most literal sense, the University's future.

Debate

Bonnets, crinolines and a steaming Mr Darcy

Professor Janet Todd and Dr Linda Bree debate whether TV adaptations of the classics can ever be a good idea.

Illustration **Lee Woodgate**

Linda Bree Why are classics adapted for TV? It used to be as a way of making them understood – remember the Classic Serial at teatime on a Sunday, vaguely aimed at schoolchildren and their parents? Now it rather seems a way of offering glossy entertainment without having to think of a new plot.

You and I have spent most of the past five years on detailed study of the writings of Jane Austen which haven't been adapted for TV: it has made me realise how lucky those works have been to escape.

Janet Todd I was not in England for the Classic Serial; I had a colonial childhood in which I read classic novels – in comic form. I remember them well; cheap paper as befitted the postwar years and colourful pictures. They were interpretations, simplifications of course – but I went on to read other works of Scott, Stevenson and, indeed, Austen, pricked into doing so by those vivid reductions. I suspect modern TV adaptations can work in much the same way. They are glossy and, like the comics, they make their visual images conform to present ideas of beauty and heritage notions of the past. Yet something intriguing and less familiar does often emerge, sending readers to the particular author for more.

LB Well, if the best we can say for adaptations is that with luck they send the audience to the book, it's not much of an endorsement.

JT It's not the best praise – the best would be that they're (sometimes) thoughtful and good entertainment in the present. But the dispatch back to the author is an attractive by-product: they let us see an old work with fresh eyes.

LB I do understand that adaptation needs to make sense in its own right. But it's a no-win

situation: either the adaptation sticks slavishly to the original, while adding a whole load of specifics that are necessary for visual performance, but get in the way of the mind's eye experience of the book, or the adaptor or director follows their own ideas – in which case why pin it back to the book at all? Why have an 'adaptation' of *Mansfield Park* in which Fanny Price is a spunky heroine or of *Persuasion* where the climax of the novel – Anne's poignant speech about the endurance of female love, which leads directly to Wentworth's avowal – is missing?

JT I grant you that Billie Piper as Fanny Price in *Mansfield Park* was probably the nadir of casting, but adaptations can make interesting comment on novels. Patricia Rozema's controversial 1999 version of the same novel, in which slavery was upfronted, irritated many viewers who knew that the subject was met with silence in the book; nonetheless it extended a strong current trend in Austen criticism and was an intelligent dialogue with the book. I like the fact that there are now so many famous adaptations that they interact with each other. The notorious wet shirt and tight breeches of Colin Firth's *Mr Darcy* provoked scenes in *Bridget Jones's Diary* and the recent witty TV serial *Lost in Austen*, where the modern heroine, thrown back into the Regency world, is inspired by the Austen industry as much as by *Pride and Prejudice*. This replicates Jane Austen's own habits of interacting with other contemporary texts such as the gothic novels in *Northanger Abbey*, which so obsess the heroine.

LB I disagree. Even so-called attempts to replicate the original in new ways – as with the presentation of *Bleak House* and *Little Dorrit*



in half-hour episodes – are really gimmicks. Is this really the equivalent of monthly parts, each of 50 pages or so, which could be reread and referred to as the novel progressed?

JT Yes it is, especially now that episodes can be re-seen on the web. The eccentricities that Dickens's minor characters display and which allow readers to remember who they are over several weeks suit television admirably.

LB Well yes, but often that just tips over into character actors hamming things up – it is



one of the things, along with inevitable use of contemporary ideas of beauty and ugliness, that make some adaptations seem dated if you happen to see them again after a few years, while the books themselves don't.

JT Even taking you on your own assumption that the books live in the way adaptations can't do, are you really saying you've not been jolted into a new awareness of some aspect of a novel by seeing a TV adaptation?

LB Almost never. Some of the Dickens characters in the adaptations are beautifully done, idiosyncratic, hilarious, touching, tragic, all at the same time, but I can't say seeing them has expanded my understanding of the novels.

JT In the recent adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice*, five daughters, all expensively dressed in the fashion of the day and following their mother out of Longbourn, underline for me what is less prominent in the book: the Bennets' financial precariousness and the foolishness of Mr Bennet's theatrical response to Mr Collins's proposal – that he wouldn't speak to his daughter if she married him. The celebrated Darcy plunge stresses the passion that is, unusually in Austen, more on his side than on the heroine's.

LB I have nothing to say against the wet shirt, but it didn't make me find new meaning in the *Pride and Prejudice* that Jane Austen wrote. But then, surely that wasn't the point of it. Just as the repeated vision of Willoughby seducing and abandoning Colonel Brandon's ward at the beginning of each episode of the recent *Sense and Sensibility* wasn't really intended (despite the arguments made occasionally by the adaptor and director) to illuminate the novel but rather to entertain the viewer watching the TV programme or to create – for whatever reason – something different from what the novel offered.

JT I thought the initial seduction scene well captured the sexual threat of Willoughby. If I may be critical of Austen here, I think this is insufficiently delineated in *Sense and Sensibility*, which presents Willoughby's damning history in a rather unsophisticated inset narrative. In any case, the purpose was to make sense of the film not the book. But, then, perhaps you feel that only the book matters?

LB No, I don't feel that the book is the only thing that matters; but it's hard to assess a TV programme or movie in its own right when it is itself proclaiming that it is the film version of a novel. In that sense *Bride and Prejudice* – or *Lost in Austen*, as you say – is doing something more interesting, in declaring the novel as a start-point but wanting to create something original.

JT Creative writers and musicians have always re-done and adapted. Authors rewrite past works and treat them with often insolent freedom: Shakespeare did so, then others rewrote Shakespeare, giving his tragedies happy endings. Or they turned his dramas into opera. Pope transposed the ancient Greek *Iliad* into English 18th century language and fashion. Occasionally moments in adaptations stay in the public mind as thoroughly as anything from the original work – the wet shirt is not a new phenomenon. The Victorian novel *East Lynne* was a bestseller in its time, but now people remember the sentence that was never in the book, only in the play based on it: "Dead, dead, and never called me mother!" The original novel and its adaptation feed off each other.

"I grant you that Billie Piper as Fanny Price in *Mansfield Park* was probably the nadir of casting, but adaptations can make interesting comment."

LB Shakespeare didn't promote his plays as dramatisations of *Holinshed*; he used his sources creatively for new purposes. But your point about *East Lynne* reminds me of the conventional view that often the best adaptations – or rather the most fulfilling entertainments based on novels from the past – are from originals that are not themselves considered as top classics: *Nicholas Nickleby* among Dickens's novels, or, more recently, *Cranford*.

JT This is indeed conventional wisdom, but I'm not sure it's true. A certain kind of plot is required for a good film perhaps. The Andrew Davies *Pride and Prejudice* was as successful as *Cranford* and rather more entertaining; *Middlemarch* was sensitively adapted. All three novels lend themselves to adapting. On the other side *Emma*, with its emphatic use of free indirect speech and themes of secrecy and misinterpretation, is not a prime candidate – consequently the most satisfactory version, *Clueless*, set in a modern California high school, has the plot creatively used and entirely transposed.

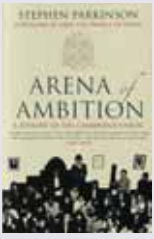
Let's agree to differ. We could perhaps accept that novels and TV adaptations are ultimately different modes of artistic expression: they can reinvent the originals or take them as starting points. For some viewers, an Austen adaptation is simply a work in its own right; for many – and certainly for us two, after nine volumes and eight years of living with the texts – the ghostly 'originals' can never be erased.

Janet Todd

is President of Lucy Cavendish College and General Editor of the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jane Austen.

Linda Bree

is the Literature Publisher of Cambridge University Press. Janet Todd and Linda Bree have just collaborated on the final volume in the series, *The Later Manuscripts of Jane Austen*.

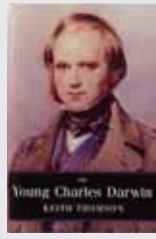


Arena of Ambition: A History of the Cambridge Union

Stephen Parkinson
Icon, £25

Mr President (or possibly “Madam President”, for women, such as Clare Balding, have sat in the Union throne): the motion before this House tonight is that “This is just the book for anyone who ever attended a Union debate”. In proposing this motion, I know that that it will bring back memories of pompous undergraduate speakers – and of hearing in person more extraordinary speakers than will ever come our way again. There was Ronald Reagan, who congratulated the Union on being founded in 1215. (On a point of information, it was 1815.) And Frankie Howerd, whose classical expertise derived from starring in the series *Up Pompeii*, was *victor ludorum* in his debate on the decline of the Roman Empire.

Ex-President Stephen Parkinson takes us through the society’s glorious moments, such as admitting women in 1963 – and its inglorious tendencies, such as excluding them for the previous centuries. (Motion carried unanimously. House adjourned to Union bar.)



The Young Charles Darwin

Keith Thomson
Yale University Press, £18.99

“I find Cambridge rather stupid,” wrote Christ’s student Charles Darwin. Cambridge thought Darwin rather stupid too. He had no interest in his theological studies, nor the career as a clergyman for which they were supposed to be qualifying him. He did, however, work very hard in his unofficial studies of insects and became engulfed in the new craze of ‘beetlemania’. More accessible than previous weighty volumes on the great scientist, this biography takes us up to the publication of *On the Origin of Species*. Professor Thomson qualifies the conventional image of Darwin as an altruistic scientist and family man. Charles edged aside a rival researcher on the voyage of the *Beagle* and later, when another scientist came up with a paper on natural selection before Darwin had finished his own masterwork, he dashed off an instant summary which was launched onto the world at the same time.



Mrs Charles Darwin's Recipe Book

Dusha Bateson
and Weslie Janeway
Glitterati, £17.99

At last: a book with ‘Darwin’ in the title that will please gastrophiles (and happily omits the gastropods). While food and the dyspeptic Charles did not get on, his clever and competent wife Emma fed and watered a large household of family and servants. Charles studied measurements of boobies’ beaks; Emma kept the domestic accounts for 50 years. The recipes she collected and used have survived in a large notebook. Dusha Bateson and Weslie Janeway have ‘revived and illustrated’ a selection of these Victorian dishes, including paragraphs of Emma’s own handwriting, botanical drawings and the best colour photograph of a turnip imaginable. This, easily the most attractively produced book in this selection, sets Mrs Darwin in her historical context. The Darwins grew and reared much of their own food and these recipes have a homely feel: pea soup, potato rissoles, quince jelly, stewed pears and arrowroot pudding.

Books Darwin's dinners

Words Jonathan Sale

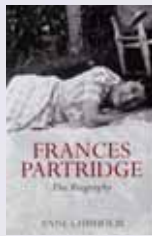




**The Pattern in the Carpet:
A Personal History with Jigsaws**

Margaret Drabble
Atlantic, £18.99

Margaret Drabble is back, this time with a beautifully written piece of non-fiction which passes on the fruits of a lifetime's experience, such as: always start a jigsaw with the pieces on the outside edges. Not that she claims any particular expertise, admitting that she took months to complete the puzzle based on Rousseau's Tiger in Tropical Storm (Surprised!) – doubtless much longer than the artist took over the original painting. She is, however, a tireless puzzler (if that's the word), most memorably in the company of Aunt Phyllis, first when she was very young and much later when her aunt was very old. Between her family memories she drops in milestones in the history of jigsaws: entirely white or red designs; the crime novels which included an actual jigsaw revealing whodunit; and the gallery in Buffalo which many visited not for Jackson Pollock's Convergence but for the fiendish puzzle based on it.



**Frances Partridge:
The Biography**

Anne Chisholm
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £25

With her age then approaching three figures, Frances Partridge must have been the oldest person ever interviewed by CAM. This very readable biography devotes only a fraction of its space to her “wildly happy” memories of Newnham just after the end of WWI, as it has to cram in many decades of a life caught up in the enthralling, exasperating activities of the Bloomsbury set, a talented group whose relationships were so complicated that they require not just a family tree but a family forest. Frances herself was in the emotionally and geometrically difficult position of being the fourth ‘side’ in the Eternal Triangle of Lytton Strachey, Dora Carrington and Ralph Partridge (and was played by Alex Kingston in Carrington). She outlasted her fellow Bloomsburyites and became their chronicler in diaries that she later published.



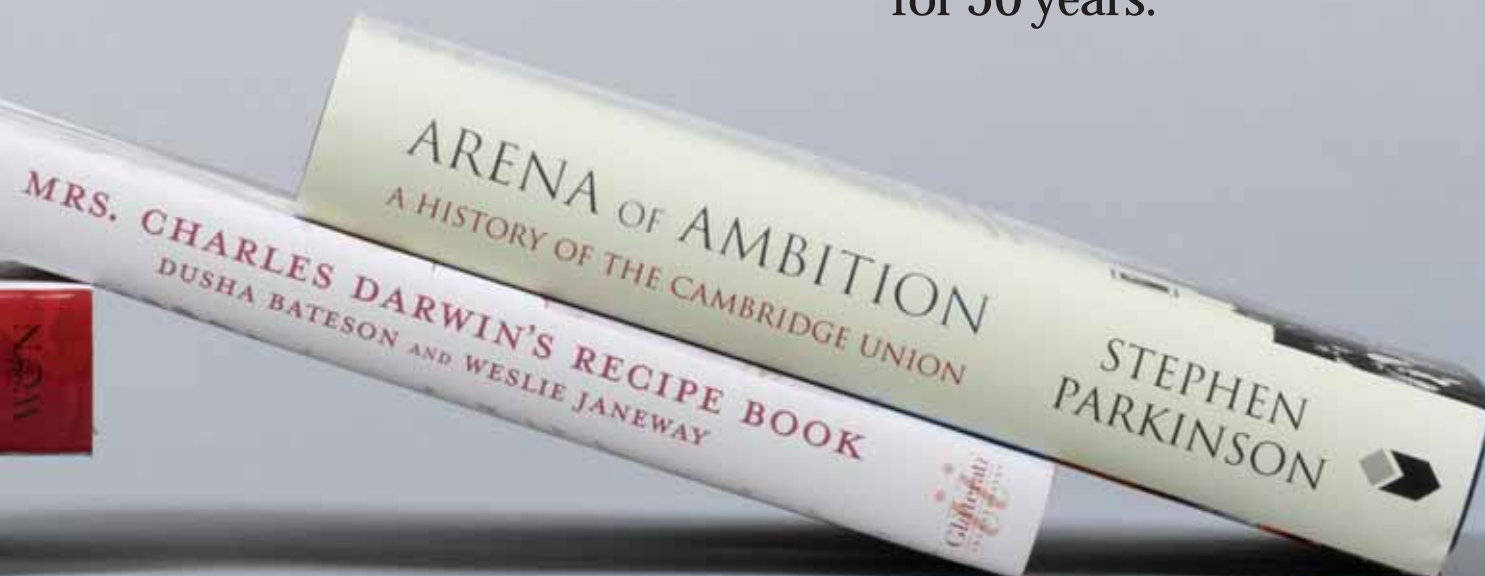
**Rebel Land:
Among Turkey's Forgotten Peoples**

Christopher de Bellaigue
Bloomsbury, £20

Turkey has its own war taboo. The war in question is WWI and the great unmentionables are the Armenian massacres of 1915. Having chosen particularly difficult foreign languages at Cambridge and learnt to speak like a local in Turkey, foreign correspondent Christopher de Bellaigue might in other circumstances have passed unnoticed but, digging up the skeletons of this murderous dispute, he found Turkish authorities too curious for comfort in his researches. To give a focus to this fiendishly complicated racial and religious struggle, he concentrated on the killings in Varto, “a curious place with a name like a detergent”. His tireless research uncovered appalling atrocities – on both sides. A dispossessed Armenian primate, for example, was beheaded; and, as part of the lust for revenge, a Muslim leader's body was boiled in a cauldron. This is an excellent, if disturbing, study.

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“Charles studied measurements of boobies’ beaks; Emma kept the domestic accounts for 50 years.”



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Nic McGegan

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Alessandro Scarlatti, Cecilian Vespers, Avie AV0048

Words **Richard Wigmore**

“When I direct an orchestra, I don’t see myself as working with them. I’m having fun with them.” Any performance by Baroque specialist Nicholas McGegan – universally known as ‘Nic’ – will involve meticulous preparation and informed scholarship. But more than almost any of his ilk, he exudes a palpable delight in the music, an ebullient enthusiasm that communicates itself to musicians and audiences alike. A Bach gavotte or Handel jig is likely to set him dancing on the rostrum. As Mark Tatlow (Corpus 1973) artistic director of the Drottningholm Opera House just outside Stockholm, puts it, “Nic is in the great tradition of the 18th century amateur. He doesn’t just conduct the external aspects of the music; he expresses its inner joy.”

McGegan became an avid convert to the Baroque cause while a music scholar at Corpus. “In those days, the Early Music movement was in its infancy. When I arrived at Cambridge in 1969, my instruments were piano and modern flute, and I’d be more likely to play Janacek or Poulenc than Bach or Handel,” he says. “The Baroque impetus really came from Sir Nicholas Shackleton, the renowned climatologist who also taught acoustics and had a passion for collecting 18th century wind instruments. He lent me my first wooden flute and introduced me to Christopher Hogwood, who’d accompany me in Baroque flute sonatas while I was still trying to put my fingers over the right holes! A few years later I was playing flute in Hogwood’s Academy of Ancient Music, and working with conductors like Norrington, Pinnock and Gardiner. You could say that my time at Cambridge set me up for life. Everything else developed from there.”

‘Everything else’ includes directing the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra in San Francisco (where McGegan now lives) and the annual Handel Festival in Göttingen. He also works regularly with modern-instrument orchestras like the St Paul’s Chamber Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. “Twenty years ago, there was understandable resistance from the old guard of American string players when I tried to get them to adjust to 18th century playing styles. Today, though, with a younger generation of players who have studied Baroque violin at college, the New York Phil can play Handel with the lightness and



Daniel McGegan/Denham

“On the 250th anniversary of his death, Handel has never had it so good. And no conductor has proselytised his work with such zest as McGegan.”

flexibility of a period orchestra.”

On the 250th anniversary of his death, Handel has never had it so good. And no conductor has proselytised his once-neglected operas and oratorios with such zest as McGegan. He first made his international reputation with revelatory recordings of rarities like the opera *Agrippina*, and the delightful *Susanna*, which crosses sacred oratorio with English ballad opera. At Göttingen, where the Handel opera revival began in the 1920s (in performances that were a ludicrous travesty of Baroque style), McGegan has conducted 23 of 40 operas, and still counting.

“What constantly amazes me about Handel is his incredible understanding of the human heart. His finest characters are both individuals and universal in their passions. Audiences can’t help being moved by the plight of Ariodante, plunging from blissful happiness to despair and back,” he says. “But it’s Handel’s women who are really fascinating. Rodelinda, the heroic, suffering wife, is one of his greatest portraits. At the other end of the spectrum, Cleopatra is an irresistible minx, who leads a, shall we say, quaint family life with her brother Ptolemy and sings a love duet with Caesar only minutes after his death. But this is Baroque opera, so who’s quibbling?”

This summer McGegan conducts one of Handel’s most popular operas, *Orlando*, in the first of a series of projected collaborations between the festivals of Göttingen and Drottningholm, that jewel of an 18th century theatre, where he was music director from 1993 to 1996.

“*Orlando* is perfect for Drottningholm, with its original theatrical machinery. It’s one of Handel’s ‘magic’ operas based on Ariosto. It runs the whole gamut of emotions, including a famous mad scene; and it’s visually spectacular, drawing on all the paraphernalia of the Baroque theatre – flying chariots and so on. The plot is a struggle between extravagance and rationality, with the magician Zoroastro seeking to bring the half-crazed Orlando back to the middle way – a very 18th century preoccupation.”

McGegan is pragmatic rather than dogmatic about ‘period style’. “Absolute authenticity is like searching for the end of the rainbow – and in any case, castrati, the biggest draws in Baroque opera, are hardly an option today, short of a cultural revolution.” He is also quick to acknowledge the debt his generation owes to the pioneering efforts of the Handel Opera Society and Alan Kitching’s productions in Abingdon. “This is a great age of Handel singing, and of Handel countertenors in particular. Yet they would not have come through without the examples of an earlier generation – James Bowman, Paul Esswood and Jochen Kowalski. And they in their turn owe so much to Alfred Deller. So I was born at just the right time – none of what I do would be possible without the example of these people.”

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Sport: Amateur Boxing Vincent O'Shea, coach

Interview **Sophie Pickford**

Frank Bruno said, 'Boxing is the toughest and loneliest sport in the world', and I have a tendency to agree with him. In a career defined by highs and lows, perhaps my darkest moments as Cambridge boxing coach came in the wake of the 2008 Varsity Match.

Pummelled 7-2 by Oxford, this result prompted a number of questions. What could we have done differently? How could we turn things around, bring some pride back to the squad, and rebuild for the future? As a coach you feel a responsibility to your team, not only to train and to prepare them, but also to fulfil the trust they place in you – I had to ask, what had gone wrong?

Cambridge is a frustrating place to be a boxing coach. Faced with the brightest and the best on one hand, struggling with a lack of facilities, funding and support on the other, you're forced to enter selection with a preconceived idea of what you want. Though shortsighted, it's a necessary approach: with six months to prepare for the Varsity Match there isn't time for much long-term thinking. The longevity and depth of the club is always somewhere in the back of your mind, but balanced against the necessity for Varsity victory in the short term.

CUABC (Cambridge University Amateur Boxing Club) is consequently less like a club and more like an ongoing selection process, enabling the Varsity Match to take place, and the club to survive. This puts a constant pressure on members to overperform; they put everything into training, desperate not to be cut and willing to do almost anything for a Varsity vest. The results are mixed, the odd cheap shot is thrown in the gym to gain ground, and there's a fiercely competitive atmosphere. From the outset it's clear who your internal opposition is, the weight categories are well-defined, and you train next to your opposite number for months on end in competition for that elusive Varsity spot.

Then there are the fixtures. People assume Cambridge is full of toffs. Yes, we have our share of privileged kids in the club, but they come from all backgrounds and they respect each other because of what they're putting themselves through. Cambridge often isn't taken seriously as a boxing club, but most of the time we leave a venue with more respect than we started with and we're invited back.



“There is a constant pressure on members to overperform; they put everything into training, desperate not to be cut and willing to do almost anything for a Varsity vest.”

So what are the benefits for those who box with us? Life skills: self-awareness, confidence, fitness, commitment and friendships. Boxing's quite a humbling sport, especially for a single night of potential glory. The boys aren't in the limelight when they box in a working men's club, they're taking part in a working man's sport in low-cost venues to non-existent audiences, purely for the love of the sport – and, of course, for a Varsity place.

As Hemingway wrote, “My writing is nothing, my boxing is everything.” Though this is not an attitude we'd encourage, he epitomised the scholar-athlete, a precociously

intelligent, driven, ambitious youth with a passion to succeed and an aptitude for physical challenge, his writing fuelling his boxing, and his boxing his writing.

There are plenty of Cambridge boxers with this attitude, and the perceived boxing stereotype of a loutish, aggressive, ignorant thug is miles from the lads I've dealt with. They have a visible determination, a deep sense of sacrifice; they are occasionally overanalytical but bring their intelligence to the ring. They are so enquiring I need to be able to justify every aspect of my coaching, and, crucially, their intelligence makes them safer boxers: there are clever ways not to be hit and they pick them up quicker than average. In this way, CUABC shows how boxing is the great leveller – PhD student or man on the street, competitors use the same core skills in the ring.

Our 9-0 victory over Oxford at the 102nd Varsity Match in March 2009 laid to bed last year's demons, both for me and for the club. Personally, I felt like I'd justified my presence, I'd had a lot of doubters and would never confess to being the best coach, but we won through as a team on the night and that was enough.

Despite our victory, I don't think there'll be boxing at Cambridge in a couple of years' time. The University will have to get behind it to sustain its level of progress, and also to satisfy the minimum safety and equipment requirements as enforced by the sport's governing body. The standard of boxers year on year improves but sooner or later they'll give up because they're tired of being so much better than the available facilities.

As for me, this is my final season as coach. I'll miss the guys, I'll miss the club, I'll miss witnessing the transformation of the people – but most of all I'll miss walking them to the ring at the Varsity Match, sitting back and hoping we've done enough.”

Read about the Cambridge University Amateur Boxing Club's latest triumphs at www.cuabc.org.uk

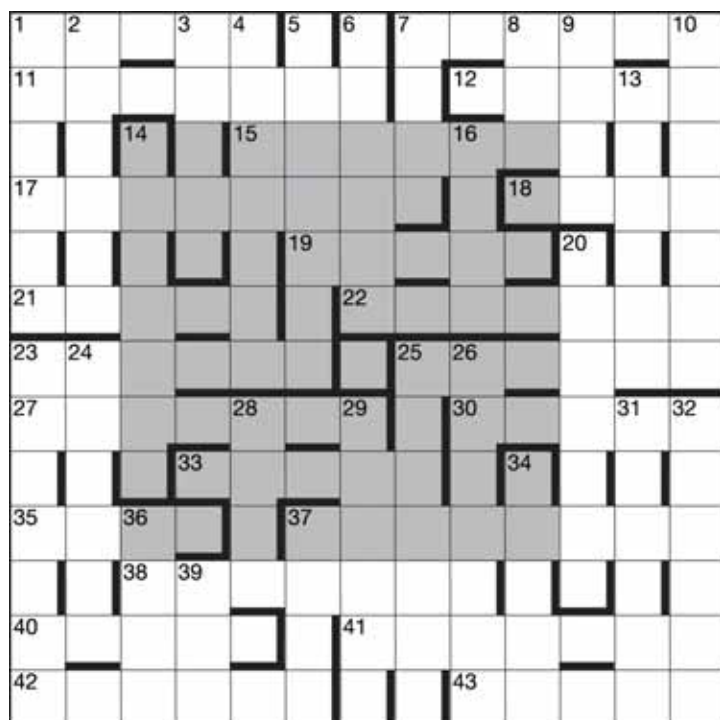
Playtime by Charybdis

Answers to the CAM 56 crossword
Letters missing from subsidiary indications spell out HIS LAST BOW, the title of a volume of Sherlock Holmes short stories, which includes "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax", whose name had disappeared from the grid.

Winner:
Brian Midgley (St Cath's 1957)
Runners-up:
Mike Lunan (Peterhouse 1960)
Charles Hastings (Clare 1966).



CAM 57 Prize Crossword



The first correct entrant drawn will win a copy of
**The University of Cambridge:
An 800th Anniversary Portrait.**

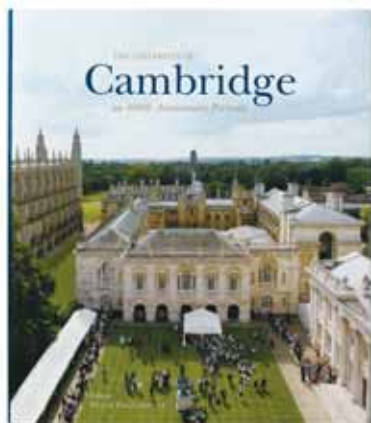
There are two runners-up prizes of £35 to spend
on Cambridge University Press publications.*

Completed crosswords
should be sent to:
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University of Cambridge,
Cambridge Alumni
Relations Office,
1 Quayside, Bridge Street,
Cambridge CB5 8AB
or by fax:
+44 (0)1223 764476

**Entries to be received by
27 July 2009.**
Please remember to include
your contact details!

Solutions will be printed in CAM 58
and posted online at www.cam.ac.uk/alumni on 24 August 2009.

*Excluding journals



Programme notes

Act I Extra letters in the first 16 clues begin an appropriate quotation. Considering its source, 15 and 23A are to be interpreted to produce the titles of two plays (three words, 18 letters).

Act II In turn these 18 letters are the key to taking one further letter from each of the next 18 clues, where A would indicate taking the 1st letter, B the 2nd etc. The resultant partial quotation allows identification of the puzzle's protagonist (who appears in the completed grid) and completion of 7A, 42, 1D and 32 (all different).

Act III A relevant play by 10 (4 words) is written beneath the grid.

Act IV The play at 26 and also its author are completed in the grid.

Act V The six men, symbolically representing the political situation are highlighted in 6 separate cells. Chambers (2008) is recommended.

Across

- 1 Emergency room received a diseased steed (5)
- 11 Cactus sugar mixed with granola finally put on hold (7)
- 12 Cleans piano interrupting series of items performed by band (5)
- 17 Make again carpet destroyed in yard (8)
- 18 Black allium from the East (4)
- 19 Mountain peak with church in Seattle (5)
- 21 End of rusty nut attached to cog (5)
- 22 Language cards flipped over: 'shot' and 'old' (7)
- 25 Classified hats by radius, eccentricity etc, bizarrely (6)
- 27 Material head of tech (Henry) is cutting opposite to lathe (7)
- 30 Note specified actuary infiltrated group that's wet and weedy (5)
- 33 Newt tucks into meat that's rotten (5)
- 35 House in Provence's open for hall to see fish (4)
- 37 Mule's run with gee gee - this ruins mule (8)

38 Instrument doctor implanted in girl (following Tina she might be drunk) (7)

40 Pollution is huge on outskirts of America's capital (5)

41 Lime set well away is superlatively covered by Ulmus (7)

43 Hangmen at execution to some extent like an excrescence (5)

Down

- 2 Let's have our competition - it's a feature of medics in the US (6)
- 3 Extravagant wandering route (5)
- 4 Playing servant for the locals (7)
- 5 Morality tale about religious instruction is likely to fall apart (7)
- 6 Suffrage holds liberal spellbound initially - leaps out of harms way (6)
- 7 A standard aid to drawing? Take rubber (4)
- 8 Parking for instance - drive no more (3)
- 9 Foil's packaged in orange-peel? (4)
- 13 Get choppers from letter and article (6)
- 14 Landscape to spy for Spenser even in the interior (7)
- 16 A catholic's special bow shapes (4)
- 20 One of Paris's painters out frolicking around small brook (7)
- 23 Special resistors meet RSC for revolution (7)
- 24 Is this capital city hot at all? - not for a Scotsman (6)
- 25 Ideally what a crossword is? - with this left I could be libellous (7)
- 28 Catch the clippers not protected by steamship (4)
- 29 Rabbit and sweet potato has merit but it's not on (6)
- 31 Favouring the young? - an inspiring principle (6)
- 34 Once more amateur's caught in a trap (5)
- 36 Rain cut short a self-satisfied grin (4)
- 37 Weak glue in bulk (4)
- 39 Black bird seen in Central America and in Tanzania (3).

A man and a woman in business attire are looking out of window blinds. The man is in the foreground, looking to the right, and the woman is behind him, also looking to the right. The blinds create a strong diagonal pattern across the image.

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