

Hall Rents set to rise again

Mukul Devichand

Another hall-fee rise is on the cards. Proposals for a rise of up to 5% are due to be decided upon by the LSE Residences Management Committee on the 26th of January.

It comes as no surprise for most, however, that LSE begins the new millennium with news of yet more price hikes. LSE Halls are among the most expensive in London, and the prospective rise would send fees at the most expensive hall (High Holborn) spiralling through the £100-a-week barrier.

"I think a price rise of 3-5% is pretty likely," said Accommodation Officer Paul Trivett, "which is unfortunate - but I don't have a vote on the matter." In fact, the vote is to be taken by a new senior committee for Residence Management - a leaner body than

the old structure where the Inter-Halls committee reported straight to LSE Management. This year, pressure is being brought to bear by the LSE administration, who have proposed the 5% increase. The Inter-Halls committee, which has many student representatives, has been relegated to a lesser role. Nevertheless, they too have recommended a price rise - although a less drastic 3.5%.

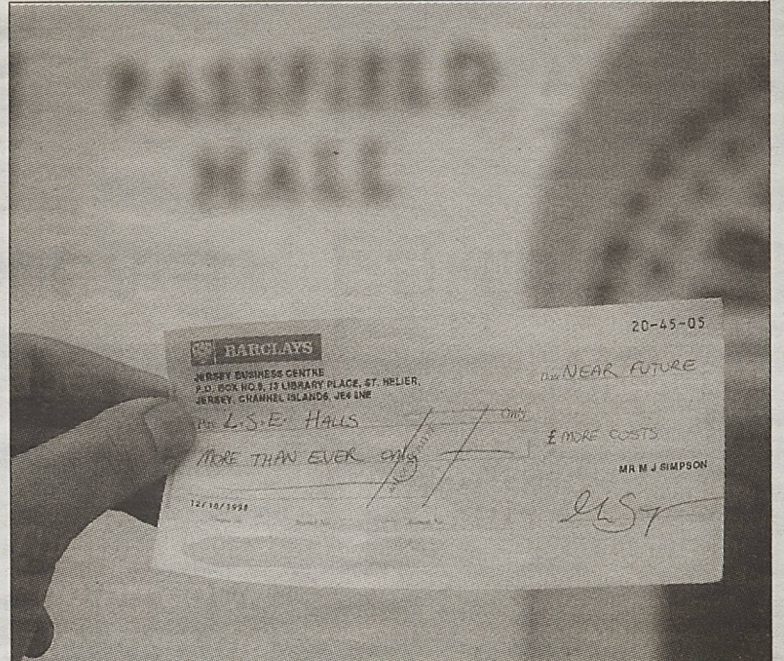
The less expensive halls (Carr-Saunders, Passfield) which were protected last year by a price freeze, are also subject to a rise.

"Demand for halls has continued to be high despite the increase in private housing to rent," said Trivett, "but we anticipate the need for halls will increase." Private sector rents are also due to rise between 5-7%. Combined with the increase in hall fees, London's already inhospitable

student housing sector just got worse.

As expected, there have been some noises of opposition from the Students Union. "With rising fees and falling financial support, these increases are totally unrealistic," commented Jon Black, SU General Secretary. "We are simply calling for a fair figure that is affordable to everyone - students and LSE. Halls are one way we can allow students from all backgrounds to afford to come to LSE. Rent increase of this kind are shutting the door to LSE for poorer students." The Union is planning to lobby the Committees involved with a student petition.

The decision will come on the 26th; and although the Union is leading a strong campaign, the general consensus for impoverished students seems to be "don't hold your breath".



Down and out in London (School of Economics) Pic: Mark Simpson

Ex-LSE student released after hijack



Matthew Smith

Former LSE student Ahmad Omar Sayyed Sheikh featured prominently in the national press over Christmas, as the influence of underground Islamic politics within the School became apparent once again.

The former Economics student was one of the three men held in Indian jails whose release was secured by the hijackers of the Kathamdu to Delhi flight of an Indian Airlines Airbus last month.

It is suggested that, whilst at the LSE, Sheikh fell under the influence of a group known as Harkat-ul-Ansar, who were responsible for the hijack. Prior to this, Sheikh had shown great potential at Forest School, Snaresbrook, having been head of his House and chess champion.

Continued on page four

The hijacked Indian Airlines plane on the tarmac in Afghanistan. The hijackers demanded an ex-LSE student's release

Pic: Archives

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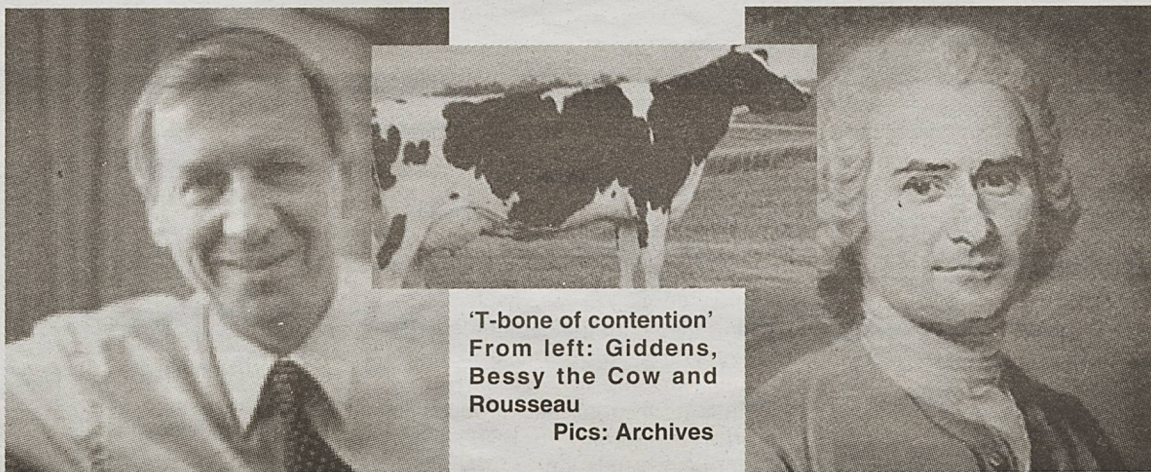
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John Sagan and co. take a tour around the Theatre Museum

No philosophy please, we're British



'T-bone of contention'
From left: Giddens,
Bessy the Cow and
Rousseau

Pics: Archives

Michael Collins

The cross channel war of words over the French ban on British beef took a strange twist during the Christmas break with French journalist Pierre Georges accusing our very own director of wanting to impose a ban on French social philosophy in retaliation for the French ban on British beef.

The bizarre allegation was

made in a column titled "Représailles" in the French national newspaper Le Monde on the 23rd December 1999, and was brought to the attention of the Beaver by our correspondent in France.

In collaboration with the Oxford Professor of Philosophy Teri Eagleton and academic Frederic Jameson, Professor Giddens is said to be seeking a ban on "all

French social theories, until justice is restored."

The list includes all the usual suspects: Baudrillard, Lyotard, Derrida, Foucault, Irigaray, Sartre, Deleuze, Guattari, Merleau-Ponty, Bataille, Barthes and Camus.

Will this mean that students in the philosophy department might find topics five, six and twelve of their 'Introduction to Social Philosophy' strangely cancelled?

Quite how such a ban would work in practice remains unexplained.

The LSE Press Office told the Beaver that Professor Giddens had been contacted about the accusation from journalists as far away as China. The general opinion seems to be that this is a case of the French imagination getting a little carried away.

Professor Giddens reportedly responded to press interest in the French article by saying that he obviously wouldn't say anything as "ridiculous" as that. A fair comment no doubt, yet it remains to be seen why such an allegation should be made. The Beaver has contacted the French journalist Pierre Georges but has so far had no response.

In the meantime French philosophy continues to be admired the world over, which is something we unfortunately can't say about British beef. If a ban on French social philosophy were to have no effect, might we expect a ban on French students?

CNN - but when?

Sib Hayer

As you should all know by now, CNN is coming to LSE. Our university will be the first in the world to participate in a video-conference style questioning of important people. This joint venture is supposed to allow LSE students the chance to ask the questions they really want answering to the people who really matter. Like why is that bloke on Countdown (never watched it of course) allowed to live, yet mass-murderers are sent to the chair? Well, questions roughly along those lines, but more with a political slant, issues like Chechnya and war crime, for example (Richard Whiteley should be treated like a war criminal in my books).

It's obviously a fab idea - who doesn't want to be on TV? So what's the hold up, I hear y'all asking? Well, apparently, there seems to be have been a slight communications problem between LSE and CNN this week. But everything should be fine and sorted for next week. Jon Frewin, LSE SU Treasurer, assures us that the technical side of things is running smoothly, and I can assure you, after my personal inspection of his equipment (!) that everything is in place. Primarily, questions were going to be asked in the



'So, Riz, what's the weather like in Atlanta?'

Pic: CNN

Quad, but because of its seriously noise-polluted atmosphere, Jon decided that his office would be the best place to pull innocent young first-year girls along to and ask them if they wanted to be a star.

The only problem, pointed out Jon, is that not enough students know about the programme: "It needs more publicity." Jon is sure that as soon as everyone gets to hear about this programme there

will be people queuing to ask questions. There has been a massive campaign to get this thing off the ground: look out for posters and advertisements around the School, and in the forthcoming 'News and Views'. If you think you've got what it takes to ask a serious question (preferably not along the lines of 'Woz Thatcher and Reagan, ya know, doin' it?' - yeah, yeah, Ali G asked it first), or

if you want to join a proposed mailing list, then contact Jon. You can catch him in his office in the East building next to the Copy Shop or phone him (Extension 7471). Video recording of questions will take place between 2-3pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Has PuLSE flatlined?

PuLSE has been refused a restricted service licence (RSL) by the Radio Authority. The decision means that PuLSE will not broadcast on FM this February, or indeed for the rest of this academic year. The refusal, though anticipated, is a blow for Jon Frewin (PuLSE's station manager) and for the many students who have spent last term preparing for the one-month broadcast. Frewin said he was "disappointed", but insisted "we have to accept we're not going to get a licence".

At the end of last term Frewin was not optimistic about PuLSE's chances (see Beaver issue 510). The last glimmer of hope was banished in a letter from the Radio Authority just before Christmas, in which Susan Williams, the Radio Authority's Development Officer, categorically refused to grant PuLSE a licence.

As explained in The Beaver last term, the problem stems from the launch of another station, Choice FM. Radio Authority rules state that no radio station can be granted an RSL during the launch period of a rival station. In this case, however, both PuLSE and Choice agree that they aren't rivals. In a letter to PuLSE Neil Kenlock, Choice's sales director, describes PuLSE as "commendable and in the interest of student radio" and accepts that it "would not be a threat to Choice FM".

Last October a similar situation arose between Loughborough student radio and Oak FM. On that occasion, however, the Radio Authority accepted that there was no competition and relaxed their regulations, granting Loughborough the requested licence. Frewin has put this point to the Radio Authority, but to no avail, Ms Williams merely stating "we do not usually consult stations about RSL activity in their area".

Matt Deegan, London representative for the Student Radio Association, confirmed that a similar problem between student radio and Galaxy had been resolved, and in

the end both stations were able to broadcast. It is unclear what the difference between these cases and the current situation is. Mr Deegan added that "the Radio Authority rarely have any hard and fast rules... so they can amend decisions to reflect any real-life problems". Unfortunately for PuLSE, this does not seem to have happened.

Reaction to the decision has been mixed on Houghton Street, with some students feeling that Frewin has not done enough to promote the station. One student

by ED SEXTON
PuLSE Correspondent

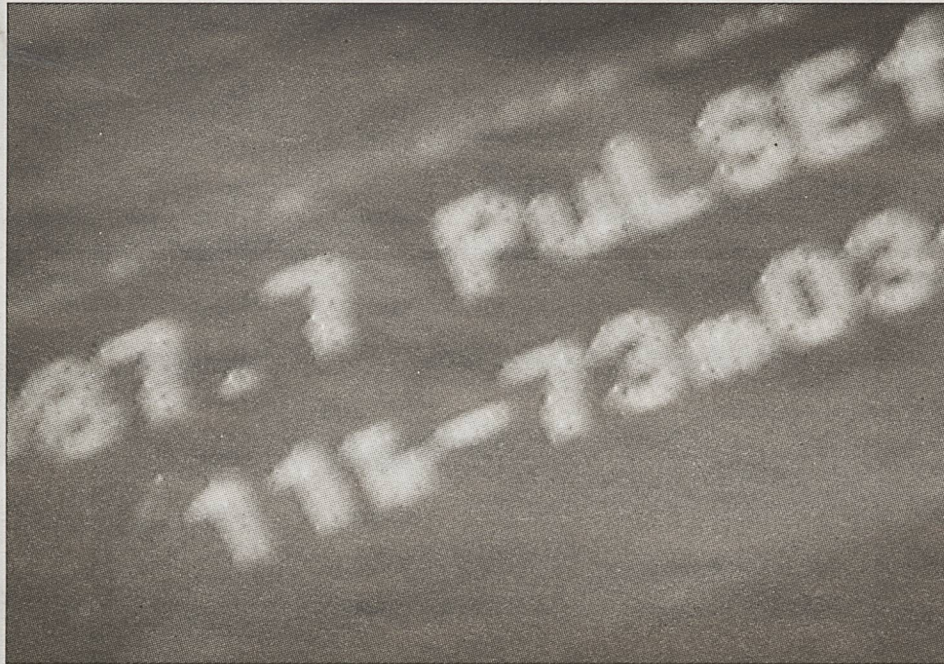
What will the future bring for PuLSE FM?

Picture - Alison Perine

commented "he shouldn't give up, he should fight on!" Most interested parties, however, seem to have reluctantly accepted the decision. Frewin is convinced this is the right approach, as aggravating the Radio Authority now may reduce PuLSE's chances of obtaining a licence in the future. Jonathan Black, LSESU Gen Sec, saw the situation as "ridiculous - it's absolute madness that PuLSE has been blocked by reams of red tape".

Frewin is not entirely downhearted, saying that he is "excited about [PuLSE's] future prospects". PuLSE will continue

broadcasting to halls, around campus and on the internet at www.pulsefm.co.uk. He is also interested in PuLSE producing programmes for other student radio stations, and is looking into the possibility of getting a digital licence. As Choice is not launching until May, it could be eighteen months before PuLSE is on the airwaves again. Frewin hopes it will be less, and intends to apply for an RSL for next November or February 2001. Given the current rigidity of the Radio Association, however, the future for PuLSE is far from certain.



Union Jack

It's official - the millennium bug did strike, after all. It has caused several short circuits in the brains of Union officers, not to mention in the collective student body, who once more hushed in some AU chaps to the chair and chair to the side.

Beks has apparently gone quackers, as Jack thinks she was trying to say. Having clearly taken lessons from Downing Street on how to make unfinished expensive buildings sound interesting, she set out an acid-fuelled vision of a, well, really nice, future. Insert joke about lame ducks here, should you wish. Similarly afflicted were good old Corruption and Secrecy committee, who have failed in their most difficult task to date, namely counting to two.

Vedad has been in negotiations with Lord Howe, and fortunately there was enough wool left over from the old dead sheep to make a lovely new jumper for Crown Prince Crackerjack. The UGM's Gyles Brandreth was on stage to ask a question that has been bothering Jack for, ooh, minutes - as the SU sees the biggest rise in Societies ever, where the hell is the societies officer to help them out? No one has seen la Swinson since she disappeared into Red or Dead on New Year's Eve. Hopefully she's red rather than dead, but if anyone does see or hear her (you'll know if you do), contact the fashion police (or perhaps the gender cops if Vedad is to be believed) immediately. This will avoid the embarrassing prospect of a probe from Jon Black.

It seems like Oscar 'the grouch' Kent will finally get to probe his nemesis, the flower-wearing, chord-strumming champion of democracy, Rachel Goldwyn. Hopefully he will give in to the temptation to shout 'get your tits out for the boys' (surely 'raise the issue of responsible and effective protest against a despotic regime'? - ed). Kent was moaning that no-one was present at the UGM, perhaps overlooking the fact that the prospect of having 'Fudge-packer' or 'Faggot' bawled at them has put off many of a nervous disposition from getting involved. Keen to set up a taskforce or something, Jon B promised to wave a flag (surely shome mistake? Ed).

Listening to Jon these days is not quite like being savaged by a dead sheep, more like being irritated by a small, well-permed poodle. Jack can't be the only one to have noticed a touch of messianism entering the man's oratory (a la his hero Mr Blair), as 'I'm not going so its not very interesting' seemed to suggest. Plans to liberate the toilets from the dictatorship of unacceptability were outlined, but people were too busy watching Fat Bob and Charlotte whispering to each other every time the word 'Sabbatical' was mentioned.

These two have stolen a march on la Swinson by grabbing the two self-publicity posts (surely 'important roles in keeping the UGM in order'? - ed) unopposed. Judging by the reluctance to oppose the AU Cartel, the Sabb elections look like being as exciting as an encounter with a dead sheep. Only Vedad going head to head with Kent for Ed and Welfare can save us now, surely.

15 years, and the last laugh's yet to come



Eugene Cheese, long-time host of the Chuckle Club and purveyor of fine introductory ditties

One of the finer parts of the LSE tradition, the Saturday-evening Chuckle Club, saw in its 15th year of existence last week with a special gala performance. Guests from earlier years, many of whom have now acquired the status of comic legends, came back to join Eugene Cheese in his weekly laugh in.

Guests included Stewart Lee, Tim Vine, Hattie Hayridge, John Leneham and Mark Hurst. The atmosphere was a relaxed one, despite the fact that the Tuns was filled to bursting with lines of eager punters. As usual, there was the odd upstart heckler who was swiftly made to look silly.

As always, the Chuckle Club proved itself to be a comedy gem of London - and of LSE.

Hijackers wreak havoc: ex-LSE kidnapper drives away, a free man

Continued from page one

On Christmas Eve (December 24th) five masked men entered the cockpit of the Delhi-bound Indian Airlines flight that had taken off from Kathmandu, Nepal. They ordered the pilot to land at Amritsar, India (near the Pakistan border) and then take off without refueling. After the hijackers had cut short another refueling stop in Pakistan due to a fear that the Airbus would be stormed, the 188 hostages were taken to Afghanistan.

A drawn out negotiation process followed, featuring heavily in international news bulletins, with one hostage being stabbed to death. Another of the prisoners whose release was obtained was Maulana Masood Azhar, a Pakistani Militant leader. Two earlier attempts to secure his release, by taking Westerners hostage in Kashmir, have also been made by the group, in 1994 and 1995. Those taken captive in the 1995 incident have never been found. Upon release, the prisoners were given a car and told to 'disappear'.

It was for his role in the 1994

incident that the former LSE student was arrested and held in an Indian jail, having received a gunshot wound before being captured by the police. As was the situation with the other two men released, his case had not yet come to trial. According to his former captives, who were all from Britain, Sheikh would reminisce about his time at the LSE and Forest School before making threats to kill them.

The group Sheikh belonged to, Harkat-ul-Ansar, are Kashmiri based and are involved in the long-running dispute between India and Pakistan over who controls the region. It has been alleged by Indian authorities that the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate supported the hijack and were involved in the planning of it.

Sheikh's father is said to be a successful businessman from Lahore, Pakistan, who owns a textile firm based in East London and lives in Wanstead. As a British national, Sheikh's perfect spoken English was supposedly a great boost for Harkat-ul-Ansar. It is not known whether Sheikh plans to return to Britain, with the Foreign

Office having stated that he would be free to enter the country as he is a full British national and has not been convicted of any crime. Sheikh's family have been in contact with the Foreign Office since the time of his arrest, but are thought to have recently left for Pakistan.

This is not the first time that Islamic political groups have been linked to the LSE in recent times. At the Freshers' Fayre last year a group set up a stall bearing a sign saying 'Jihad' - meaning holy war - in Houghton Street. It was alleged that they were distributing anti-Semitic literature and, after a number of complaints, the police were contacted. Upon trying to arrest one of the gentlemen involved, a violent scuffle ensued as protests about a violation of freedom of speech were made. It seems certain that, given the multicultural background of LSE students, groups such as these will again return to try and recruit members - possibly to take part in the kind of activity that Ahmad Omar Sayyed Sheikh became involved in.

For an analysis, see
Features, page fifteen



Three of the men Sheikh kidnapped in 1994

Pic: Archives



Guard at the Indian prison where Sheikh was held

Pic: Archives

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Editorial

Campbell's Shambles

In the last issue of last term we ran a spoof of the London Student, which some of you might know is the newspaper put out by the University of London Union. Emanating, aptly enough, from the bowels of the ULU building in Malet street, the Student, which comes out approximately once a fortnight, is now home to a bunch of pissed off characters.

Riled by the home truths and touched nerves of the spoof, the team has opted to Harris me personally - circulating my resignation, sending me death threats etc. - rather than attempting to improve their newspaper.

At present, the London Student is a hotch potch of press release generated 'news' stories, 5th XI football reports and columns written by a bunch of ill informed cretins, euro-sceptics and self-publicists. How such a rag can be allowed to continue to waste its potential is beyond me.

The University of London is huge, full of news, scandal and intrigue, yet the Student seems to be continually behind the pace and out of touch with its readership. It is surely a damning indictment that the most read sections are the classifieds and the sports tables. Why not just peruse Loot as you check out the tables on the ULU website?

Changes need to be made. Rather than operating as a rival to the Universities' individual papers, the London student should cooperate more, share more stories and writers so that the readership gets a more balanced, complete overview of the goings on in our capital, rather than the drivel spouted by a bunch of misfits.

PuLSE is for life, not just for February

I need to write now that, despite the calm and respectful approach to the Radio Authority being taken by PuLSE Station Manager Jon Frewin, I would be outraged if my media had been taken away in such dodgy circumstances.

The people at the RA have spent the last two months hiding behind a bunch of nonsensical, bureaucratic rules and prohibited PuLSE from receiving a radio license on, and get this, the grounds of competition.

How anybody could be threatened by PuLSE is beyond me.

PuLSE is just a university radio station, aimed mainly at a mere 6,000 students, and an excellent opportunity for students at a non-creative university to sample a vocation outside the mainstream of the City.

The people at the Radio Authority are actually allowing the February RSL to lay fallow by not awarding anyone a license. This 'Oh it wouldn't be fair on the others' approach is exactly the impractical, dogmatism one might expect from a government authority.

It upsets me that the people at PuLSE aren't pushing this matter even further, after all what do they have to lose? I urge Jon Frewin to fight this further, otherwise the £15,000 spent last year on getting PuLSE up and running will start to look like an awful waste money.

Daniel Lewis
Executive Editor

Letters

Money for Nothing?

Dear Sir,
Could someone explain to me why LSE students have to pay for study packs for their course? As a postgraduate student, I am paying several thousand pounds a year in order to study at the LSE. Undergraduates are now in a similar position, given the introduction of tuition fees. Study packs typically consist of essential readings for a course, which are of course very useful. However, given that our fees are supposed to cover teaching costs, should not the cost of these packs be included in the course fee? Furthermore, even if I were to accept that study packs should be chargeable, the cost is extortionate. For example, one of my packs costs £39 from my department. Yet if I were to photocopy the material in LSESU's copy shop, the cost would be little more than £15. Can anyone provide a rational explanation for this?
Yours truly,
MSc Philosophy student

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MODERN LIFE IS RUBBISH

Joseph Heller died last month. James Corbett finds his masterpiece, Catch-22, increasingly pertinent in an ever-maddening World

"I'm going to live forever," Joseph Heller once boasted, "or die trying." Last month he did just that: a heart attack doing what Nazi anti-aircraft gunners had failed to do sixty years earlier. The literary legacy he left was a mixed bag. Heller was never a prolific or even consistent writer, but the first novel he gave the world - *Catch-22* - is one of the most famous, loved and important books of the last century.

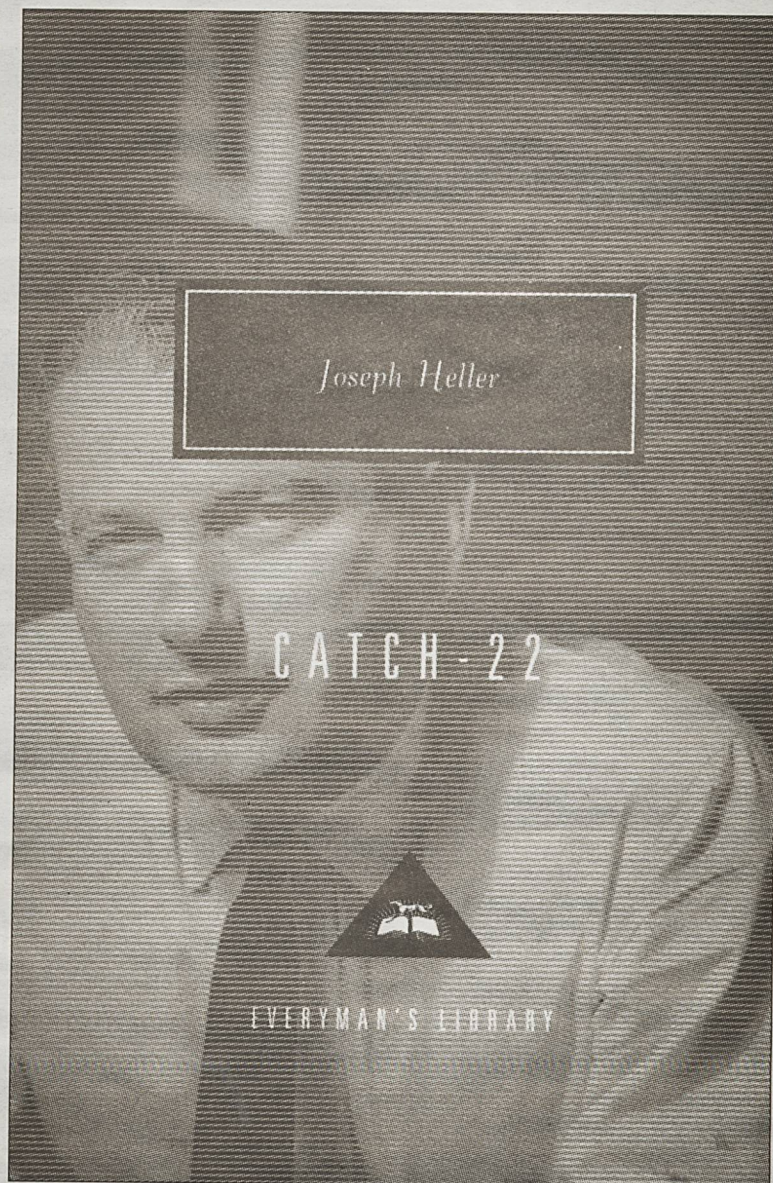
It is ostensibly the story of a US bomb squadron in the Mediterranean during World War II and a bombardier by the name of Yossarian, who is driven insane by the Germans who keep shooting at him while he is trying to bomb them, and by his American superiors, who seem less concerned about winning the war than they are about parades, loyalty oaths and getting promoted. Yossarian is so crazy he should be withdrawn from combat, but here lies the catch - *Catch-22*: You can't be excused from duty unless you ask to be excused, and anybody who wishes to get out of combat is obviously sane and therefore ineligible to be excused. *Catch-22* lay at the heart of everything in the novel as Heller caricatured the military world he had once been a part of as an absurd and contradictory one where the whims of increasingly stupid and vainglorious colonels and generals are more important than the lives of the men they command. Ironically, the overall objective of the war barely merits a word of consideration in some 550 pages.

Catch-22 is widely seen as an anti-war work as powerful and important as the poetry of the Great War poets; the songs of Bob Dylan and more recently in films such as *The Thin Red Line* and, though expressed somewhat less eloquently, *Saving Private Ryan*. Yet *Catch-22* is more than merely an anti-war polemic. The phrase itself has become entrenched in our day to day language, it's embedded in dictionaries and spoken daily in the language of frustration. The absurdity Heller creates in his book can be applied to every facet of society: from the top echelons of government to the lowest fringes of the underclass. As one writer puts it, '*Catch-22* sells briskly wherever human beings feel tormented by crazed bosses and mindless bureaucracies - which is to say just about everywhere on the planet.' In the former Eastern bloc, bootlegged copies of the book served as antidotes to the absurdities of life under communism, in the West it helped wake society up to the fact that authority is ridiculous and most often utterly unnecessary.

But *Catch-22* is forty years old next year, is it still relevant? More than ever. Think back to the major events of the last decade or so, for instance, the fall of the Berlin Wall. For years the West laboured to bring about the collapse of communism, spending countless billions on nuclear weapons which were never going to be used, causing wars on neutral battlefields such as Vietnam and Korea to

prevent its spread and bring about 'peace' to the World, when they finally bring an end to the 'scourge' of communism, what is the reaction? To ostracise and isolate Russia to the extent that within a few years the plight of that once mighty country will be such that it will become inevitable that another kind of extreme government will emerge from the ashes of communism and again break up the uneasy coexistence between East and West. America, Britain and the West will again be faced with a dangerous, malevolent and possibly powerful enemy. Perhaps led by someone along the lines of Saddam Hussein, a man who built up the strength of his country with Western arms and then defended his brutal regime against those same countries with the weapons they had supplied. The Gulf War was in many ways as crazy as Vietnam. Fought ostensibly to protect the freedom of the Kuwaiti people - a country without a democracy, with a poor human rights record, where immigrant workers are treated shamefully and where women have few rights - when the allied alliance had liberated the country and were faced with the option of destroying Saddam's dictatorship they balked and let the Iraqi dictator turn his attentions to the large Kurdish minority within his own country and commit acts of genocide. Did the Kurds not deserve to have their liberty protected too? One more absurdity to originate from that war: more British soldiers were killed by their own men and by Americans with their 'friendly fire' (Is it possible to fire a few dozen rounds of bombs from an F16 fighter jet in a friendly way?) than were killed by Iraqis.

Over in America a Freedom of Information Act was defined in such terms as: 'a federal regulation obliging government agencies to release all information they had to anyone who made an application for it, except information they had that they did not want to release.' Closer to home the Conservative Party have recently termed their



Joseph Heller: iconic

Picture - Archives

manifesto as the 'Common Sense Revolution.' Yet I don't think it's possible to have a more disparate, loopy bunch of outmoded right wing lunatics to unleash common sense upon the good people of Britain.

Banality, stupidity and contradictions pervade and pollute our every day existence, some would say our every move. Joseph Heller's gift to the world was to give us the phrase which encapsulates the dilemmas we are faced with on a daily basis. He wrote his book about what he saw was a stupid

war, but nobody learned from it. The same year *Catch-22* was published America started deploying troops in Vietnam. Life throughout the World carried on in its own stupid way, often to get more ridiculous. That's the ultimate *Catch-22* of someone who has read Heller's masterpiece: we know how crazy we are and how insane life is, but still we go on, from the sublime to the ridiculous. As Heller himself wrote, 'That's some *Catch*, that *Catch-22*... It's the best there is.'

'Catch-22 sells briskly wherever human beings feel tormented by crazed bosses and mindless bureaucracies - which is to say just about everywhere on the planet.'

Bart

Beaver Arts Magazine



**RAP RE-INCARNATE:
THE RETURN OF 2-PAC**

A NOVEL ATTEMPT

SHILPA GANATRA grabs at the chance to review **IT'S WHAT HE WOULD'VE WANTED** by Sean Hughes; a novel about "secrets, suicide and bad weather".

Don't be fooled by the author, people. Though we know and love Sean Hughes for all his witty and comic perceptions about the harsh realities of everyday life, his book encompasses a lot more.

In actual fact it's a crime drama, revolving around one man's quest to uncover the reason behind his father's suicide. The lead character could be Columbo, were it not for the fucked-up head, fucked-up family

and genuine love of blow jobs, which I doubt the genius detective shares. I hope, at least.

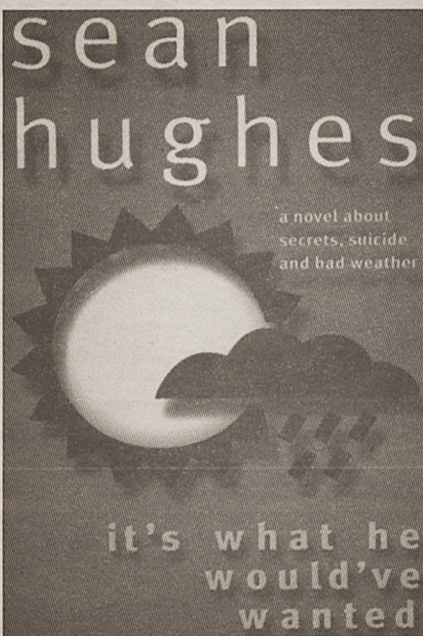
Only his second attempt at novel writing, Hughes has managed quite successfully to put pen to paper, but he has undoubtedly not reached his literary peak. Which is polite-speak for saying that he perhaps needs to work a little harder if he's to win that Pulitzer Prize he's perfectly capable of. There are some classic lines in here ("Kinky sex can never result in babies; it's just not morally right") but the main

problem with **IT'S WHAT HE WOULD'VE WANTED** is the tension that arises between Hughes' wild imagination and his witty and comic perceptions about the harsh realities of everyday life. Though he may be describing events as far out as falling in love with a prostitute in Australia, you can see he's just itching to describe how she had a spot on her forehead which he tried his best to ignore, or something equally down to earth. Christ, the main guy is called 'Shea' and he lives in Crouch End without a 9 to

5 job, it's so real. As close to home as it is, Shea also receives a blow-job from a mystery man at his father's funeral. See what I mean.

This isn't to say the book isn't worth a read; it does keep you captivated as to promise yourself 'just one more chapter' at three in the morning. And the one-liners will still make you burst into laughter on the tube, so weird looks come your way aplenty. And the mystery will keep you on the edge of your seat; the fact that his father's death happens at the very beginning does not mean we spend the rest of the book retracing his steps and then ta-da we have the answer. There's still shit that our hero needs to sort out. Will he ever forgive his brother for stealing his one true love? Can he ever find another love? Will his conspiracy organisation to expose Aitken-types ever succeed? The subplots are as important as the main one, and it is perhaps the layers of story that make the book work so well.

IT'S WHAT HE WOULD'VE WANTED by Sean Hughes is out now in paperback published by Scribner RRP £9.99



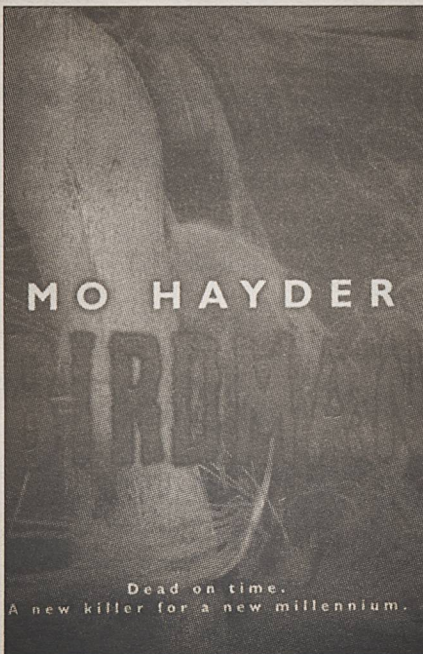
Watch out for the Birdie

TOLA SOLEYE gets her teeth into Thomas Harris wannabe Mo Hayder and her debut thriller: **BIRDMAN**.

Great book; shame about the title. **BIRDMAN** by Mo Hayder is a thriller in which five young women are found buried near the Millennium Dome. They have been ritualistically mutilated and murdered. Enter Detective Inspector Jack Caffery, a handsome, young officer assigned to solving the case. He has issues stemming from his brother's death when they were children and parental angst with a mother who wishes he had died instead. Add to this volatile mixture, a neurotic girlfriend, the aftermath of the Stephen Lawrence report and other office politics and you're in for a cracking read. Hayder has invested some endearing characteristics into her chief protagonist and so Caffery has a weakness for Glenmorangie scotch and Rizla. Set mainly in South London, the novel has a few underlying themes. One of these is child abuse; several of the characters experienced abuse as children and in a dramatic shift from father figure oriented abuse, all the survivors were abused by their mothers. Hayder tackles the race issue with no punches pulled. An incompetent DI is prepared to place the blame squarely on the shoulders of the resident black dealer and the references to 'mulatta', 'darkie' and other derogatory racist terms are rife and represent the views that so many still hold and are allowed to get away with, especially within the police force.

The twist in the tale is brilliantly executed and for once, the perpetrator genuinely surprised me. If you are squeamish, this novel is not for you because Hayder does not spare us any of the graphics involved in the murders and rapes and goes into an incredible amount of detail on drug use. That said, a brilliant protagonist, masses of gore, and a view into the sick, twisted minds of the villains all provide a cracking good read. I'll definitely keep an eye out for DI Jack Caffery's next adventures, as he is a suitably troubled and flawed hero. My only complaint is that there was far too much similarity between this book and the Thomas Harris novel **THE RED DRAGON**. Hayder's plot line lacks originality but compensates in style.

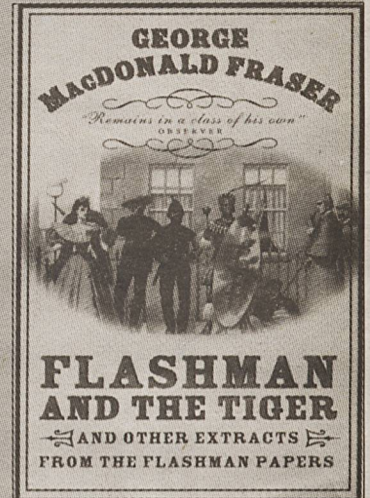
BIRDMAN by Mo Hayder published 10 January 2000 by Bantam Press. Available in hardback RRP £9.99



FLASHMAN

AGLAYA SNETKOV reviews the latest in the Flashman Papers, **FLASHMAN AND THE TIGER** by George MacDonald Fraser.

Here is a new volume in the series the Flashman Papers. Written as a proposed memoir of Flashman Harry, an imaginary Victorian adventurer, the series as a whole spans from 1839, right up to 1894. In this particular volume we see the details of the Berlin Conference, the Baccarat Scandal involving the Prince of Wales and Flashman's encounter with one of the fiercest villains of the times. This is historical fiction at its best. Faithful to the genre MacDonald Fraser fills his novels with a subtle mixture of historical accuracy, fictional elaboration of well known events, and a hearty adventure plot. Flash Harry, the last century's Fourth Musketeer, is seen oscillating between fantastical amorous escapades with Royal Princess', the Zulu War, Bismarck and sly correspondents from The Times who will stop at nothing to get to an exclusive story. What is great about this novel is that it is not dull, even to somebody who is not an expert in the genre, this piece of fiction does offer a delightful door to escape into a world filled with wonderful adventures. MacDonald Fraser's style is just descriptive enough to set the scene, whilst diving in and out of Flash Harry's escapades and his



retrospective commentary on the events around him. A refreshing interpretation of the nineteenth century, demonstrating that Victorian Age was a little more than dried flowers and neatly folded napkins. This would be a great piece of writing to read before bedtime, when you are discouraged by work and will make you feel all is well with the world so long as there are great adventurers to fill in the gaps of history.

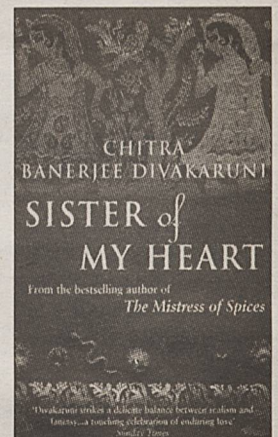
FLASHMAN AND THE TIGER by George MacDonald Fraser is out now in hardback RRP is £16.99

December Paperback Releases



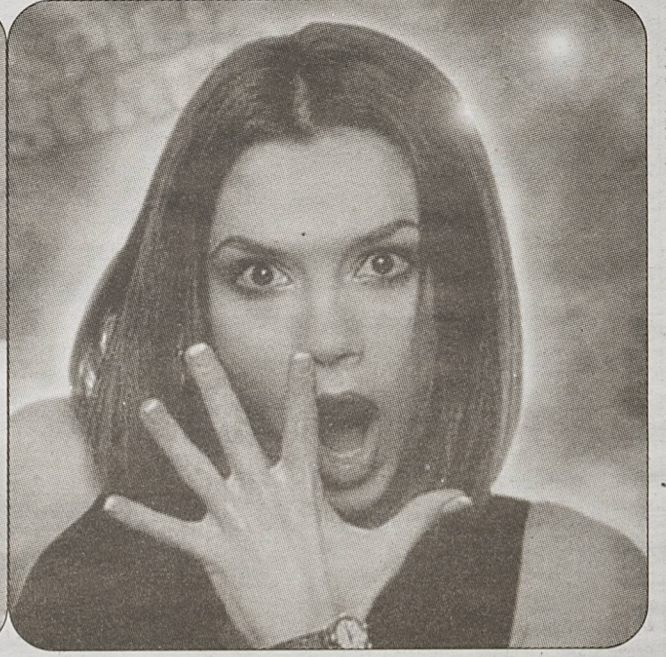
Robert Rankin must be a very strange and probably deranged individual. After all no sane writer would actually think that anyone would be interested in a novel completely about snuff. **SNUFF FICTION** written in 2058, a world in chaos since the computer crash of 31st December 1999, snuff has made a huge comeback. And the person to bring it back from the mists of history? Some imaginary bloke called Doveston. The novel follows the story of Doveston's life from the eyes of a childhood friend. Very, very strange.

SNUFF FICTION by Robert Rankin out now RRP £5.99 (Corgi)



SISTER OF MY HEART is a lavish novel following the lives of Sudha and Anju from childhood into womanhood. Cousins and yet closer even than sisters, they share a special bond which even time, marriage and moving to America cannot break. This novel encompasses the mysticism and myths of India perfectly; creating a world of beauty and sadness, reality and myth, love and hatred. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has portrayed her country of birth and the Asian woman's lifestyle beautifully.

SISTER OF MY HEART by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni out now RRP £5.99 (Black Swan)



POSH MY BITCH UP

TOLA SOLEYE EXTOLS THE POSH ONE'S VIRTUES

What else do you say about someone whom, at 24 is a member of the MOST successful girl band ever, a mother and is also married to one of the fittest football players around? Prince Edward got in a lot of trouble for pointing out last year that the British hate anyone successful. I find myself agreeing because there appears to be a penchant for slagging off any successful home-grown talent. Posh isn't saying to anyone 'love me cos I'm cool and have an amazing voice' or anything like that. She's a young woman, who's madly in love with her baby, her husband and her life.

I'm sure I'll be crucified for this but, we love to hate Posh because she's got everything a girl could possibly want (yes, even an LSE girl) Gucci frocks, a cute baby, Harvey Nicks gold card, her own financial independence and best of all a Louis Vuitton bottle holder! At most she could be accused of being slightly dopey- you just don't announce that your husband wears your thongs in public. But isn't it every little girl's dream to dress up her Ken doll anyway she wants? Most of all Posh and Becks signify the Great British Hope. I give to you two young people who are blessed with good genes. The man is gifted with an amazing right foot enabling spectacular free kicks as well as accurate long-range goals. (Handily, he's a blond Adonis as well). Then there's the brunette pop star who's turned pouting into an art form and is a walking advertisement for the gamine /elfin haircut. They fall in love, (cue a whacking great diamond) have a baby (cue silly name) and have a wedding a la Brothers Grimm. But of course it would be way too boring if they lived 'happily ever after' gining The British Press an excuse to yell 'spice up your life' and accuse theme of several heinous crimes.

1. She loses WAY too much weight after the baby's birth (cue outraged gasp) leaving her skinnier than she was before. Conclusion: She must be anorexic, it has nothing to do with the fact that her husband is a super-fit football player or the fact that she can afford to but the best exercise plans that money can buy Oh No!

2. They get married and an onslaught ensues from the style police who, ignoring the fact that they both look bloody good, attack them yet again. I'm sure that Posh and Becks don't know this but in fact, they are adhering to a typical African custom in which the newly-wed couple express their devotion to each other by wearing clothes made from the same fabric. Twee? naff? maybe, but didn't Baby Brooklyn look gorgeous

3. Now Posh is being blamed for Beckham's tackle on Jose Milan in Rio. I'm not sure how this works. Perhaps she ordered him to do this so that they could get another lambasting from the English press. An outsider would presume that Posh and Becks single-handedly conspired to ruin Manchester United's chances in Rio because of course, that would benefit them both greatly by ensuring the loyalty of the Great British Press

So she's a clothes-horse, she's pretty and a size 6. She knows her limitations and has avoided being pressured into a mediocre solo pop career. I'm going to conclude by putting a psychological spin on things- in the void left by Princess Diana's death, the press have latched on Posh and Becks who are more attainable yet remain so inspirational and just look too bloody good for everyone's liking. To everyone's who's past time is bitching I have one thing to say: Deal with it

SHAILINI GHELANI GOES ON A DISSING SPREE

How many people think that it is stylish to dress their man up in leather and then put on a matching outfit and a smile before hitting the town? On a similar note how many of you girls would like to publicise that your man wears your G-string? Is it really a wonder that the nation picks on poor old David Beckham? In fact the reason that he is aggressive on the pitch is probably because it is the only place that he has some control, because it is obvious that in the house Posh wears the trousers or at least the more than a G-String.

Posh is probably the most inappropriate name for this Spice Girl, tasteless is probably more appropriate. What kind of stylistically challenged person puts naked figurines of her family on her wedding cake for goodness sake?

Not only is she tasteless, the plastic pink outfit that she strutted about in on TFI Friday requires more than an explanation. Not only did the outfit look bad, the posh one looked like a skeleton in it, her upper arms looking like they would fall out of the socket if she moved too much.

What really hacks me off about Vic is that she gives the impression that she is a cut or two above other people, for example her blatant disregard of the dresscode at Phil Neville's wedding where she probably decided that black, red and white were not her colours and decided to wear brown instead.

The greatest problem with posh is that she is guilty of overexposure, do people really care to see a picture of the room where her mum may or may not have had her nails done on the eve of the Posh-Becks union. Well OK! Seemed to think so in the 30th week of their Posh and Becks wedding special.

The sad thing is that the only thing that Posh seems to be good at is posing. Why is it that she always has the smallest part to 'sing' in all the Spice Girls songs? Obviously not because she's shy.

What posh doesn't seem to realise is that money cannot buy taste. Just looking at the entrance hall to her apartment shows this. The Beckhams are obviously 'love's young dream' but do all their guests need to be greeted with a picture of the two snogging as they enter the house? I don't think so.

The Beckhams proved their cluelessness once more by naming their son Brooklyn. Are they so unimaginative that the only name they could think served as a memorial of the poor little accessory's site of conception. Well I suppose that he'll be okay with a cousin called Liberty. 'Liberty and Brooklyn' has a nice ring to it doesn't it?.

Why don't they just change her name now from 'Posh Spice' to 'Pretentious Spice' ? Notice how she turned on the Bond Street and not the Oxford Street lights. Oxford Street has mass appeal but it's not good enough for Posh as she's a Bond Street kinda gal. Unfortunately she always seems to find the plastic pink tight outfits that look like blancmange! So I'll tell you what I want, I really want: posh to get a clue and realise that she ain't all that.



When asked about the G-String debate Beckham declared "I'm not musical"

TUPAC-ED IN HEAVEN

Shumi Obrasky sorts out the gransta rap from the gangsta crap, in light of Tupac Shakur's posthumous album 'Let It Rise'.



NIRVANA LIVE ON. WELL, IN PICTURE FORM ANYWAY

Grunge kids will be interested to know that there is currently an exhibition of some of the best photos of the band. Taken by prominent NME and Melody Maker snappers, the pics are on display at Proud Galleries. Entrance is £1.50 for students (ring 0171 839 4942 for further details) or you can look and buy the prints from www.lastminute.com/proud. And then your Nirvana shrine can be the envy of all your friends.

MANSON ARTING ABOUT



Talking of pictures everyone's favourite dysfunction, Marilyn Manson, has found another outlet for his creative outpourings. Hmm. He is currently displaying his 'original artwork' (that'll be a first then) on his internet site. So next time you're in C120 check out http://www.marilynmanson.net/gallery/index_hifi.html if you want to be inspired to write that politics essay.

SECOND LONDON DATE ADDED FOR THE PRIMALS

Those cheeky scamps Primal Scream have added a second date to their April tour. In addition to their gig at the Hammersmith Palais on the 15th, they will be playing the Brixton Academy on the 21st, so now there's no excuse for not going. Stay tuned to these pages for a full lowdown on their new album.

GOMEZ RETURN TO THE LIVE SCENE



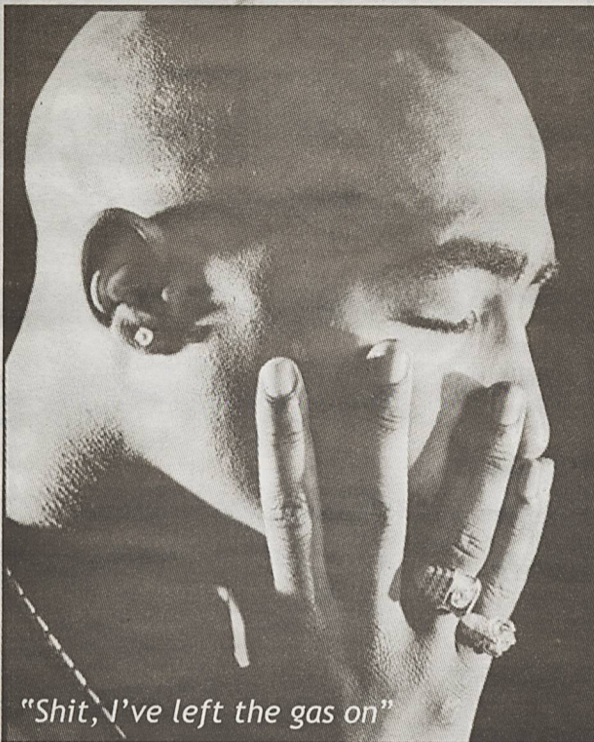
Gomez will once again be playing their student rock to the apathetic masses. If you want to go and nod your head, they'll be playing the Brixton Academy on the 16th of April. Call 0171 274 1525 for further enquiries, to book tickets, or just for a chat.

2Pac and Outlawz Still I Rise

West Side! This article goes out for those of you out there who think that I accidentally typed the word "side" instead of "end".

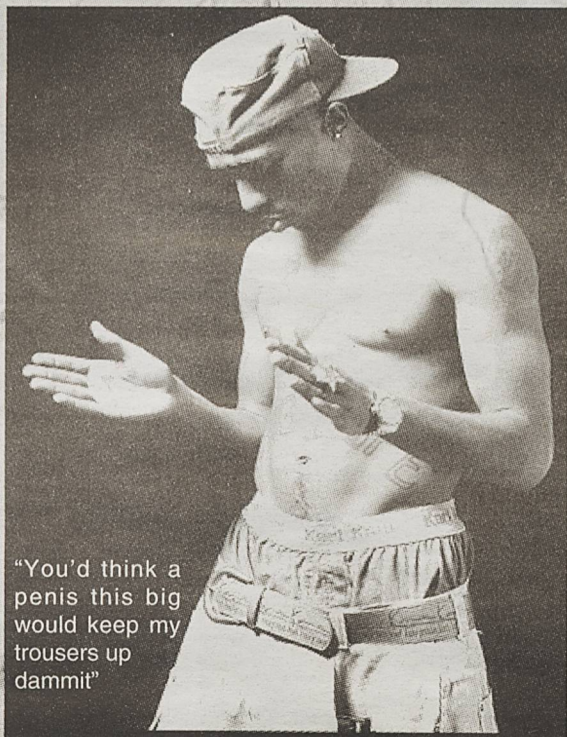
I always hated rap. However, after a short time of listening to it I came out with similar feelings to those I had in fifth grade in relation to the WWF: these guys talk a gang (i.e. a lot) of shit and don't do half of it, other than the part about making a lot of money. Right around the time of Snoop's DoggyStyle, America was also taken by a storm by this video of this rap artist known as Tupac Shakur. The video was of the song "Keep Ya Head Up". My first reaction was: another one of these fucking Nation of Islam (Louis

political message. After hearing he was arrested on a gun charge, my attention was held. He was shot six times in a New York music label's lobby



"Shit, I've left the gas on"

during an armed robbery, and survived. Afterwards he was convicted of battery and attempted rape, and sat in jail for a couple. 2PAC getting in trouble with the law pointed out of his problems (just like it does with Mike Tyson or Dennis Rodman), and showed he's for real. Then after seeing the video for "Dear Mama" I officially started to like 2PAC, who at the time of the release sat in jail. For once, I felt, when I listen to the lyrics of his songs (though many of which are quite contradictory and idiotic) I knew it was real.



"You'd think a penis this big would keep my trousers up dammit"

Farakahn) punk-ass bitches! Not only is he another one of those fake-ass shit talkers, but he is also bringing a stinking

after Suge Knight, the man behind the operation of Death Row Records (which at the time was the label of Dr. Dre

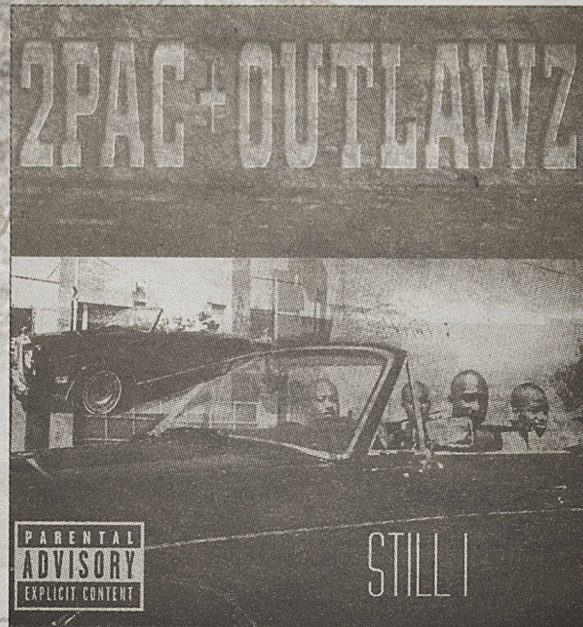
and Snoop Doggy Dogg) had him sign a highly disadvantageous contract to join the label. Then came his double CD entitled "All Eyez On Me", a great CD which sparked a war. There was ongoing tension between the West Coast rappers and the East Coast rappers. Tupac's next album, "Machiavelli" was more than a declaration of war. It contained lyrics of true hatred directed towards a number of East Coast pussy rappers, mainly those rapping for the Bad Boyz label, the Notorious BIG, Puff Daddy, Daz, etc. The East Coast idiots further responded by talking shit, including direct threats, and so on. And then, after the Tyson fight in Vegas, on 7th September, 1996, 2PAC who was sitting in the passenger seat of Suge Knight's car, was sprayed with bullets shot at him from another car, right on the Vegas Strip.

He died tragically six days later in a Las Vegas Hospital. To me it is clear that it was not the East Coast enemies responsible for his death, but rather Suge Knight (who is currently, as I write, in prison for three strikes, i.e. three separate offences, one of which took place in a party where he forced another man to drink his piss...what a nice guy). How is it possible that Mr. Knight as the driver of the car, a man of huge proportions (6'5, weighing 350 lbs.) didn't get hit even once? How is it possible that out of over 70 eyewitnesses, not a single one wished to co-operate with the police? But that is a different matter altogether.

2PAC's mom, a self-confessed crack addict (not in the Irish sense, but in the Compton sense), wanted to squeeze some mo' money following the death of her

son, and therefore released the kick-ass double CD "RU Still Down" of Tupac's songs. Now, thanks to his prolific output we get another Tupac album, "Still I Rise" (also good as hell). This album is packed with will be future 2PAC anthems. This album was also an opportunity for the "Outlawz" (the group of rappers that worked with 2PAC on some of his albums) to shine. Basically, what rappers who made the big time do, is to feature with rappers who will maybe make it on an independent album later. The "Outlawz" have not made it, but still they have some unique voices and rap skills. A member of the "Outlawz", Kadafi, was also killed by a drive-by shooting in L.A. in '97. In this case, the death probably was the direct result of him slanging many East Coast rappers in songs. This album is another must for 2PAC fans. Interscope Records pieced it together in a successful way in the studio, doing some wonders with the famous old-school West Coast beats. That old school style includes funk guitars, crazy drum progression, and the rest of Caribbean influence. The lyrics are good as ever; speaking about the general everyday California struggle in the hard streets of L.A. Tracks such as "Hell 4 a Hustler", "High Speed", "The Good Die Young" and "Tattoo Tears" all achieve the 2PAC legacy: for millions of California kids to raise their fingers in the air and yell: West Side!

★★★★★



DI FRANCO INVASION

Ani Di Franco
@ Kentish Town
Forum

Imagine a Boyzone concert, put the average age of the audience up by six years, give them dreads and strappy tops and you're pretty much got the crowd at the Ani concert! Ani Di Franco is gaining popularity every year. She is a folk-rock diva from America where she has a big following. It was interesting that the vast bulk of the audience seemed to be Americans.



As always she arrives in a massive flash, a ball of energy bopping, dodging, diving and weaving all over the place (pissed again, eh? - Ed). She played a mix of

songs from her umpteen albums, re-working almost every one, from a rockier version of 'Fire Door' to an anthemic 'Untouchable Face'.

She sounded best when it was just her and the guitar. But to be fair to the rest of the (excellent) band, I think that this was because the level of the guitar was too low and the bass

seemed to drown everything else out. If you haven't ever listened to this woman's music then I strongly suggest you go and get the CD. A good place to start is 'Like I Said' but if you prefer things a bit heavier go for 'Dilate'.

The only bad side to the concerts is that if you're a straight male (like me) you tend to feel excluded- even if you've got a silly hat on. That's nothing to do with Ani's music. It's to do with the audience members who create the 'you-can-only-be-a-true-Ani-fan-if-you're-a-lesbian-so-fuck-off' feeling. If you don't mind that, do try and catch her when she's next here, she will inject new dimensions into the recorded potential.

Mark Pallis

Shilpa Ganatra experiences the ups and downs of life after the Wildhearts



The Yo-Yos, Sugar Plum Fairies & Plan A @ Garage, Highbury

For a Wildhearts fan, this is a wet dream come true. Three former members of the said disbanded, er, band playing with three new groups on one night? Yes purlease. The newest band are on first. Jef Streatfield, formerly on geetar and backing vocals in the Wildhearts, takes the centre stage and he'd look out of place anywhere else now. Plan A (originally called Plan B after the Wildhearts split, but then they decided they weren't no second-rate band) are neo-punk through and through. With so much attitude on stage, the under-18s who snuck in give themselves away by the shock on their faces. Only their second gig yet, they're not exactly up to Sex Pistol scratch but the fact they are able to move on leaps and bounds is clear. So keep an eye out. For a band whose music is more layered than the live arena normally gives credit for, the Sugar Plum Fairies headed by Willie Dowling (occasional piano and guitar for the Wildhearts) do their songs

justice. The fact that their songs aren't all that good is a bit of a problem, but moderate reception is deserved and received. A few stand-out tracks make this a better than average set, but sandwiched in between two up-tempo, rocking bands means their effort is more brave than anything else. The night, it must be said, belonged to the Yo Yos from the start. Their record of



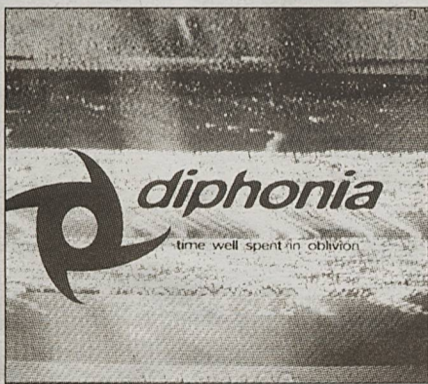
The Yo-Yos: The latest craze

better-than-sex gigs remains unblemished with their gig in celebration of a deal with Sub-Pop. All the expected faves are delivered with the force of a steam engine. 'You Got Me Out of My Mind' and the equally infectious '1000 Miles Away' are delicious 3 minute pub-rock treats, raw as you like but perfect nonetheless. The omission of what would have been a fitting closer, 'Rock City' is...well, we'll let it go. They made up for it by a blinding set. As great a night as expected.

Diphonia

Time Well Spent In Oblivion (EP)

Diphonia, in case you're wondering, refers to the type of duet singing where the performers sing the same part some octaves apart. Given that this is mostly a one-man show, with the occasional band backing vocals, it just looks like they were looking for a cool name and went 'hey, why don't we use a Greek word no one will get?' Little did they know...



Anyway, I've got to say, this short record sounds alright and has got some surprisingly good moments! Moving between futuristic indie rock at times and britpop at others, you can tell these guys were listening to Babylon Zoo some years ago. The songs leave the type of impression that they're a soundtrack to the Truman show of your life, with 'East 24th St' (the first and clearly the main track), 'Lost Souls' and 'Vampire' standing out pretty well for their class of fame. The vocals could get better and less britpopish, but the music has got an edge, and as this is their first work, their first LP will be worth checking out. Potential!

★★★★☆
Elias Corossis

- ★★★★★ Chicken Tikka
- ★★★★☆ Cheese and Coleslaw
- ★★★☆☆ Chicken Salad
- ★★☆☆☆ Spam
- ★☆☆☆☆ Brunch Bowl Sarnies

SINGLE FILE

CODA
Bleed Together

Do you like U2? I bet 95 percent of you would say yes. I personally don't. This band, CODA, is highly influenced by the Irish band. They even have those famous U2 synthesizer sounds in the background of some Irish themes. So far for you U2 lovers, so good. But there are still two problems: first, they are obviously not the original thing, but more importantly, one can also trace a bit of Oasis influence in their music. What's the problem with that you ask?! It is a universal given: Oasis sucks. Even Oasis will tell you that. The single entitled Bleed Together is an indication of an unoriginal, yet musically interesting style. There is definitely some talent in the music.

6/10
SO

Manic Street Preachers
The Masses Against The Classes

Too little too late from the Manics? You decide, but what cannot be denied is that 'The Masses Against The Classes' is the Manics' best effort since the untimely disappearance of the other one. Pulsating with energy, guitars and distortion, the track is bookended by the words of intellectuals' friend Noam Chomsky and Albert Camus respectively which are largely rendered irrelevant by the words of Nicky Wire/Nick Jones in between and the music of Bradfield and Moore and at least they avoided the ultimate cliché by putting the Cuban flag on the cover.

8/10
CJ

Royal Trux
Radio Video EP

After the critically acclaimed albums "Accelerator" and "Veterans of Disorder" this 5 track EP is initially confusing, even offensive, but songs such as "The Inside Game" and "On My Mind" become more comfortable the more you listen, despite the howling vocals of Neil Hagerty. This record has a number of noteworthy features: the best song title this year ("Victory Chimp: Episode 3"); possibly the worst line ever ("You're so rank/You probably try to lick your own skank") and an interesting Black Grape/Beck hip-folk-rock sound which stretches itself on all sides.

7/10
CJ

Nine Inch Nails
We're In This Together

With albums full of potential singles, it's a relatively rare occasion when they actually release one. The first from their album 'The Fragile' offers the expected industrial/rock thang, but what stands this track out is emotive stadium rock chorus. The anguished vocals and soaring guitar have never worked so well together and if you're not going to buy the whole album, this single is an absolute must.

9/10
SG



Live
The Dolphin's
Cry

If you've heard anything by Live in recent times, don't be expecting to die of a shock-related condition from this single. But if the style ain't broke, why fix it? 'The

8/10
SG

Handsome Boy Modelling School
Rock 'N' Roll/Holy Calamity

Handsome Boy Modelling School are the hip-hop equivalent of Sunny Delight. It's somewhat artificial but full of flavour, and strangely addictive to the extent that once you pop you can't stop, so it's also the hip-hop equivalent of Pringles. The product of two producers, Chest Rockwell (Prince Paul) and Nathaniel Merriweather (Dan the Automator), Handsome Boy Modelling School's polished hip-hop sound makes up in quality, such as the services of DJ's Shadow and Quest on the scratch-fest "Holy Calamity", what it lacks in raw originality and freshness. It's the great stuff kids go for.

9/10
CJ

Utah Saints
Love Song

Yes, they're officially back, nearly ten years on from their debut "What Can You Do for Me" the Utah Saints look destined for a return to the big-time with this release, shamelessly sampling fusion classic "Pick Up The Pieces" by the Average White Band but creating the kind of pop-house that will inevitably be a club hit and chart highly. The repeating "Love Song" vocal ties the track together well, but there are clichéd elements to the edit I heard and "Love Song" is far from a classic.

6/10
CJ

BURTON CAUGHT NAPPING

SLEEPY HOLLOW A GOTHIC MASTERPIECE OR JUST A BIG YAWN - RICARDO VALE DECIDES...

The thought of Tim Burton directing a film based on Washington Irving's literary classic 'The Legend of Sleepy Hollow' should be heart-warming to many a fan of the master of gothic cinematography. However the film turns out to be rather disappointing.

The year is 1799, and Ichabod Crane (Johnny Depp) - a schoolteacher in Irving's story - is a police officer assigned to investigate the mysterious beheadings of several people in Sleepy Hollow, an upstate New York hamlet. When he arrives there, the village gentry inform him that the attacks are being perpetrated by the spectral Headless Horseman who seems to have a fondness for decapitating local dignitaries. However Crane a man ahead of his age and obsessed by science as a crime-solving tool, refuses to accept their claims. 'What do you believe in?' he is asked. 'Sense and reason. Cause and

consequence' Crane responds.

So our main character is presented as an analytical investigator, more of a Hercule Poirot than a Fox Mulder. This works fine in the first quarter of the film when it moves along in the vein of a Raymond Chandler novel. Yet, this being a fantasy story, Ichabod's Crane character in time is faced with a reality that is entirely different from what he thought possible, a reality where witchcraft abounds and Headless Horsemen exist. He is also confronted by his growing love for Katrina van Tassel (Christina Ricci), the daughter of the village's wealthiest nobleman.

Photographically the film is magnificent, with beautiful woodlands full of brown and black tones, the village coloured in shades of grey and the screen constantly overflowing with fog. Whilst watching it you can easily see images reminiscent of Burton classics, such as 'Beetlejuice' or 'Batman' (1799 New York doesn't look much healthier than Gotham City).

However, in my opinion the film falls short in the most crucial aspect of all, storytelling. Yes the scenery is breathtaking and bizarre, as if taken from a painting but that is futile if the plot is forgotten or wasted. The film's placard says as a subtitle: 'heads will roll'. It's absolutely spot on, heads do roll, in fact

there are so many beheadings that after a while you're just yawning and can hear the 9 year-old next to you munching his pop corn. Not since Robespierre was having a ball guillotining aristocratic scalps have so many heads rolled and too much lesser effect. And as you all know if you use a ploy too many times...

There is also an excessive number of characters, making you feel as if you're watching a soap opera ('Who's he?'; 'I think he was the one who got his head chopped off... Oh wait, he isn't.'). Finally, the case is solved not because of anything Crane does or finds out but simply because so many people don't have heads anymore that one could just flip a coin and hit upon the architect of the murders.

The acting is actually very good overall and cannot be blamed for the outcome of the film. Depp is as sharp as ever and the British cast playing the parts of the local noblemen are all excellent. There are cameo appearances from Christopher Lee and Martin Landau as well as a superb performance by Christopher Walker as the bloodthirsty horseman (his already menacing gaze never looked as frightening).

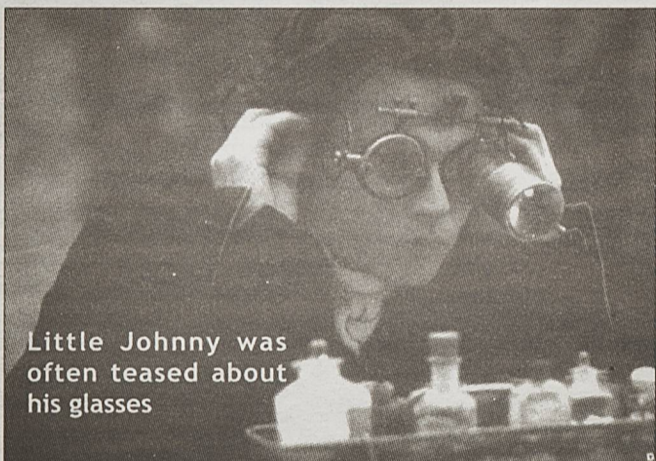
Curiously the two main female characters are flat, both Miranda



'Where's my fucking stylist?!

Richardson (as a member of the Sleepy Hollow upper class) and an uneasy Christina Ricci having trouble with Tim Burton's environments.

You would imagine that a story taking place in foggy scenery, involving macabre beheadings, and surreal characters would be ideal for Tim Burton's filmmaking skills. Johnny Depp is also here, an actor as linked to Burton's best work ('Edward Scissorhands', 'Ed Wood') as Robert de Niro once was to Scorsese's. Nevertheless after watching 'Sleepy Hollow' one would do better to wonder at what might have been, rather than consider what it ended up being.



Little Johnny was often teased about his glasses

MOVIEWATCH 2000

OWEN MATTHEWS LOOKS AHEAD TO THE YEAR 2000

1999 was a great year for film, The Matrix, Sixth Sense and Fight Club are to name but a few, and although, as ever, shite did get released

2000 is going to have to come up with something pretty special to be able to top it. The outlook, however is good, with a number of big releases just on the horizon. It's pretty clear though that only time will tell us whether they are going to be able to be half as good as the hype suggests.

One of the best films out this year, is undoubtedly going to be American Beauty, released at the end of this month, it opened to critical acclaim in the States and is already hotly tipped for the Oscars. Kevin Spacey is said to put up an excellent performance in this offbeat spin on the Middle-American mid-life crisis and its ramifications. Definitely not to be missed.

The eagerly anticipated (well by me anyway) major film out next month is the merchandising golden goose Toy Story 2. This has already taken \$117m in the US and should prove to be equally as good as the original.



Also out next month is the much talked about The Beach starring the actual king of the world Mr DiCaprio himself. The

Green Mile is another film creating a bit of a buzz in America at the moment which is director Darabont's follow-up to the 1995 classic The Shawshank Redemption and is out in February.

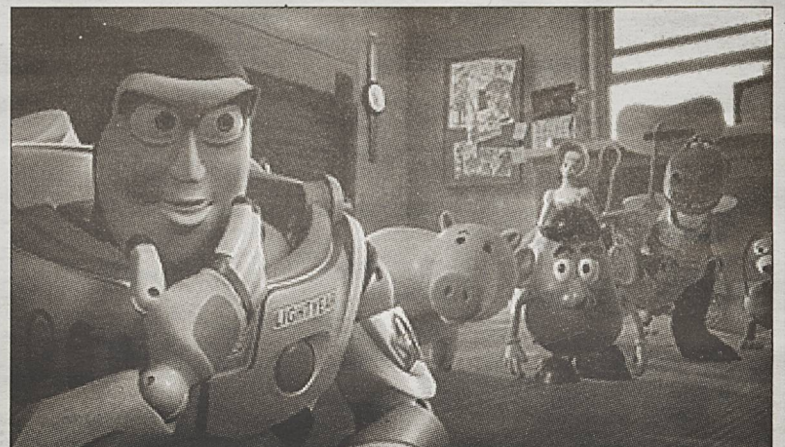
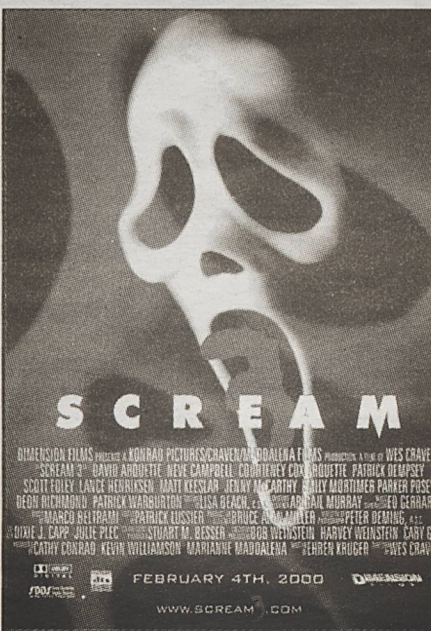
A number of the traditional summer blockbusters should

feature prominently this year Battlefield Earth and Mission to Mars both being promoted as the years sci-fi epics. Whilst Gone in 60 Seconds, a story about a thief who has to pull off the heist of a lifetime in order to help his brother has all the ingredients for a quality summer no-brainer.

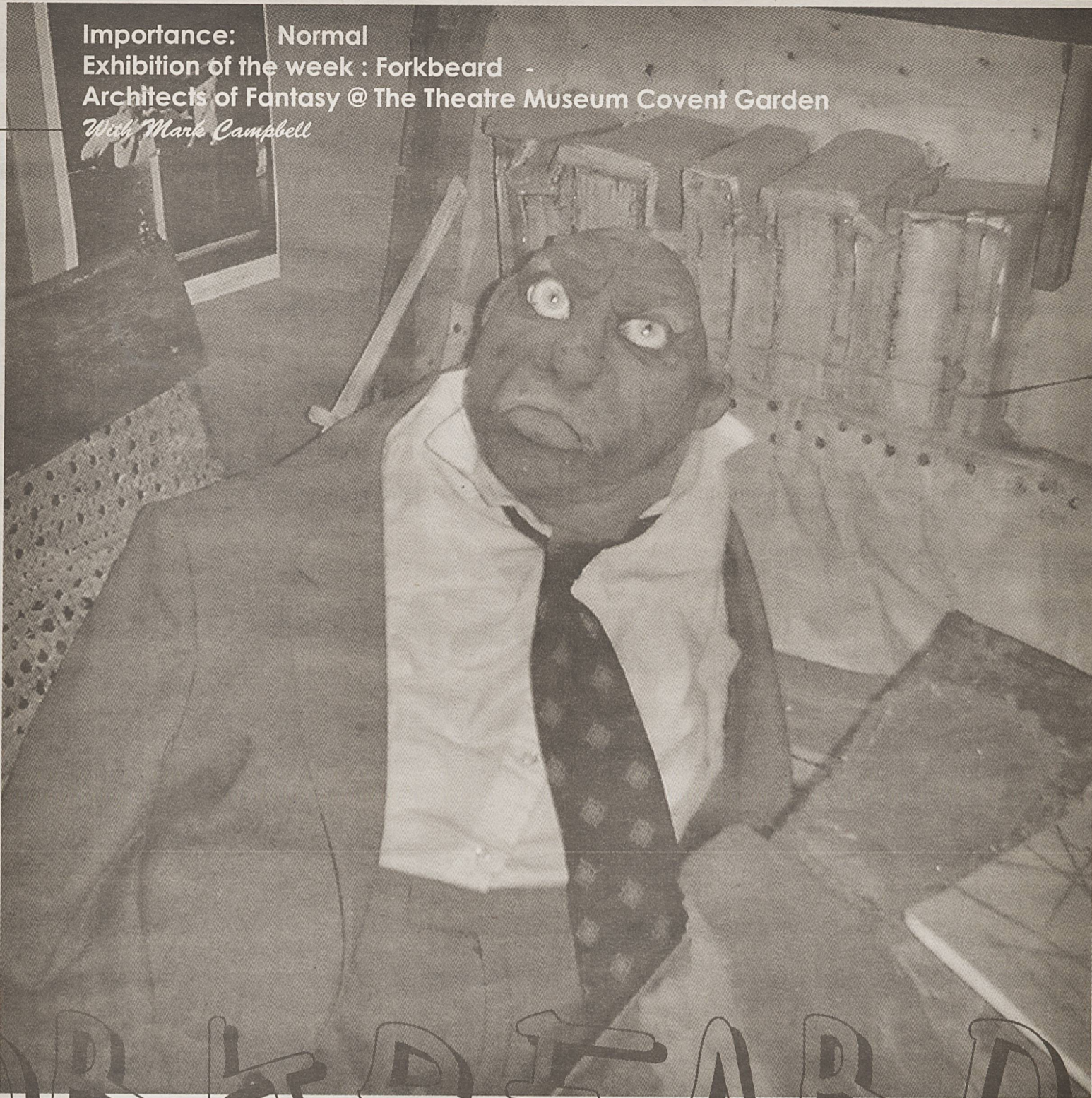
There will also of course be an even spread of cinematographic manure being released in the coming months.

Scream 3, X-Men and Mission Impossible 2 could all prove to be films that might be more suited to be shown on Channel 5 television than the box office. However, I suppose even these have the limited potential to surprise.

What is overwhelmingly clear is that 2000 is promising us a lot, we can only hope it's able to deliver.



Importance: Normal
 Exhibition of the week : Forkbeard -
 Architects of Fantasy @ The Theatre Museum Covent Garden
With Mark Campbell



FORKBEARD



On discovering I was going to attend Forkbeard at the Theatre Museum, I was perplexed. Is the fork of the beard not a careers fair for graduating facial hair lice? Do we not hear the falsetto squeaks of these layabout molluscs pondering: "Which side of the face do we take next?" Unsurprisingly, this is not the case.

Forkbeard are in fact a touring theatre company conceived in 1974 by Penny Saunders and Chris and Tim Britton. They are no RSC offshoot. They coin their own very peculiar description of

theatre as "Cruising the Celluloid Divine". Forkbeard specialise in combining puppetry, live actors and pre-recorded film sequences to be performed simultaneously as cohesive theatre productions, examples of which are "Invasion Of The Bloopies" (1990) and "The Barbers of Surreal" (1990). As you may no doubt discern from these titles, Forkbeard do not merely provide the audience with a completely unique theatre format: the subject matter of the plays is always wonderfully surreal. All of this information may be gleaned from the exhibition. Which reminds me; *discuss the exhibition.*

On entering the museum, you are confronted by "Anthony". As were all the puppets in the exhibition, he was created for a specific production. "Anthony" is a traditional marionette and his ball-joint limbs may be operated by pulling various strings. "Anthony" personifies the most

commendable aspect of this exhibition. Most of the puppets work. Members of the public are welcome to operate them, startling unsuspecting fellow patrons, free of any sneers or restraints from museum staff.

The exhibition is tightly packed in on the ground floor; a collage of puppets, props and information about their role in Forkbeard's productions. Marvel at the mandate of "Rabbit" an, er... eight foot rabbit created by Penny Saunders (most of the puppets have been created by the founders):

"...he is something of a connoisseur of shampoos, a chain smoker and the ideal companion to a Hairdresser intent on applying the very latest break-throughs in Genetic Engineering to his clientele's scalps. His unnatural size is attributable to early experiments with growth hormones."

This quote reveals the

subversive slant towards contemporary issues that runs throughout Forkbeard's work. Other targets of caricature include materialism and consumerism.

I would that any fan of surreal Terry Gilliam-esque fantasy portrayed through the medium of theatre resign £2.50 (with student I.D.) and enter the deranged world of Forkbeard. My only qualm is that within the confines of the inanimate world of an exhibition the vitality and true mind-boggling impact a live Forkbeard production must generate is lost. Next time: a lice careers fair...





The Crucible

An LSE Drama Society production
31Jan, 2Feb, 4Feb £3/£4

FLYING AT GUNPOINT

Gautam Seshadri gives his opinion on what went wrong during the Indian Airlines hijacking

Ramadan is the holiest month amongst Muslims. The Prophet Mohammed is said to have received his first revelations during this period. Not only must all Muslims refrain from all food and drink between dawn and dusk, but also must not commit any unworthy act. And yet, a handful of Islamic militants chose to hijack Indian Airlines Flight IA-814 with its 189 passengers and crew during this month.

The chronology of the hijacking is roughly as follows: IA-814 was hijacked on its way from Kathmandu to New Delhi on the 24th of December and forced to land in Amritsar, near the Pakistani border, due to low fuel. Here, it refuelled and took off to Lahore, Pakistan where it again had a brief stop-over. Then it proceeded on to Dubai where the hijackers released 27 passengers, mostly women and children, and then left again for Kandahar in Afghanistan. In Kandahar, this gruesome drama unfolded in earnest. The conclusion came eight days later with the release of the remaining hostages, minus one of their number. This was in return for the release of a certain Mohammed Azhar Masood, an Islamic cleric and advocate of holy war in Indian Kashmir and two other militants, from Indian captivity.

If one takes away the unfortunate killing of one passenger, this saga is rather less interesting for its own sake than for what it elucidates regarding the present state of affairs in the sub-continent. The Indian government



Indian Airlines technician and two Afghan workers approaching the hijacked plane Picture - Archives

must take its fair share of the blame for the bureaucratic ineptitude, to which the Indian public is sadly accustomed, which unnecessarily prolonged the agony of the hostages. A complete breakdown in co-ordination led to the flight not being detained in Amritsar, on Indian territory. If this had been achieved, it could have saved the government the embarrassment of having the Kashmir conflict receive considerable international exposure, something India has always taken great pains to avoid.

That aside, India was forced to request the co-operation of the Afghan Taleban and the military

Nothing is being done to address the basic conflict, which gave rise to the hijacking; namely the Kashmir issue

junta in Pakistan, two countries which India traditionally reviles.

But, most embarrassing of all, it only occurred to the government to send a team of negotiators to Afghanistan after its hand was more or less forced by the anger directed at it by relatives of the passengers. Cynicism towards politics is nothing new to India. It has occasionally led to public outbursts of anger. But this was the first time that this anger emanated from members of the urban middle class (The passengers were flying and flying

is a luxury in India). Hence, the government was flustered and forced to negotiate with the hostage-takers, thereby contradicting its policy of zero-tolerance with terrorists.

Simultaneous to these developments, India and Pakistan were playing their favourite game of blaming each other for the dilemma. In fact, this week the Indian government claims to have uncovered incontrovertible evidence to prove a Pakistani hand in the hijacking, which that country vehemently denies. Irresponsible, heated words are being exchanged between hard-liners on both sides of the fence. However, nothing is being done to address the basic conflict, which gave rise to the hijacking; namely the Kashmir issue. As I write this, Rachna Katyal, the widow of the sole slain passenger, is sleeping under heavy sedation. She was not told about her husband's death until after the hostage crisis. If Indian and Pakistani hard-liners feel they should not talk peace for their own sakes, then so be it. However, can it not be respectfully suggested to these people that perhaps they owe that traumatised, shattered young woman something? But it is being naive, of course. What a ridiculous suggestion!

For a description of the involvement of Ahmad Umar Sheikh (former LSE Student) see news, page 4

INTERNATIONAL ROUND-UP

Despite the dire predictions regarding the **Y2K BUG**, the dawn of the new millenium did not herald any catastrophic consequences. One can pose questions about how the money spent around the world on being 'Y2K compliant' could have been better put to use. However, specialists say that without such precautionary measures, there might have been

disaster.

One surprise on the eve of the millennium, 31 December, was the resignation of President Yeltsin of **RUSSIA**. It has been said that this was to clear a smoother path to victory for acting president Putin in the upcoming presidential elections. Putin has become one of the most popular politicians as the designated successor to Yeltsin.

The elections are to be held on 26 March.

SOUTH AFRICAN politician Roelf Meyers has also announced his resignation for "personal reasons", ending a 21-year-long career. He was the deputy leader of the United Democratic Movement(UDM). Meyers is also distinguished as the politician who negotiated the end of apartheid as the minister for constitutional development in 1992.

As it has just given its final approval for a project to import

liquefied natural gas, hopes are up concerning **CHINA**. The LNG project is seen as an indication that China is giving concern to the environment and opening up to external energy sources. Many see this as one of the first in, what is hoped, a series of steps to gradually become a more friendlier market. This is especially in light of its pending entrance to the WTO.

According to British Home Secretary Jack Straw, General **PINOCHET** is to return home to

Chile because of mental problems which he has suffered since he has been detained in Britain. It is said that he is unfit to face a trial in Spain on alleged human rights abuses such as torture. There is controversy over whether the medical report on Pinochet should be made available to concerned parties such as victim's families and Amnesty International.

HOW BLAIR MUST SHOW HIS COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION AND EQUALITY

Gen Sec John Black examines the implication of the recently published Cubie report

Just before Christmas, when the government hoped that nobody would notice, a potentially crucial report by a Scottish lawyer was publicised. That report was the Cubie report into the funding of education in Scotland.

Amongst other things it proposed replacing the current system of up-front fees for Home/EU undergraduates with a scheme whereby you paid back bit by bit after graduating and also advocated the reinstatement of a means-tested grant. This is may be all very nice for the Scots, but what has it got to do with us? Well, quite a lot actually.

If the report is adopted then the effects could have crucial knock-on effects south of the border. And as it happens it seems it probably is going to be adopted.

Dems to throw away. The coalition survives and the report has done its job.

But the survival of the coalition government in Scotland isn't why the report is of interest to us, far from it. However interesting to Government students like myself different types of governments generally are, the ins and outs of Scottish politics itself fails to stir the blood. I'm sure that is why some key figures south of border were so keen to push devolution. Before devolution they had to pretend that they cared about tolls on bridges to remote Isles etc. in order not to threaten the Union. Now they needn't bother - quite rightly so, the whole point of devolution is giving power to the people who do care, power to people who are best placed to make the decisions, and decisions about far more significant issues

education financing system than the rest of the UK.

There are some curious anomalies. Imagine two students with identical circumstances, both studying the same degree here at LSE, the only different is that one is from the town of Berwick (on the English side of the border) and the other from Berwickshire (on the Scottish side of the border). Even though both could live within metres of each other, the English student may have to fork out over £3000, the Scottish student absolutely nothing. To add a further anomaly - students of similar backgrounds from all countries in the EU studying in Scotland may pay nothing, except that is for students from the UK outside Scotland. Now the solution is not that other EU students should pay as well, but that there should be equality between not

Cubie's Proposals

Fees: Replace the current fee system with a "Graduate Endowment" - effectively you pay the fees after you've left when your salary is over £25,000, rather than having to pay up front.

Grants: Reinstatement of a limited means-tested grant system

Jobs: Students should not work for more than 10 hours per week

relatively little will have to pay, whilst students with poor parents who go on to be millionaires won't. The botched means testing system means relatively poor people just above the threshold have to fork out and no account is made for the size of the family or other financial circumstances.

The whole point of the means-testing part of the system is to make sure poorer students aren't deterred from applying, yet Cubie has said that that is exactly what is happening. His solution means that nobody pays at the point of entry, but everyone earning over £25,000 does after exiting.

There are two advantages to this system. Firstly, poorer students will be less likely not to apply because of financial fears, although fees per se still make this a real risk. Secondly, it avoids the absurd situation whereby parts of fees are means tested not on the user but on their parents.

There is a tension in higher education funding which nobody has been willing to answer. If the "users" are to contribute, should it be the users themselves or their parents? The current system is both, mainly depending on which one gets the government the best deal. Students are legally adults and bear all the responsibilities that go with that status, yet when it comes to financing they are legally effectively still dependent on their parents. Fees and loans are means tested on parental income. This assumes that parents should, will and are able to continue to fund their children when they are adults. In many cases parents won't or can't - this creates an unfortunate funding gap for the student.

That is partly why the Cubie Report's fee recommendations are a step forward. Sadly the proposals for modifying the loan

system means that many students from more fortunate backgrounds won't even be entitled to a loan. Nor will they (or any student for that matter) be entitled to work for more than 10 hours fill the cash gap.

A Cubie for the rest of us

The Cubie Report therefore is a step forward, but there are further strides that need to be made. The report shouldn't be implemented in the rest of the UK, but the rest of the UK should at least have a report.

This is the message that we are sending to the government. This is the message that the Aldwych Group is sending too. The Aldwych Group is made up of the nineteen Students' Unions from the Russell Group of universities, the UK's top research institutions, which includes LSE.

Cubie has rightly stated the current system is failing students in Scotland, in particular students from less-privileged backgrounds, the very people the government argues the current system was set up to help. Effectively the current system is narrowing and not widening access to education. Well, if it is failing Scottish students, it is failing students elsewhere.

What is therefore being demanded is a Cubie for the rest of the UK - an independent inquiry into how higher education is funded. Devolution, almost by definition, means diversity. But what we risk is a diversity characterised by degrees of failing systems.

If the government is committed to education and equality, not only in rhetoric but in reality, it must independent inquiry into higher education funding.



Enough fudge to save face

The report was set-up following the elections in Scotland last year to bridge the gap between the Labour and Liberal Democrat coalition partners - the former wanted tuition fees to stay, the latter wanted them abolished. Now in reality the report doesn't propose the abolition of fees, but there is enough in the report for the Lib Dems to accept. Or rather there is enough fudge in the report for the Lib-Dems to save face whilst U-turning in their ministerial limos. In the end seats in the executive and chauffeured-driven cars was too irresistible for the Lib-

than tolls on bridges. The Scottish Parliament fills this function, whilst congratulating itself on how brave and proud their nation is. In a similar way that Scotland, or England for that matter, plays bravely and proudly when they are thrashed by Australia, the US, South Africa etc. at a game they themselves invented.

Behind all the politics of the Cubie report and the coalition government, lie quite important policy implications. If adopted, the government in Scotland will have to stump up over £70m to pay for it. More interestingly, if adopted Scotland will have a totally different (and at times incompatible) higher

only European citizens, but also British citizens.

Nor indeed is the solution to adopt the Cubie Report across the whole of the UK. There is much right about the report, but there is also much wrong with the report and there is no point in replacing one flawed system with another.

Putting aside the principle of fees for one moment, the system Cubie suggests for paying fees at the exit rather than the entrance to university is far fairer than what we have now. At present a means testing system means the poorest in theory don't pay. The reality is very different. A student with rich parents who goes on to earn

WAR OF THE POSERS

FOOTBALL

LSE 3rd 2

LSE 4th 0

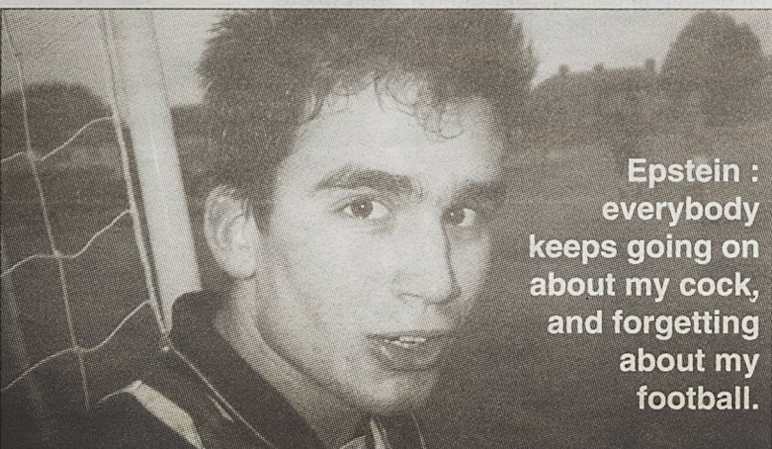
The G-Man presents an unbiased view of the 3rds' stunning victory, whilst Epstein declares 'we woz robbed'

The clash of the titans, the rumble in the jungle call it what you want as there is nothing bigger than a football match involving two of the LSEs finest. In the red corner was Stoates warriors and in the blue corner the Rocks Neanderthals ready to do battle to the death in a match that had been hyped up for all of last term. The first punch was from the thirds who arrived at Berrylands early, supposedly to go through various stretching and warm up routines but amounted to little more than a quick kick around and an on going argument about players wearing gloves, t-shirts and jumpers to keep warm whilst playing. For fucks sake lads we're a football team not some namby pamby puffs, so lets start acting like one instead of a bunch of wet bastards. With the thirds supplying a match photographer in the shape of Bruiser Russell who was determined to make his pictures as "abstract" as possible whatever that means, all that was left was for the fourths to show their yellow arses and for the thirds to give them a good fucking whacking.

The fourths entered the ring in more a manner of Prince Charles than Prince Naseem, trying to act high and mighty in an attempt to unnerve the thirds. Stoates ploy of adopting an away strip that looked almost like the LSEs home strip seemed like a good idea as it would cause panic and confusion on the pitch, but a none to convinced referee made them reverse the shirts to a more visible white. The game kicked off and immediately a flurry of blows were delivered by each side, Wogan and Tommy C fighting the fourths cause and the Guv'nor and Dynamo the thirds. A few rash challenges by the G-Man early on showed that this was hardly likely to be a game of style and flair but more one of grit and determination. Stoates cunning plan of playing 8 men in defence seemed to be working as the various jabs from the thirds were easily dealt with. In fact some early corners could have been tucked away by the fourths if they had finished them properly instead of allowing Stoatey to try and head them. The lumbering fool was even more embarrassed as first the G-Man beat him in the air and then all 5 foot of Lightning did the same.

Gradually the thirds started to get a grip on the game with the Guv'nor almost scoring with a header which was cleared of the line much to the fourths relief. Calamity Barnes should have done better when put clean through as his scuffed effort never looked like reaching the goal let alone going in, and then when he arrived at the back post he pratted around with the ball when he should have put it in the gapping net. As the bell sounded for half time the fourths were the happier as a victory on points was there for the taking. The second half saw the thirds use their A, B, C and D plans to no effect so it became a case of hoofed long balls and every man for himself. The killer blows finally came in two lucky and ironic ways. Firstly a through ball down the left flank from Dynamo was picked up by Lightning whose attempted cross to the G-Man freakishly went in, and then the G-Man left unmarked for the first time in the game fired in a loose ball in the six yard box after good work by Gangles.

The knockout punch didn't materialise and a counter offensive from the fourths never happened as the thirds defence of Bryan, Hightower, Phillipe, Mikey, the Guv'nor and the G-Man stood firm. All that was left was for the Rock to run things in midfield with Buffy alongside, as the final bell came. With the fourths heads low and their tails between their legs all that was left was the piss up in the Tuns. Barnesy finally made it after stealing a UCL players bag after the game which contained a can of deodorant and used porn much to Calamity's delight. The next cup rumble for the thirds could be the seconds, we're waiting boys so come and have a go if you think you're hard enough.



**Epstein :
everybody
keeps going on
about my cock,
and forgetting
about my
football.**

THIRDS VS. FORTHS GRUDGE MATCH: TWO SIDES OF THE EVERY STORY

The hotly anticipated and awaited ULU cup tie between LSE III (aka The Fellas) and LSE IV (Stoatey's weasel army) turned out to be a highly competitive and charged affair. The tie, rearranged from last term because the 'Rock' required some emergency hair gel treatment and half his side buggered off home, represented the epitome of British derby football; fast, furious and few clear cut chances.

The fourth team struck first. A viciously swinging corner in the third minute from Alfie saw Matt Snot comprehensively beaten in the air by Paxton. The ball fell invitingly for Marlboro Man Michael to swivel and hit a half volley that seemed destined for the top corner until the boot of O'Shea, fresh from being inserted up Barnesy's calamitous arse, managed to deflect the ball over. Spurred on by this early lapse in marking, the thirds began to come into the game, with O'Shea's long throws and long balls into the box the hallmark of their cultured play. The fourths rose to this aerial challenge with the defending of Orson Wells and Stoate again outstanding. The only lapse in concentration in the first half saw Calamity Barnes run through one on one with the keeper after another long ball from the back. Faced with such a serious goalscoring threat, Antii pissed himself laughing and

Barnsey obligingly passed the ball back to him. As the half wore on, the thirds pressed harder but created few chances, the exception being Snot's header cleared off the line by Alfie. Once again, the fourths created a clear cut chance, a curling cross from Tommy C was chested down by Rabs, leaving him with only the keeper to beat. Unfortunately, the wing genius left his shooting boots at home and fired over. As a result the teams were level at half time.

The second half saw much of the same; combative, fast football. The thirds got shot of the hapless Barnes and Tom, and brought in Gav, a well known thug true to the fella's mould. Still, the fourth team would not budge, with Paxton and Alfie again having outstanding games, and fullbacks Karly and Alan assured in possession. The turning point ironically came from a fourth team attack. A long cross into the box evaded the keeper, who accidentally (yeah right) failed to evade Alfie's chin with his fist. The ball fell to Tommy C with an open goal, only for the ref to blow the whistle for Alfie's head injury. Paramedic O'Shea was quickly onto the case with wise words such as 'come on fella, there's nowt a bit of Byrlcream can't put rigghhht', but Alfie was undoubtedly groggy, and needed to be replaced. From the restart, a breakaway found the diminutive goalgetter Kyle at the by-line. His attempted cross skidded off his little feet and looped over Antii, finding its way into the far corner. Disappointed from falling to such a sucker punch, the fourths conceded a second goal from a corner with a Hazeldine tap in, to give the thirds an unassailable two goal cushion. The lads kept the commitment up to the end, in true style, with Stoate impressing observers with his variety of clumsy challenges, and Wells showing us once again he is the master of the two footed jump tackle. Defeat, though expected, was softened by the fact that we had given a good account of ourselves and we had created a few clear cut chances, proving that the third's three man system at the back is complete jism, just like their match reports.

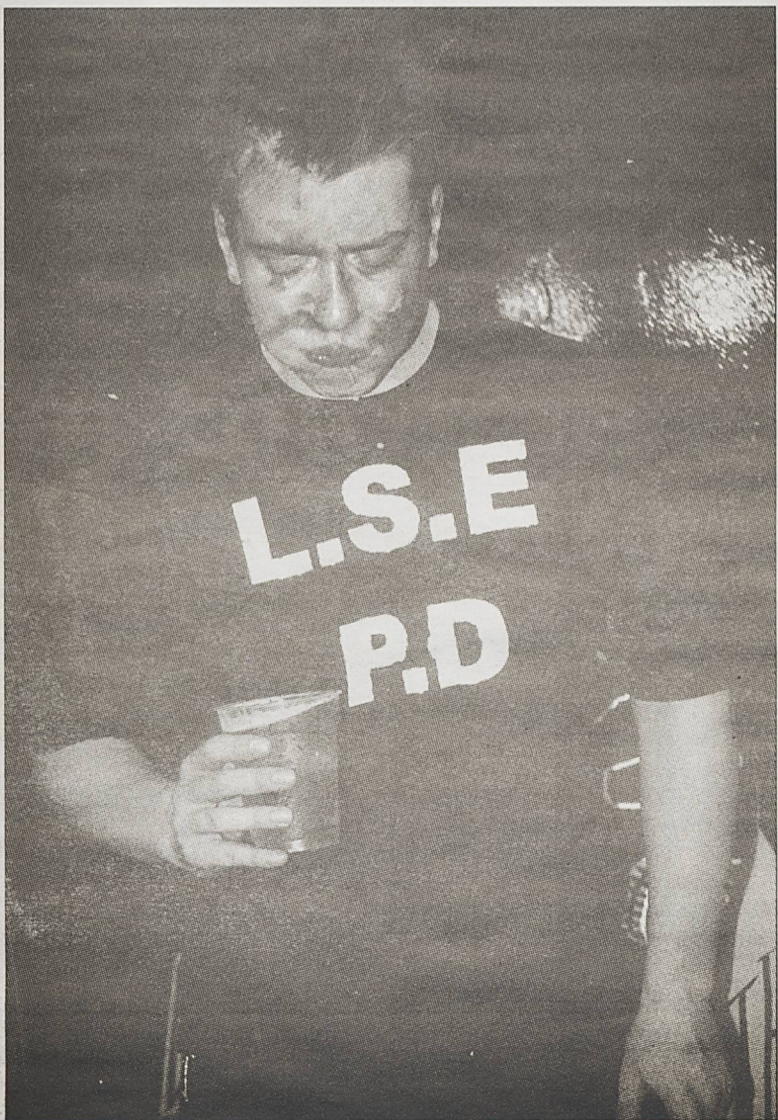
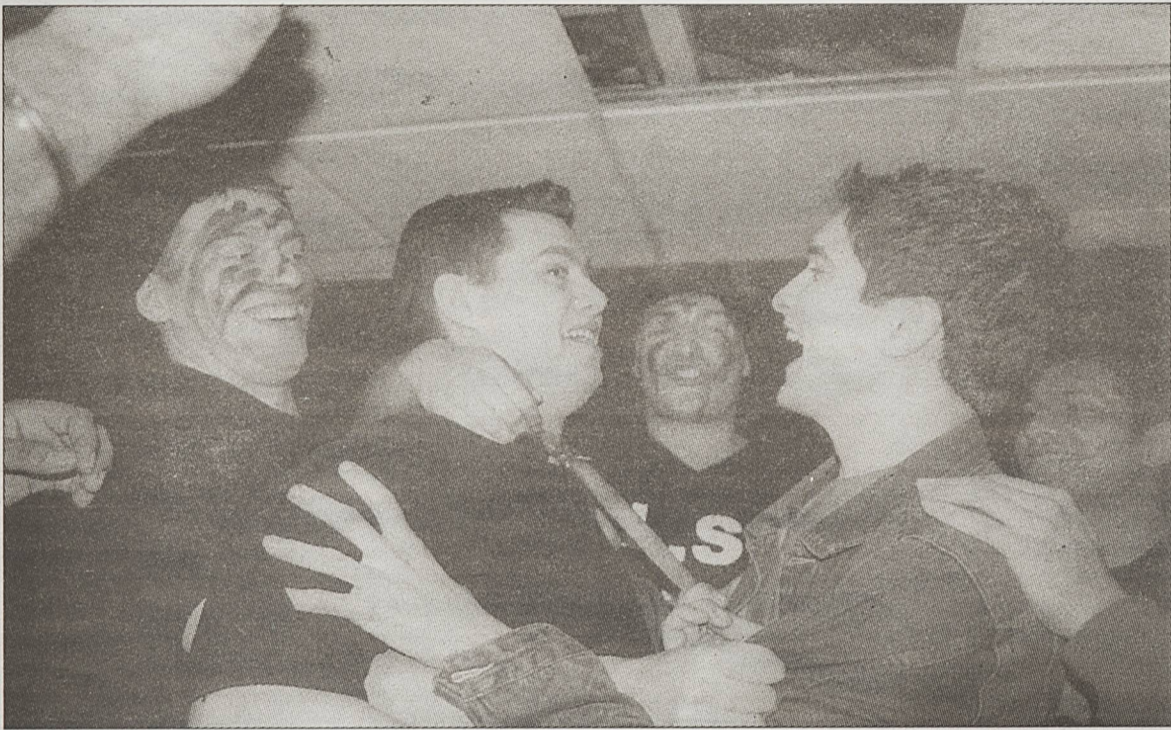
***The lads kept the
commitment up to the
end, in true style, with
Stoate impressing
observers with his
variety of clumsy
challenges.***



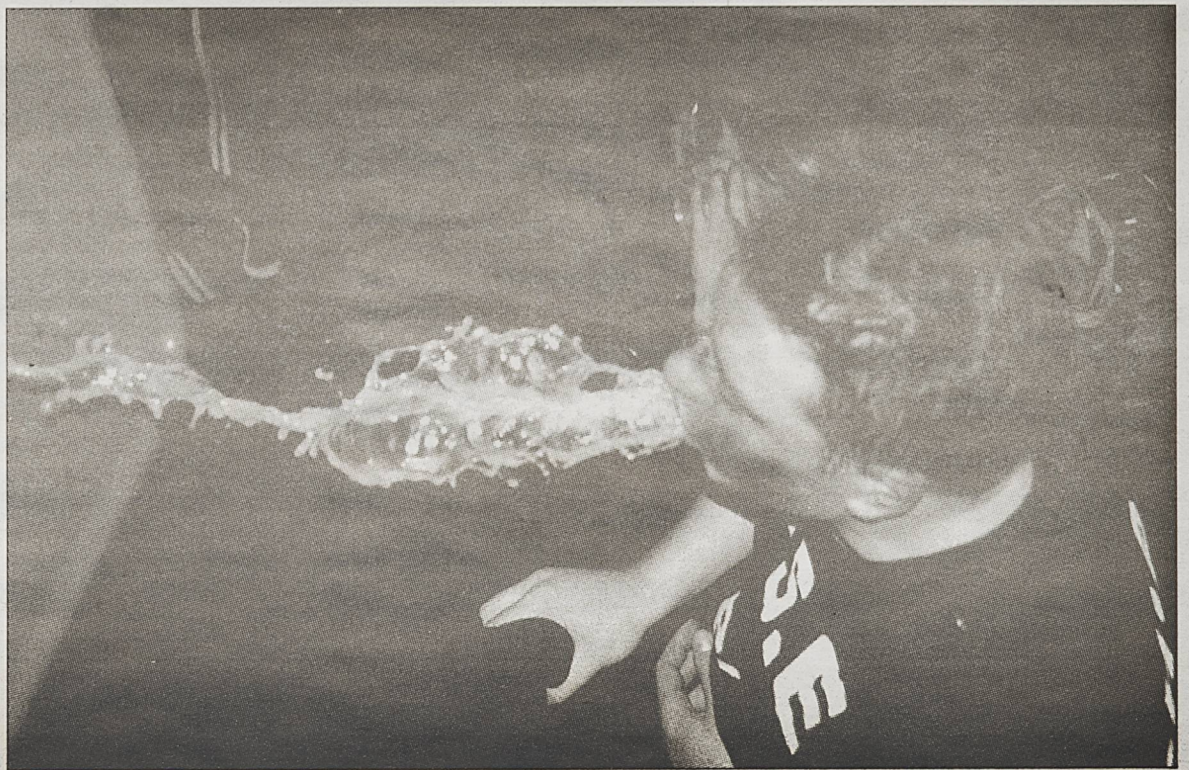
**Epstein cowers
behind Wogan to
shield his swollen
member as his arch-
enemy the Holborn
reception doors leapt
menacingly out in
front of him**



Those foolish enough to turn up late had to face the wrath of Judge Sellers and Uncle Bob's gruesome "wheel of death"



The grand finale was Mr Kents fantastic 'booze 'til you barf' bonanza. Indeed, he quaffed ale like an animal before repeatedly shouting at the ground.





**From tennis to thai boxing,
people from all sports
were united in the desire to
get absolutely shitfaced**

AU BARREL MAYHEM
continued from back page

of the guv'nor and the rock. The sight of Charterhouse in his birthday suit stopped traffic as the posse went down to mix it with the muppets from the good ol' Strand poly. When confronted by the singing crusaders, the average King's student was more confused than a cross dressing 17 old boy with a passion for farmyard animals. The response of Kings was swift and appropriate - the geniuses decided to 'bring in the bacon.' Eons after we left the sest pit on the Strand, the boyz in blue turned up in full riot gear, ready to do battle with General 'Gobshite' Stoate's guerilla forces and 7up Sam's gun toting cowgirls. Most fearsome were the fatboy drag queen duo of Andy Macfarlane and Max 'your momma' Ansell, armed with rather fetching snakeskin handbags. The grand finale was Mr Kents fantastic 'booze 'til you barf' bonanza. Indeed, he quaffed ale like an animal before repeatedly shouting at the ground. Anyone who can remember anything after that, blatantly wasn't drinking quick enough. The crowd dispersed far and wide in the quest to seek out more booze; some larged it on the karaoke - injecting life into the funeral wake atmosphere of the Beaver's retreat. Few were still standing upright at the bell for last orders. Nuff respect to the football contingent led by Matt 'ladies man' Cole, the guv'nor and the rock went the distance along with fat Bob's rugby mob. The police were called on three seperate occasions. The main suspect has to be a lady who complained about being trapped in a phone box by a gang of hooligan's in fancy dress, who were chasing a naked bloke down the Strand. Yeah, right...Sounds to me like she'd had a few!!!!



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BLOOD, SWEAT AND BEERS

AU Barrel claims more victims than ever

Nick Wogan finally sobers up and struggles to recall the carnage...

As the old saying goes "If you can remember it, you weren't pissed enough". The cognoscenti of LSE swapped thinking for drinking last term in the annual booze fest that is the AU Barrel. From tennis to thai boxing, people from all sports were united in the desire to get absolutely shifaced -can't think of anything better to do at eleven in the morning myself. The dress code was fancy and punctuality was strongly advised- those foolish enough to turn up late had to face the wrath of Judge Sellers and

Uncle Bob's gruesome "wheel of death". Cordon bleu, chunder inducing cuisine such as vodka and sprout jelly or the classic chilli and lard sandwich were among the penalties awaiting the guilty parties. Beaver boss Dan Lewis was forced to down three pints after the jury were convinced by Oscar's detailed and compelling arguement that he was a 'wanker'. Entertainment guru Al Hatton gave the crowd, and James 'If it moves, snog it' Mulligan, what they wanted by engaging in a spot of tonsil hockey with the Limelight legend.

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faster than the hockey birds, and there were casualties. Many took up the popular student pursuit of 'psychadellic yodelling' as the crowd in the underground blasted off in a rocket bound for 'Planet Twat'. Hockey playing hooker Kate demonstrated her agility in a booze-fuelled game of twister. The football team quoshed their 'shandy sipping nancy-boy' image with victory in the beer boat race. Special mention should be given to the cricketer, you know who you are - even if we don't, who displayed a complete disregard for the kangaroo court by refusing to

accept his fine. Some suggested the judges authority was undermined by the fact he was dressed in bin liners and his wig resembled a mop-head.

Undisputed star of day was rugby boy Charterhouse, who proceeded to undertake the Houghton Street Streak with a worrying eagerness. After getting his Darth Vader kit removed, he led the conga through the corridors of LSE. Anyone unlucky enough to still be awake half-way through the deadly cure for insomnia that is Econ. B, were rewarded with a soaking

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LSE's finest streak through the street of London...
Picture censored by Netball Girl