

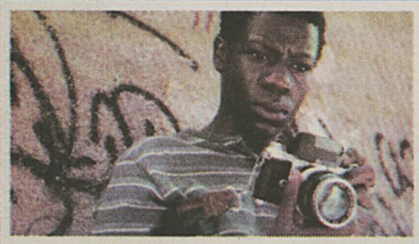
The Beaver

The Newspaper of the LSE SU

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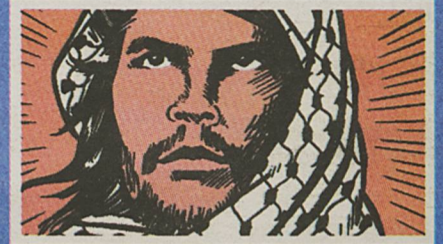
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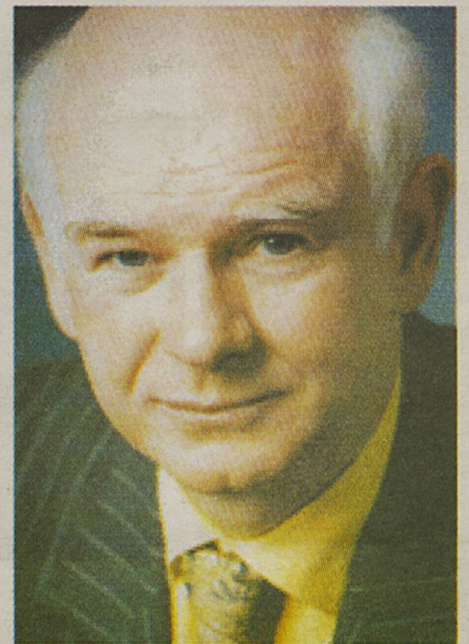
B:art reviews City of Gold - is it the best film of the year?

B:Link takes a voyage to the Occupied Territories



The New and Improved Wright's Bar hits Campus- page 6

Howard's Way coming to LSE! - Next Director Announced



What a dapper chap! Man City supporter and Director-to-be Sir Howard

Michael Bourke

SIR HOWARD Davies, Chairman of the Financial Services Authority (FSA) and a past Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, is to be the next Director of the LSE it has been announced.

His appointment was officially approved by the School's Court of Governors on the 12th December. He will take over the reins from outgoing Director Tony Giddens on the 1st October.

The news was predictably warmly embraced by the School's top brass. Chair of the Court of Governors Lord Grabiner QC said: 'We are delighted to make this appointment. Howard Davies is the right choice to build on the tremendous work of Anthony Giddens and further the School's reputation for social science teaching and research excellence.'

Outgoing Director Giddens was similarly effusive, saying "LSE attracts the brightest and best students and staff from all over the world. I have no doubt that Howard Davies will continue the tradition and reputation for academic excellence and challenging thinking which I have sought to enhance at the School. I wish him every success, in what is a wonderfully exciting job, when he takes up his

appointment in October 2003.'

And beyond the confines of the School, the great and the good were eager to endorse the School's choice. Mervyn King, governor designate of the Bank of England and formerly a Professor of Economics at LSE, praised Davies's "broad experience, sharp mind and deep intellectual curiosity about the social sciences." Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, expressed saying "I warmly congratulate Sir Howard on his appointment to be the next Director of LSE."

Davies, 51, certainly has an impressive CV and experience in many relevant areas of public life. He studied History and French at Oxford before beginning a tour of the UK's major public institutions. He worked at the Treasury and the Foreign Office before talking a walk on the wild side and joining McKinsey and Co. as a management consultant. From 1987-92 he was Director of the Audit Commission and from 1992-1995 he was Director General of the Confederation of British Industry.

Indeed the very diversity of Sir Howard's career has been a source of criticism from some quarters. In the initial aftermath of September 11th as financial markets tumbled the FSA found itself in

troubled waters and there were doubts that Davies would stay around to deal with them. Speaking to the Observer in October of 2001 Andrew Hilton, director of the Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation said "He has not got stickability, he has not stayed anywhere once the initial challenge has been surmounted.'

Of course, by the time Davies becomes Director he will have lasted well beyond this gloomy prognosis. However, his time at the FSA has not been without its difficulties. Its low point came in November of last year when Sir Howard was accused of "being asleep on the job" by a committee of MPs investigating the split-capital trust debacle. He was forced to concede that his organization "could have done better" in dealing with sliding stock markets."

It is clear that when Davies takes up the job of Director he will have a number of serious challenges to face. He will inherit the implications of the government's forthcoming higher education funding review. Whatever its implications for students the chronic under funding of UK higher education is unlikely to be ended to the satisfaction of the Universities. The ongoing industrial dispute between the School and its staff over London weighting is just one symptom of

this problem.

Early student reaction to Sir Howard's appointment has been positive. LSESU General Secretary Tuuli Kousa said "I am delighted that LSE has managed to secure the appointment of such a renowned individual as Howard Davies. To me, he seems to be an ideal successor to the current Director, and we anticipate he will steer us towards the direction of continuing and developing our excellence as one of the leading social sciences institutions in the world.' Kousa did, however, acknowledge that Davies has a much lower profile than Giddens. She said 'Having had such a foremost academic as Professor Giddens as our Director, it would be difficult to surpass him in terms of academic merit.'

This view was echoed by students spoken to by the Beaver. When asked what they thought of Davies's appointment one said "Who's Howard Davies?" Another, after hearing a little about Sir Howard's pedigree, said "He sounds a bit dull but at least he knows some economics..." It seems that when he arrives the new Director will have a little work to do to win the hearts and minds of the student body.

Anti-Rape Row At UGM Mars Festive Fun

Michael Bourke

THE LAST UGM of the Michelmas term was marked by a heated disagreement over an anti-rape motion. Some of the fiercest debate of term was played out to as the LSESU sabbaticals looked on, dressed incongruously as Santa's elves and reindeer.

The controversy was sparked by an incident that had occurred at the AU Barrel the previous Friday. One of the revellers at the event had brought along a home made placard bearing the slogan "Free John Leslie - Hard Sex is not a crime", a reference to press allegations that Leslie was the unnamed TV star whose attack Ulrika Johnson had described in her recent autobiography. Leslie denies the allegation.

The motion proposed by Katya Nasim and seconded by Tansy Hoskins condemned the display-

ing of placard which gave the impression that rape was not a crime and highlighted the problem of sexual violence against women. More contentiously it also sought an apology from the AU Exec and an assurance that steps would be taken to avoid any repetition at future AU events.

This part of the motion was vehemently opposed by some of those attending the UGM and it was strongly argued that the AU had no need to apologise since the offensive placard was the work on an individual and in no way officially sanctioned. AU President Rex Walker was particularly forthright in his opposition and was keen to point out that those bringing the motion had not approached him or other members of the AU Exec either on the day of the Barrel or prior to

bringing the motion to the UGM. Hoskins was similarly forceful in her support for the apology.

The meeting became increasingly acrimonious and polarised as tempers frayed. Supporters of the motion were angry that what they saw as a simple statement against a clearly inappropriate action was being refused. Its opponents were outraged by what they deemed to be the suggestion that they condoned rape or might be in any way associated with the initial incident.

The temperature rose further when Rowan Harvey, SU Women's Welfare Officer, spoke against the motion. She told the Beaver that she had found the meeting "very distressing" and said

"The saddest part is that both sides of the debate actually feel the same way about rape, neither side condones it, and their message could have been far stronger had they come together to look into ways of preventing this sort of thing happening at future AU and SU events."

However, some sections of the meeting were clearly outraged by Harvey's decision to speak against an anti-rape motion whatever the context. Their ire was further exacerbated when almost the entire SU exec voted against the motion. Despite their opposition the motion appeared to pass. Confusion reigned at the end of the meeting when it was unclear whether or not a late filibustering ploy has succeeded. However, leaving aside procedural games it did appear that the feeling of the meeting was in support of the motion. At the time of writing the Beaver has not been able to confirm this with the Constitution and Steering Committee.



There very were very few happy little pixies by the end of the debate...



Oh deer! It's reining on the Gen.Sec's parade...

Striking News

More industrial action to hit LSE

Tom Delaney

STUDENTS RETURNING to the School for the new term will face renewed disruption from industrial action. Neither of the disputes, involving fire fighters and university staff, that led to closures and restrictions on student services have been resolved.

It had seemed that the fire fighters dispute was on the way to resolution when both sides agreed to begin talks with the conciliation service ACAS. However, these hopes were dashed On Friday when the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) refused to continue with negotiations. The FBU stated that further talks were pointless without an improved pay offer. It has called a 24 hour strike for 21st January and two further 48 hour stoppages starting on the 28th January and 1st February.

FBU General Secretary, Andy

Gilchrist, told his members "With good will from the employers and the Government this could be achieved without further industrial action. Unfortunately, however, the employer's side seems at present to be prisoners to the Government's determination to hold down public sector pay and to every last comma of the discredited Bain report."

Fire Service Minister Nick Raynsford reacted angrily to the FBU's decision, describing its pay demands as "completely ridiculous". He said it was "deeply regrettable" the FBU was saying it would not take part in next week's planned talks. The minister said: "I don't think it's defensible and I don't think the British public will think it is defensible."

The strike will lead to the closure of "deep" underground stations served by lifts and may reignite the row between LSESU and the School about the safety of social events during fire strikes. Last term a bitter disagreement erupted when the School cancelled Crush at short notice due to an

FBU strike.

The London weighting dispute between higher education staff and university employers is also on the verge of further escalation. Last term the LSE was severely disrupted by strike action taken on the 14th November by members of UNISON, the public sector union, and the Association of University Teachers (AUT). The unions are arguing for a higher London weighting payment to reflect the costs of living in the capital. They argue that the current payment is deeply unsatisfactory and leaves many staff members in financial hardship.

The campaign continued over the Christmas break. Union members lobbied the Vice-Chancellors Christmas ball on 17th December to keep the pressure up.

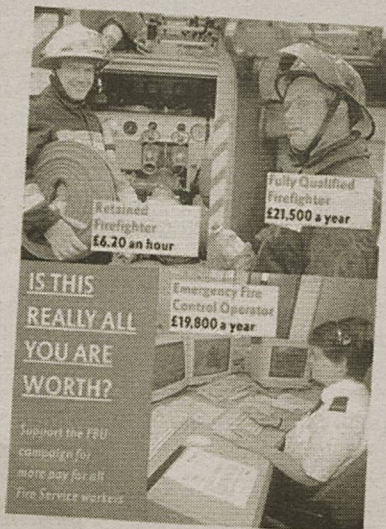
Progress has been made and talks between the two sides took place last Wednesday. According to the AUT this was "an important breakthrough", indicating that the employers may be prepared to alter their previous position. The employers have also asked for further talks later this month after the government's

announcement of the new funding settlement for higher education. Press reports in December suggested that an extra £1.5 billion may be made available to the sector and that some of this cash would be used to improve pay.

However, a request from the employers that the strike scheduled for 4th February be called off was rejected by the unions. The 5th March has also been identified as a further date for industrial action. If the employers do not make serious concessions it seems likely that both dates will see teaching at the LSE seriously

disrupted with many lectures and seminars cancelled.

AUT General Secretary Sally Hunt was keen to reiterate her union's central message. She said "During the last ten years house prices in the capital have rocketed by 155 per cent and yet London Weighting for staff at the University of London remains at the same level as 1992." This statistic and others like it have been central to the unions' campaign from its inception. Now that the campaign is finally starting to make some head way the unions are unlikely to back down.



Fiery rhetoric as negotiations falter



Coming soon to the steps of the Old Building

Fighting Hard For Peace

Stop The War Coalition keeps working

Paul Kirby

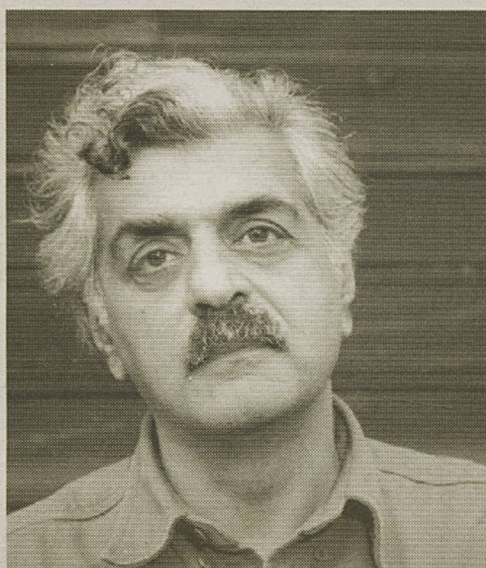
THE LSE Stop The War Coalition will be adding their own distinctive flavour to the debate on Iraq this week with a high-profile rally to be held tomorrow, Wednesday January 15th, in the Old Theatre.

The event, scheduled to start at 6.30 pm, will be attended by Professor Mary Kaldor of the LSE, prolific writer and thinker Tariq Ali, Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn and Stop The War Coalition member Lindsey German. The Stop The War Coalition built quite a reputation for themselves last term with a string of UGM proposals and a stall that became a firm feature of Houghton Street.

Their campaign saw its visibility reach a height with the Teach-In held at the end of October and the society's organisers hope to build on that momentum in the coming term. James Meadway, a coalition member, points out that this Wednesday's rally is part of the build up towards a much more high profile day of international action against the war one month later [that'll be on February 15th then] when he claims that up to 10 million people will be marching around the globe against war, a claim given validity/invalidity [depending on your point of view] by the fact that it was printed by the Mirror.

As Meadway himself puts it "this would make it the biggest single protest in human history, and the Stop the War Coalition in Britain are confident of an exceptionally large demonstration in London that day. It's this sort of pressure that causing our government to hesitate. LSE students have already shown their opposition to this war during last term's occupation and teach-in - we can help build a massive protest on the 15th that will shake the warmongers to their core."

Perhaps most beneficial to the STWC cause are the increasingly confused and contradictory messages coming out of both Washington and Downing Street over the possibility of conflict in the Gulf. The admission by Hans Blix, head of the UN inspection team in Iraq, that he had found "no smoking guns" last week prompted many commentators to speculate on whether there was any material breach of UN Resolution 1441 at all.



Tariq Ali - Anti War Activist

It was a worry that seemed to be shared by both the UK and the US who both quickly issued statements stressing that the inspectors must be given "time and space" to find evidence of Saddam's disobedience. Yesterday the Ark Royal aircraft carrier set sail for the Gulf as the flagship for a British force 16-ships strong and involving over 8,000 Navy and Marine personnel. American forces in the area are now expected to reach more than 100,000 by the end of this month seemingly ban-

ishing Jack Straw's comments last week that the chances of war were 60-40 against.

The pro-war rhetoric was further strengthened by comments from Downing Street over the weekend stressing that war was "virtually inevitable". Both sides of the UK-US Alliance have begun to hint that they have their own evidence that might supersede any failure on the part of Blix to come up with the goods but neither administration is prepared to reveal details as it may jeopardise operations.

Donald Rumsfeld worryingly suggested last week that he might not even be prepared to show his evidence to the UN Security Council as it could jeopardise American lives. It is against this backdrop that the Stop The War Coalition are hoping to present their contentions that war in the middle east is not about democracy or weapons of mass destruction but about oil.

While the opportunity at Wednesday's rally for pro-war voices seems slim the STWC are still eager to encourage a high level of attendance and point to the status of their speakers as incentive enough.

Tariq Ali is author of more than a dozen books but most recently of "The Clash Of Fundamentalisms", the cover of which is most memorable for its depiction of George Dubya's face imposed onto that of an Islamic mullah.

Professor Mary Kaldor is Principal Research Fellow and Programme Director at the Centre for the Study of Global Governance, LSE. She is also an expert on the Middle East, oil and conflict and humanitarian intervention.

Jeremy Corbyn MP is a Labour Member of Parliament for Islington North and is a prominent member of the growing backbench resistance against war within the Labour government.



Union Jack

Jack hopes his loyal readers have had a good break, and are now chomping at the bit to face the term ahead - the prospect of endless campaigning and elections coming up in just a few short weeks are enough to turn anyone's stomach, and Jack is feeling particularly fragile after the crimbo excesses. Jack greatly enjoys the Lent hustings and watching prospective candidates make fools of themselves in the name of popularity as they promise to listen to the views of all students and to provide re-sits, cheaper accommodation, better catering and flying pigs, and is looking forward to the edifying speeches in the UGM, although not so much to the self-glorifying posters and irritating little scraps of paper littering the Quad with whinging pleas of Vote Packer 1!

Jack believes he is of such excellent character that New Year's resolutions could not possibly further improve him. However, he can confirm the following resolutions of notable Houghton St regulars: Booksellers and porters - attempt to spend more time doing their jobs than they do plugging the staff exit at the Tuns' bar, Emma Walsh - be as enthusiastic and punctual to lectures as she is to AU Barrels, Darius Twatawotsit - be as attentive at spotting fire alarm hoaxers at Crush as he is at spotting women, and Tall Paul - stop eating up all his greens.

Speculation for the GenSec campaign is mounting, and bets are now open. Jack is currently offering odds on Madway at 974-1, Packer at 396-1, Supertramp at 2-1, some random member of the Hellenic Society at 4-1, Mistress Ariana (proposer of the infamous Coat Peg Plan) at 12-1, with a late entry from the Bellendi-Dearman camp at 5-1 and possibly some Finn no-one has ever heard of at 3-2. He still has high hopes that Loser Lewis will apply for a late PhD and enchant us all with another spectacularly futile campaign, and so is offering odds of 5000-1 on him, providing he is enrolled on a course by Week 5. Jack was speculating about offering odds on the Beaver's very own Iain 'bundred' Bundred, but given the longest 'job' he's ever held down was spending 15 minutes in the Tuns toilets, Jack feels it would be a tad irresponsible. Jack would run himself, on the grounds that anything would pay better than writing a column for the Beaver (especially with the newly introduced London weighting for Sabbs pushed through by the Pleasurer...), but he's just too damn lazy to fill in a nomination form. Odds will of course be changing after RAG week, when we will see the most serious candidates strut their stuff in the name of fundraising for important charities and vote-raising for self-important charity cases.

Before he runs out of space, Jack would just like to thank Mrs Jack for the delightful argyle patterned brown socks he received in his Christmas stocking - he recommends them highly as being both soft and sturdy, and thinks Jimmy Mullet should try a pair on for size - although he had better buy an extra large pair as he won't be able to take them back if he discovers they don't fit after the first 'use'.

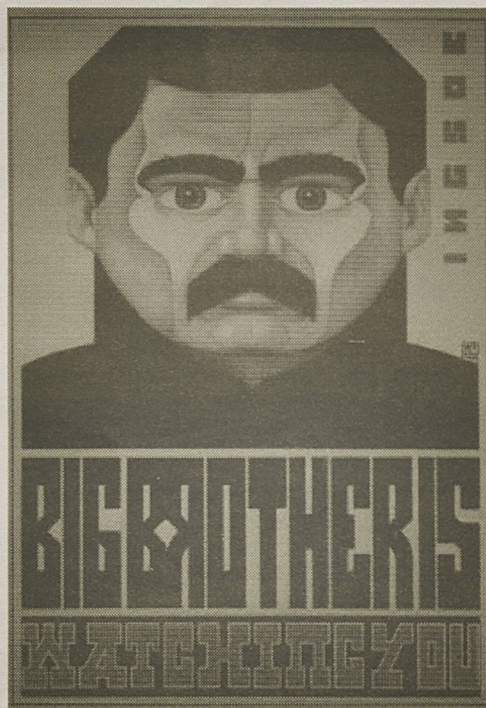
Just when you thought it was safe to download that essay....

Paul Kirby

LSE SLACKERS are in for a shock this term as they come up against the latest tool of technology - a program designed to snuff out e-plagiarism.

The nationwide system available to all UK universities was installed in October of last year but will come into its own this month - the peak season for coursework deadlines and assignments. The service works something like this: a piece of work is submitted by e-mail to your tutor who then sends it off to be checked by the program. It is compared to other works on the same subject from across the internet and then returned to your tutor four hours later with all your ineptly disguised plagiarisms highlighted in a variety of colours for all to see.

The initiative was decided upon as a result of the growing number of "essay banks" available on the Internet where layabouts/party-types can pay to download the essay of a more knowledgeable/eager student and pass it off as their own. The program was developed by iParadigms, a Californian compa-



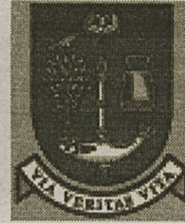
Soon they'll be nowhere they can't watch us...

ny, and has already proved to be very successful in the US where the plagiarism rate is as high as 30-35% compared to the studious 4% of the UK.

Gill Chester, who ran the pilot scheme, points out that this discrepancy is based on the continuous assessment system adopted across the Atlantic which puts students under far more pressure and leads to a much greater degree of "cutting and pasting". She was also quick to defend our naivety by saying that "students often don't know about plagiarism or how to acknowledge the sources for their work."

So it would seem that the message to universities is clear - test our knowledge less and we won't have to resort to stealing someone else's ideas. Recently received reports that enraged students of the History department are planning an occupation of key LSE buildings in protest remain unsubstantiated, as do assertions by LSE philosophers that essentially all art is plagiarism and that this system is therefore meaningless.

The Beaver's weekly round up of student news with Lyle Jackson



Have the students at the university of Glasgow finally managed a match for The Barrel? With a name like 'Daft Friday' the last day of term is promising. The roots of Daft Friday, the annual Glasgow University Union Christmas bash, date back to 1905 when a student by the name of James Bridie invented the whole affair in a fit of boredom and tedium. Mr. Bridie is alleged to have demanded a concert from the president of the student's union! The event has changed a lot over the years with less prominence to concerts and dinner and more to partying and dancing, 'the Daft Friday dance became more and more lavish, bizarre and endless!'. This is all starting to sound quite crazy and Barrel like. Just as I begin to like the idea of 'Daft Friday', Julie Craig from the organising committee explains, 'what better source of ideas than Christmas? We shall be going traditional with log fires and garlands, cozy corners and intimate lighting. Glamour and glitz will also feature with a Hollywood-style cocktail bar and our very own Crimson Club, recreated in the Reading Room'. What?! I suppose 'Mundane Friday' wouldn't attract many students, but at least its accurate!



Students at the university of Nottingham turned out in force at the end of last term to vote on the future of their exam structure. Nottingham currently employs a semester system, whereby half-year modules are examined in January and June. The proposal from the science departments, who say they need longer teaching periods, was to move to a conventional term structure with year-long modules. 4087 students voted, 64% more than any other vote at the university. 88.5% of voters were apposed to annual exams and voted to retain the current structure. The main reason for opposing the one exam period structure was the 'stress factor' according to the Nottingham student's union, who feel that students will suffer more if all exms are held at one time.



Finally, evidence that Oxford student trawl the net looking for love between lectures and essay deadlines. The Oxford Student reports, "Oxford's premier dating website Oxford Romance notched up another success story this week as a former university student proposed to the girlfriend he met on the website on top of Mount Snowdon." The couple were united after Joseph showed why he was having to use the website! "It was Joseph's admission that he was into "bad dancing and was a bit insane" that first captivated Emma, who had already dated a couple of others through Oxford Romance before finding Joseph. Emma advises fellow hopefuls to 'try out a few' and just 'keep hunting'. Oxford Romance was recently voted by University of Oxford students their third favorite website and its popularity seems to be growing. This term even sees new features such as 'Cupid recommends,' intelligently matching people using a 'purity style quiz'.

It's The Final Straw!

Oxford SU President in media ruckus

Michael Bourke

WILL STRAW, President of Oxford University Student Union and son of Foreign Secretary Jack, has become involved in a nasty spat with the independent student webzine educationnet.org.

Straw Junior has become the nation's most reported student due to his dual role and his views on higher education funding have been widely reported in the press, with journalists enjoying his criticism of the government of which his dad's a member.

However, it seems that it's not all fun being in the media spotlight, especially when dealing with the contentious issues of the day. Straw has accused both education.net and the BBC of misrepresenting him when they reported that he supported a graduate tax that "went on forever". The BBC used Straw's quote as the basis for a story published on their website on the 16th December entitled "Students warm to graduate tax". The piece suggested that the government and student leaders might be finding some common ground in the aftermath of the NUS National March held on the 4th December. Educationnet.org also picked up the story.

The disagreement hinges on a letter written by Straw to the Vice Chancellor in which he said "A graduate tax is therefore a much more suitable way to ask for an individual contribution as it is based on earnings and not potential earnings or parent's means." In his letter of complaint to educationnet.org, helpfully published online by its editor Joe Rukin, Straw expresses his "disappointment" that the webzine has "misrepresented" him.

Straw continues "You also tell a straightforward lie by suggesting that I want 'a separate tax for graduates which will go on for their whole life' - when have I ever said that?" It does seem, on reading the full text of his letter to the Vice-chancellor that it would be unfair to characterise him as a keen fan of the alternative funding sys-

tem. After the contentious quote in which he appears to soften his line towards the a graduate repayment scheme, Straw goes on, in the very next sentence to reiterate his belief "on a point of principle that the state should solely fund Higher Education as part of the welfare state through progressive taxation or non-welfare state spending cuts."

This is not the first time that the high profile student leader has brushed with the press. Last November he was involved in a row with the Oxford Student. He claimed that the newspaper had attributed comments to him out of context.

This latest argument highlights something more important than the oft noted difficulty of being the son of a famous father. At an important time in the higher education

debate, with the government's review imminent in weeks, there remains a stark divide in the student movement about what is and isn't acceptable. Almost ever since the introduction of tuition fees there have been two opposing camps. One, composed mostly of the hard left, yearns to return to the good old days of universal grants and generous state support. The other, while claiming to be similarly offended by recent reverses, has sought to pursue a more pragmatic line. Composed of assorted Labour students and independents this faction accepts that we are never going back to the good old days and has argued that inflammatory rhetoric damages the credibility of students when arguing for more attainable ends.

While the Straw episode of this long running feud will soon be forgotten the student movement as a whole will have to deal with it anew in the coming months in which all of the old arguments about idealism versus realism will doubtless be replayed. Although on the surface this debate will be about the desirability of whatever graduate repayment scheme is offered by the government and the equity of differential charges if they are introduced, its roots will go all the way back to 1997 and who sold who out to whom and at for what careerist price.



He's behind you! Will Straw struggles to avoid the feeling that his dad's reputation is always with him...

Clarke Approaches Climax

What is to come?

Iain Bundred

UNDERGRAD STUDENTS seem certain to learn their funding fate this month as the long-delayed higher education review is set to be announced within the next three weeks.

The seemingly interminable wait for the government reassessment of how to fund universities in the new millennium is being promised to arrive before the start of February so now the only doubt remaining for politicians, journalists and student officers across the country is less 'when, when, when' and more 'what, what, what?'

Since the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, appeared to rule out a large fight in upfront fees in Parliament last month (see the last issue of TheBeaver) much debate - and even derision - has mounted as to what the eighteen-month long study into alternatives to the current system used to pay for undergraduate funding in England will amount to.

For months it had seemed certain that the Department for Education and Skills would produce an 'options' paper - assumed to include at least some form of high rise in upfront charging for students, commonly labelled 'top-up' fees, as well as at least one new proposal. But since Blair spiked top-ups on the day of the National Union of Students mass demonstration, the suspicion is that the government will come out with only one proposal and try and push it through parliament as fast as possible.

So why the review?

The Labour Party introduced the current system of tuition fees, which sees roughly 40% of students levied a flat rate of £1,100 a year for their teaching and a further 20% pay some contribution on a means-tested basis.

However, despite this introduction in 1997, the huge black hole in the government expenditure is being in no way filled by these student contributions, whilst the DfES is being pressurised by the elite 'Russell Group' universities (including LSE) to raise even more money than is already in the system or fear further falling behind in world research and academic prowess.

So if it's such a problem, why the big wait?

The review was initially (and totally unrealistically) expected by many in March last year, then believed to be part of

Gordon Brown's Comprehensive Spending Review last summer. When that came and passed - pumping resources into the NHS and leaving the whole HE debate for later

- commentators placed their bets on autumn 2002. However, just when it was expected, the then Secretary of State, Estelle Morris, made a shock resignation and was replaced by Charles Clarke who asked for more time before presenting the review so he could 'get his house in order'.

Clarke, a former NUS President, has been making very favourable comments towards a graduate endowment similar to the one they have in Scotland - that would see students pay for the benefit they gain from education after they have graduated through a specific tax to cover the cost of tuition to a higher level than is currently paid up front, thereby (hopefully) not scaring off potential entrants with upfront fees. This solution - often referred to as the Cubie formula, due to its support in Scotland after the Cubie Report - has received much praise across the board and is believed to be the preferred choice of most in student politics - not least NUS President, Mandy Telford, who championed the adoption of graduate endow-

ments when she was President of NUS Scotland.

The latest predictions from the national press, however, have mooted the idea of a combination of tuition fees and some form of a graduate endowment. Crucially though, this seeming double-whammy of charging could be alleviated by the introduction of targeted maintenance allowances for students from low-income backgrounds - essentially a means-tested grant.

The government, for now stays silent on the issue - rumours persist around Westminster that a fight is ongoing between the DfES and the Treasury on what the final policy should be.

The student wing of the Labour Party is less tight-lipped, however. Ellie Reeves, Chair of Labour Students, said: "I'm looking forward to a constructive debate once the review arrives."

"It should hopefully confirm that upfront top-up fees will not be on the agenda and that for me will be the most crucial result. Whatever the government finally settles on we cannot allow such a barrier to higher education to exist or else we will be failing both today's students and those in the future."

The NUS meanwhile is restricted in its manoeuvring, having passed policy at its National Conference last March calling for free education for all.

A noble cause, but one that seems increasingly unrealistic as the review draws nearer. It seems we will all soon find out.



Higher education man of mystery of illusion Charles Clarke playing charades at the Labour Conderence

NUS Fights Against GATS

Battle of the acronyms begins...

Ibrahim Rasheed

THE NUS has condemned the application of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) in further education.

In response to the Department of Trade and Industry's consultation, the NUS stated that they believe that further inclusion of post-16 education in the GATS process



GATS protestors pull down post. Next stop global capitalism then.

would be damaging to the sector and offer no perceived benefits to students, universities or society.

GATS was enacted and enforced under the framework of the World Trade Organization. It came about during the Uruguay Round whose results came into force in January 1995. The objectives of the agreement are similar to its counterpart in merchandise trade, GATT, and aims to promote trade liberalization in the

services sector. The WTO sees this as necessary as many domestic services are becoming increasingly internationally mobile.

The NUS believes that all public services, but especially education and health-care, should be excluded from GATS negotiations. They believe that the proposals would undermine the quality of education and redefine students as simply consumers. It is believed that they will be in direct conflict with the government's policy of widening access to higher education. Chris Weavers, NUS Vice President said, "There have been no firm assurances that inclusion of post-16 education in GATS will not harm UK education sector. Without further research and assessment, GATS could effectively open the floodgates to free market education provision, putting universities, colleges and students' futures at risk."

In their response to the DTI's consultation, the NUS called on the government to rule out further liberalization of post-secondary education without a full debate and to conduct adequate research into the social, economic and environmental impact of liberalization. In a more gallant measure they also call upon the government to seek to re-write GATS to permanently protect UK higher education and public services.

People and Planet, the UK student action on world poverty, human rights, and the environment has been at the forefront of the opposition to GATS. They submitted a proposal that was similar in vein to the NUS's proposals. Concern looms



WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi faces the wrath of Mandy Telford and chums

over the fact that liberalization of education would mean that its costs would be dictated by demand and thus harming students from poorer backgrounds. The organization states that "publicly funded, publicly provided UK Higher Education must be resolutely protected and its cause championed over and above market forces".

It seems that there is a broad consensus amongst student representatives that the application of GATS to higher education would cause more damage to an already floundering public service.

For You Darlin'!

Wright's revamp

Ibrahim Rasheed

In the beginning there was the bacon,

And the bacon was with grease,
And Gio saw that it was good,
And was pleased.

Students at LSE will be familiar with the union haunt, Wright's Bar. The sandwich bar and coffee shop located at the corner of Connaught House is second only to the Tuns in popularity on Houghton Street. However, the venerable layer of age old posters entrenched in an aura of mystery is gone. On Monday the fully refurbished, new and improved Wright's Bar opened its doors for business.

The changes certainly make the place



more aesthetically pleasing as most will remember that it used to be, to put it frankly, quite grim. Initial response to the refurbishment has been positive. James Meadway of the Socialist Workers Students Society says that "the refit of Wrights Bar is the best thing to happen to Wrights Bar since 1968". Bang Bang from the Tuns was equally pleased: "It's the Italian job. Forget about it!" The General Secretary of the union, Tuuli Kousa, who confesses to not being a huge fan said "its about time, there were flies." A certain level of scepticism was in the air though. The editor of the Script, Donny Surtani was most unhappy with the hiking up of the price of a cup of hot chocolate.

In a shock exclusive, the Beaver can reveal that the owner of Wright's Bar and Honorary Vice-President of the Student Union, "Silver Fox" Gio "Papa" Wright is not entirely happy with the refit. When

asked whether he was pleased he answered with a resolute "No. It not done right." Wright's Bar insiders say that the reason for the trouble is that there is not enough counter space.

Rumour has it that Don Quixote's and Benji's are quaking in their boots.



The silver fox in his natural habitat... Contemplating the next snack coup

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Editorial Comment

Bye, Bye Third Way

It's finally here. After months of speculation where individuals as diverse as Chris Patten and David Dickinson have been hinted at, the Court of Governors have approved Sir Howard Davies as the new Director of the LSE. The position is certainly a most prestigious one and many qualified individuals applied for the post. Rumour even has it that Clare-Marie White, Editor of the London Student, had a shot at it.

Sir Howard was not the most obvious choice as many students would agree. After being spoilt with the luxury of having a prominent social scientist like Professor Anthony Giddens at the helm, many would have expected another big name academic to be appointed to the post. It is a great feeling to study at an institution run by a man who is the leading figure of his discipline. His replacement by a less renowned bureaucrat makes us wonder whether the university

is heading in the right direction.

The role of the Director of the LSE is not an academic job. It is about leading the school through its financial and spiritual commitments. Sir Howard Davies is a man of impeccable character and his vast array of experience in the financial world will be of great value. The only concern is that he has waltzed in and out of so many important positions. He has no 'stickability' one commentator has said. Indeed it has been suggested that the reason for his departure was that he did not want to bear his share of the responsibility for the state of the economy during such uncertain times.

Despite this we have faith in the man, and believe he will be able to lead the university to bright and glorious times. This could just be the job he has spent his entire life in search of.

Cheaters Beware

Slacking off work is a favourite student past time. There is a tendency at this venerable institution to put off work, allowing the quantity of essays to build up till the last minute and do them all at once. This is because almost all deadlines coincide around the same time during week five or six of term and then at the very end of term. When confronted with a huge amount of work to hand in all at once, one is usually at a position of mass demoralization.

Essay banks on the internet are alleged to be a great source of information. But the new e-plagiarism system available to all UK institutions of higher education proves to be their undoing. Just like Napster, it seems that these websites have met their match. It's a good job too. Who wants to encourage those devious entrepreneurs who reside in college dorms throughout the USA. They may yet be saved from a life of crime.

Give the New Fox a Chance

Tongues will be wagging across Houghton Street this week as students begin to evaluate the pro's and con's of the Wright's Bar refit. It has been a permanent fixture of the LSE for as long as living memory serves and one that every newly inducted student quickly becomes aware of.

Love or loathe them, the Swiss family Wright's Bar are simply a timeless institution comparable only to Jim and Paul behind the Tuns. So, many students will rightly be concerned by the new image that Houghton Street eatery has adopted. Gone are the days of sellotaped benches, flies and

a lottery system of queuing as we enter a brave new world of cleanliness and a single line.

At the Beaver we welcome a return to hygiene but are greatly concerned that the greasy spoon atmosphere that makes our favourite sandwich bar so special may well be lost. Only time will tell how LSE students take to the new Wright's Bar as they vote with their feet whether they like or loathe the new era that Papa Wright has brought.

Until we savour a mixed grill from the spanking new fryer, we couldn't possibly comment.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I have never been compelled to write to your splendid paper, however, I am so angry after the proceedings at the UGM of the 12th December 2002 I feel I had to express my views.

A motion was on the paper which proposed to say no to condoning rape. It was an absolute sham.

To begin with the motion submitted was not written adequately. It should have read:

Union Notes:

1. The AU Barrel
2. At the Barrel on Friday the 6th December 2002 a placard was displayed with the slogan: 'Hard Sex is not a Crime - Free John Lesley'.

Union Believes:

1. The banner was tasteless and offensive.

Union Resolves:

1. To mandate the Gen Sec to ask for an explanation of the carrying of such a banner and to deal with the matter accordingly.

Unfortunately, the motion on the paper was a very contentious piece of rubbish.

I argue this point from two angles. Firstly as a Criminal Law expert a number of 'facts' within the motion were actually incorrect. The statistics for rape are that one in three women will be raped in their lifetime, one in four women will become victims of domestic violence and as we are such a PC union lets not forget that one in ten men will also suffer from some form of sexual abuse in their lifetime.

As far as I could see the problem was with the banner, why then was the question of rape bought into question? Was the association between this banner and rape an automatic one? I never read the banner and automatically thought 'oh they all condone rape.' I read it and thought, they can't spell (His name is Leslie, not Lesley), I also thought true, hard sex is not a crime but such statements do have a tendency to open cans of proverbial worms.

If these statistics are accurate and the numbers of individuals who suffer from abuse are correct (and we must remember that official statistics are the tip of the iceberg and many individuals never admit to their victimisation) then surely to throw back and forth quite frankly insulting questions about rape and pseudo legal knowledge of the 'facts' is an insult to those of us in the room that have either experienced and/or are currently experiencing forms of sexual abuse.

This is the second angle I write my letter from. When I was 16 I was raped by my then boyfriend and was abused for a two year period. Ten years on I could sit through that UGM obviously bringing back memories but after a years counselling and the 'time heals wounds' logic I could just about tolerate such a farce. Back to the statistics, if you looked around that room today no one has any idea what individual's experience and I should think that I was not alone in having my demons exercised for me in a manner I intend to forget by consuming copious amounts of alcohol, as you NEVER recover from abuse and I will have it with me forever.

So, please can all people who write motions really stop and think what they are writing. This motion was about an offensive banner, the question of rape didn't really need to come into it.

John Leslie, is innocent until proven guilty and he's not actually incarcerated at the moment (if he ever will be) So he doesn't really need to be freed.

The question of rape is obviously a point in his case but the banner does not support rape in anyway. I felt humiliated, had a lot of personal flashbacks and I'd just like to thank the ignorant among you who I hope will never ever experience what I did.

Please can we keep the UGM free of personal vendettas and misplaced facts,

Many thanks.

(Name and address supplied)

Dear Sir,

I am writing to express my solidarity for the Palestinian people, of course, but even more so to express my solidarity for Omar Srouji, to whom I am much obliged for all the time he spends for the friends of Palestine society. I will not express my opinions on anything here, I just want to say I wish that one day, I hope that one day, everything will come to light. And I hope that on that day people like Omar will be hailed as he should be hailed today: as a courageous and amazing individual. Until then, I, like him, am prepared to fight, and I will, trust me.

Charles van den Boogaerde

Are you berated, bored or even bowled over by The Beaver?

Then write a letter to us and let us know what you - the readers - think

email: thebeaver@lse.ac.uk with your comments

Are you energetic, enthusiastic and enormous?

If two or more of the above apply to you we want you to write for us

Come to the Beaver Collective meeting on Tuesday 21st of January @ 5pm, Underground Bar

1000 words



h:link

DAVE COLE SPEAKS OUT ON HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING

THE COST OF EDUCATION

The LSE's own Nicholas Barr has proposed a solution to the current crisis in higher and further education funding in the UK. This article assumes a certain familiarity with them, but it is briefly explained below, and then shows certain weaknesses with the plan.

I do not propose to explain all the economics of the plan - I am not an economist - but will say that there are three thrusts to Professor Barr's plan. Firstly, deferred, flexible and differential fees; secondly, loans large enough to live off but without government subsidies (in other words, charged at the government's cost of borrowing, as distinct from higher, commercial rates of interest); thirdly, active measures to promote access. Fees and the loan would be paid back through taxation after reaching a certain income, as with a graduate tax, except that

There are two reasons why higher education should not be funded exclusively from general taxation, progressive or otherwise. Firstly, those who do not go to university should not subsidise those who do; someone from an impoverished background should not pay for an Old Etonian to go to Oxford and go on to a career in the city. This is not an argument for having to pay the entire cost of your education; there is a social as well as a private benefit to a degree; everyone benefits from the extra taxes paid by high-earning graduates, even if they aren't doctors, teachers and so on.

Secondly, it's not going to happen. No government is going to raise

taxes by the amount needed to adequately fund tertiary education, let alone pay for grants, loans, access initiatives and so on. It is simply not an electable policy. So, even if you do believe that the poor taxpayer should wholly subsidise the rich's entry to the City, this set of proposals would be an improvement and probably close to the best that's electorally achievable.

There are three problems with the plans as they stand. Firstly, Professor Barr is not clear about how he would improve access. There are ideas about students going into schools in deprived areas and so on (which the LSE already does, in part) but no co-ordinated framework is proposed. It seems that the forthcoming government White Paper on HE funding is not going to address access, but as the Chair of the Education Select Committee, Barry Sheerman, has pointed out, such initiatives have to start when people are twelve and thirteen to encourage people who leave education at sixteen to stay on to university. Debt aversion is another key demotivator; poor people are less willing to go into debt, and so any proposal, but particularly one such as Professor Barr's, which involves potentially high levels of debt, has to be sold carefully.

The second problem with the Barr proposals is that it introduces a market into education. The charging of different fees for different courses at different universities is proposed. Given that we are trying to encourage increased entry to higher and further education of people from underprivi-



leged backgrounds and that these people are, as said above, not going to take on large debts as people from middle class backgrounds are, the last thing we want to do is solve the situation only to push people away from their course of choice onto another for reasons of cost. The push is also likely to be away from courses that have high salaries attached to them and to cheaper courses that universities, as the end, private, financial benefit is less, cannot charge as much for, thus keeping people from less fortunate backgrounds away from the best-paying jobs. More important, however, is that it is impossible to quantify the ratio the private benefit an individual receives against the social benefit they provide or to predict what a graduate is going to do with their degree; medical degrees would presumably be more expensive than, say, history due to their length and laboratory costs, but doctors go into the NHS and private practice and varying mixtures of the two.

The final problem with the Barr proposals is the status of non-UK

EU students. Would the UK Government extend them loans on generous terms? Even if it wanted to, would it be electorally possible? The money, for the most part, does come back but it has to be put up in the first place. Some EU countries, where higher education is wholly funded by the state, do not offer any support at all for students, and so EU students would be put off coming to Britain to study. This is a particular worry for the LSE, which has many non-UK EU students. Nor are other overseas or post-graduate students concerned; they are not directly affected by the plan, but could benefit from similar arrangements.

There is no doubt that something drastic has to be done about funding. At the close of World War Two, 5% of eighteen year olds were in education; today, that figure is 40%. However, the proportion of poor students who make it to university has not changed while the amount of money spent on students has halved in real terms. Nick Barr's proposal would if implemented as is be a great improvement on the current situation; increasing the size of loans & removing their subsidy and deferring fees to when students are able to pay them are foremost among its qualities. However, we must not fall into the logic of the Politician's Syllogism - 1. Something must be done. 2. This is Something. 3. Therefore we must do it - as it can be improved upon. The upcoming government White Paper on HE funding will be an opportunity to implement the many positive aspects of the Barr proposals which are, if we believe the press, being left out at the moment.

features

The Cost of Education

The Vision Thing

A Cornered Terrorist

As We Stand on the Brink

The Palestinian Diaries



beaver

THE VISION THING

TONY BLAIR CAME TO POWER PERCEIVED AS THE MAN WHO WOULD SAY AND DO ANYTHING TO BE POPULAR. THESE DAYS, HE'S TRYING TO BE MORE LIKE A SIGNPOST THAN A WEATHER-VANE, SAYS ADAM QUINN

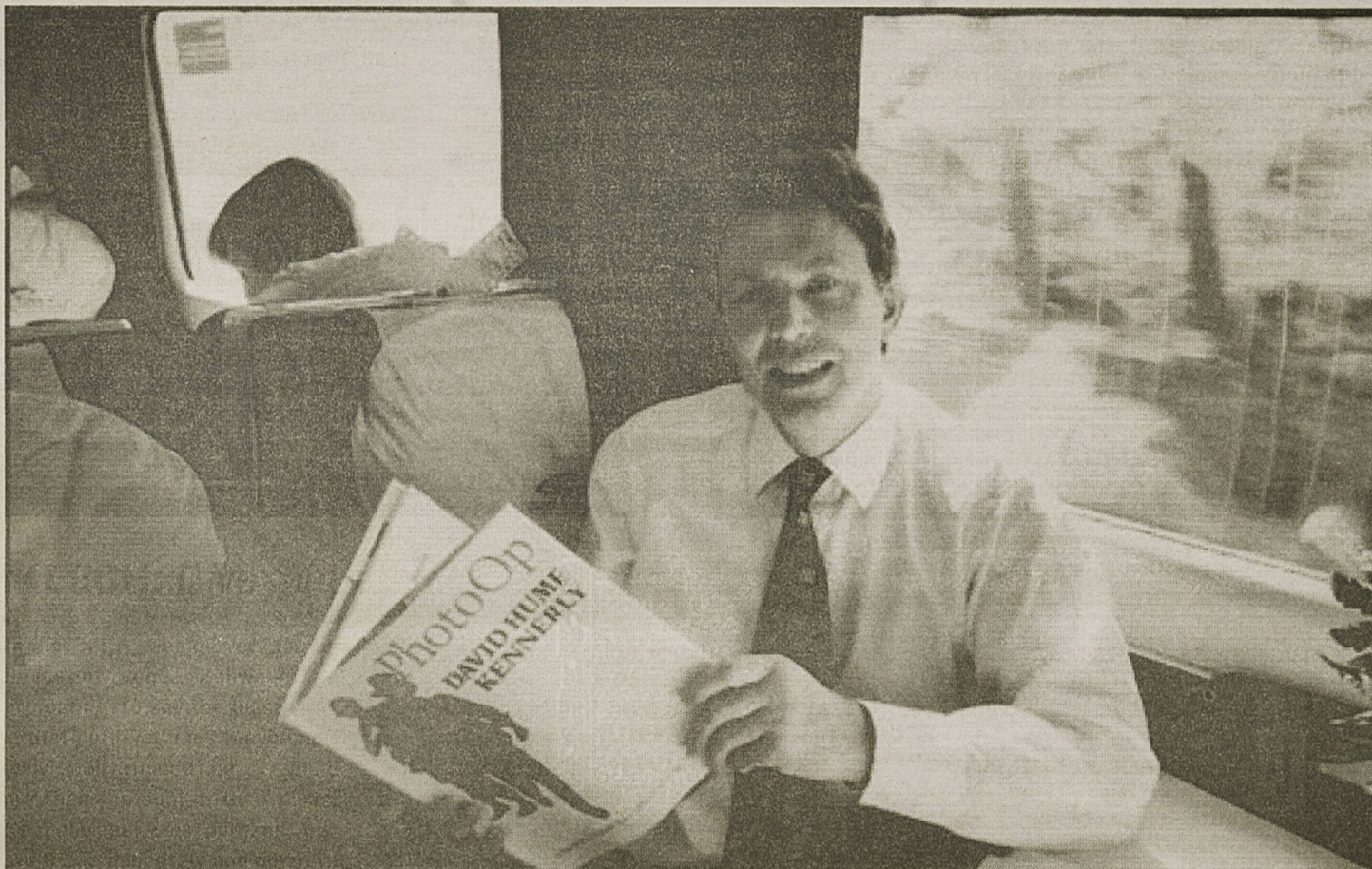
Remember the early days of 'new' Labour? When the supposedly super-slick propaganda machine that Peter Mandelson and Alistair Campbell built glided into power in May 1997, no fact was more noted about the new government than that it believed presentation and popularity were, if not everything, then close to it. For the first four years of Labour, it often seemed like their landslide hadn't really happened as the Government fled from controversy at every opportunity, as though securing a second term were the primary purpose of winning a first. And during this apparently endless period of adjustment to power, no one came to represent this appearance of near-total flexibility as the front man, Teflon Tony; the guy many said and many more secretly believed had left his convictions at the door and would twist himself into any ideological contortion to keep poll ratings high.

It all seems a very long time ago now. Labour got their second term in the end and Tony is now halfway towards matching Margaret Thatcher's decade-long stint as Prime Minister. Alistair is still scratching around in the corners of the rooms of power, while things haven't really worked out for Peter. Doubtless the stories of Tony Blair and the Labour Party are far from over, but as he enters that phase in office where it must seem hard to remember what life was like before becoming PM, it is clear that the front man is developing a penchant for demanding to be allowed read his own script, not the one written for him by the press or even the public.

At one of his new presidential-style press conferences last year, Blair was asked what had changed about his attitudes since his early days in government. He responded that he was now less interested in popularity for its own sake, but rather with what could be done with it. His approach these days seems to back up this claim, and the focus for expression of his new distaste for life as a political weathervane is undoubtedly the problem posed by Iraq.

It is an understatement to say that American and European attitudes diverge on how to deal with Saddam Hussein's troublesome regime. Having been smacked hard at the least expected moment by the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, the United States has been on something close to a war footing ever since. There are still raw wounds among the popula-

tion, and deep reserves of residual anger at the "evil-doers" which are still to be exhausted. That, plus the facts that America has for some time been more heavily militarised and feverishly patri-



otic than any other Western country mean that it is always going to at least give a patient hearing to arguments that favour bombing or invading countries perceived as a threat.

Europe, on the other hand, is more pacifically minded, partly because it can afford to be. It would be an exaggeration to say that September 11th, 2001 was just another day on the eastern side of the Atlantic, but it was an event of less personal intensity for Europeans, who by and large viewed it as a terrible thing to be sure, but one happening to someone else. There were even attempts to characterise American anger and shock as excessive, observing loftily that European countries were used to terrorism and could therefore take it more in their stride (a ludicrous suggestion, of course, given the scale of the atrocities). Also, European countries have weaker armies, are generally more averse to militant patriotism and have a distaste for military adventurism stemming from long experience. Consequently, the idea

of launching into an avoidable war was never going to appeal.

And appeal it certainly did not when the issue looked like coming to a head. Germany's Chancellor, desperately seeking popular support, declared that there were no circumstances under which German forces would be involved in any attack. France insisted on any attack being explicitly authorised by the UN Security Council, knowing that such approval was unlikely to be forthcoming. In the UK, polls showed strong public disapproval of going along with American plans for an attack without UN backing. The remainders of the organised left took to the streets to oppose action. Most of the Labour Party murmured disapproval of American plans.

majority opposition to it has been so clearly articulated in advance and when the perception would be of servile obedience to American instructions rather than rugged statesmanship.

That Tony Blair looks like tying himself to the mast of war in such circumstances indicates that he may be turning into a different political animal than before: the conviction politician. Previously, he worked out what the public wanted, and then promised to give it to them. This time, he has become convinced that he knows what is the right thing to do, and if necessary he will try and talk a hostile public round. He has said that he regards it as "an article of faith" that the closeness of the British relationship with America should be preserved at all costs. He has also said

Obviously, the easy option for any British Prime Minister would have been to declare that there was no way Britain would support an American invasion without direct UN approval, and assume (probably correctly) that this would guarantee no British involvement. This is not, however, the option Blair has taken. Despite the clear opposition of most of the public, and several of his own Cabinet, he has bent over backwards to avoid saying that he will not support American action in Iraq without further UN approval. The only reason for him to do this is to keep open the option that British troops might support an American attack based on the current UN resolution, and probably also based only on US intelligence assertions that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction, without confirmation of this by UN inspectors. If his primary concern were popularity in the short term, this would be nothing short of madness. Everyone knows that public opinion loves a good war, but not when

that inaction is not an option, and that if the UN will not act against Saddam Hussein, then he must be dealt with nevertheless. Looking at him hold his upper lip stiff as he received a standing ovation in Congress shortly after September 11th, you could see that he had been well and truly confirmed in support of the American cause, whatever that might entail.

Soon he may have to deploy that famously preachy vocal cadence to the task of converting new members to the flock, not just, as he is used to, telling the current congregation what they want to hear. 'Tony Blair: Man of Principle' may have an appealing ring to it when he hears it right now, but in the end it may mean confronting head-on the wave of public opinion he has thus far ridden on top of. Rather like a war, it will be an interesting spectacle, whatever the outcome.

DONNY SURTANI FINDS THAT THE ENIGMATIC LEADER OF SRI LANKA'S TAMIL TIGER REBELS MAY FIND HIMSELF IN UNCERTAIN GROUND AS THE ISLAND'S ETHNIC DISPUTE GOES FROM VIOLENT TO POLITICAL

The history books are still unwritten, but whichever way the story goes, there can be no doubt that the early part of this decade will feature heavily in Sri Lanka's post-independence history. The remarkable island nation, which has for centuries been called paradise by Western visitors, finds itself daring to hope for a peaceful settlement to a 19-year ethnic war that has cost over 60,000 lives. At a time when terrorism is being fought vehemently by the international community, Sri Lanka is one place where, contrary to the global trend, the government is actually engaged in negotiations with a terrorist group. Yet this raises questions, and the one to answer is whether any fighting force can become totally peaceful and enter the political mainstream.

Sri Lanka's modern history goes back to 1948, when a peaceful independence was secured and the British colonial forces left the island's shores. Since then, the two major political parties have pandered to the majority Sinhalese population by depriving the minority Tamils of their civil and political rights. Half the Tamil population lost their right to vote; Sinhalese was, for a while, the only official language; and no public recognition was given for the importance of Tamil culture. Throw in the fact that Tamils were discriminated against in all areas of socio-economic life, from commerce to public office, and one can see the beginnings of an ethnic conflict taking root.

After years of fruitless political negotiations by various Tamil groups, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE, or Tamil Tigers) began a violent campaign in the late 1970's to carve out an independent state for the Tamil people in the North and East of the island. They were, and are, led by Vellupillai Prabhakaran, a well-educated but ruthless man who is seen as the inspirational leader of the Tamil cause. At different points, they controlled different parts of the island's North, and concurrently ran a terror campaign in other parts of the island. Contrary to popular belief, it is not only Islamic fundamentalists who use suicide bombers - the LTTE has been using them throughout their conflict. The Tigers have attacked the Sri Lankan Central Bank, the World Trade Centre in Colombo, the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy (one of Buddhism's most sacred places, said to hold a tooth of the Buddha), and have killed a number of prominent leaders, including Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 and Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993.

Some interesting developments in the past few years have complicated matters, somewhat - while the government forces have clearly suffered from years of fighting, the Tigers have also

found themselves making no progress towards their goal of a separate state. However, they pursued their military strategy intensely, attacking the country's only international airport in August 2001 and destroying about half the fleet of the national carrier, Sri Lankan Airlines. Then, in September 2001, the world of terrorism changed. Western governments developed a real distaste for terrorists and clamped down on international networks, especially financial. Back on the island, Sri Lanka found itself recording its first year of negative economic growth since independence as the airport attack had destroyed the last remaining shreds of foreign investor confidence. By the end of 2001, both the LTTE and the government found themselves under immense financial pressure to bring the violence to an end. A political defection collapsed the government, and in December a new government came to power promising a return to peace talks. The Tigers declared a unilateral ceasefire on Christmas Eve and a formal ceasefire agreement, mediated by delegates of the Norwegian government, was signed in February 2002. The two sides have been engaged in regular talks since then, to begin the path to permanent peace.

Since then, progress has been swift. Trade with the North has resumed, the economy has made a dramatic u-turn, and prosperity and hope has returned to a country which, just a few months before, was looking down the barrel. Importantly, the Tigers have dropped their demand for an independent state, and are now talking in terms of an autonomous region under a federal system. The political settlements of Canada and Switzerland are being studied.

And at the forefront of all this is Anton Balasingham, the political head of the LTTE. He has taken over from Prabhakaran as the figurehead of the Tamil cause, and his diplomatic and political talents are being given precedence in the media. And this is expected - Prabhakaran can only speak Tamil, and has lived in the jungles of northern Sri Lanka for years. Balasingham, on the other hand, is the holder of a Ph.D, speaks English fluently, and has lived in the West for much of his life, with his current residence in London. He is far more qualified to sit at the negotiating table when discussing constitutional and human rights issues than his military counterpart. But there can be no

doubt that Prabhakaran still enjoys the loyalty of hardline elements of the LTTE. So the question is, will he scuttle the ship?

If a settlement is reached, Anton Balasingham will probably have a political future as one of Sri Lanka's foremost Tamil politicians. On the other hand, Prabhakaran is more used to the absolute power of a military demi-god, rather than the horse-trading ways of a democratic politician. Further, he has been convicted by both the Sri Lankan and the Indian courts for masterminding assassinations in those countries, and India is pressing for his extradition as soon as he sets foot in Colombo. Thus, it seems highly unlikely that Prabhakaran has a future in a peaceful Sri Lanka. He may decide to leave for Norway or some other friendly host country, content in his success at giving the Tamils their rights in Sri Lankan society. Or he may, in a fit of power-madness and ideological zeal, decide to form a splinter group to carry on a violent demand for a separate state, which could undermine an already delicate peace process. He may be unwilling to accept that his violent methods have become irrelevant in a situation where



The aftermath of a Tigers attack

the political drawing board is open, and the Tamils have a say as well.

But that is not to say that Prabhakaran's achievements are not to be recognised. For all his brutality, his disdain for civilian lives, his use of child soldiers, and his massacre of Tamil political opposition, it has been reluctantly admitted by commentators that the LTTE has achieved through terrorism what could not be achieved through negotiations - a real chance for Tamils to have equal civil and political rights. It is nothing other than the severe trauma of the ethnic war that has driven the Sinhalese to the negotiating table. But now, maybe the chance has come for diplomatic methods and a political solution. So the question is, can the leader of one of the world's most ruthless terrorist units bite the bullet and be peaceful?



Vellupillai Prabhakaran: The brutal leader of the LTTE

THE DILEMA OF A CORNERED TERRORIST

AS WE STAND ON THE BRINK...

EDWARD ELLIS EXALTS US TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT AGAINST WAR ON IRAQ AND HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Like most students over the holiday season, I was more than happy to embrace the easy schedule of vacation and take the time away from university to relax with friends and family. Finally, it seemed that I had the opportunity to push into the back of my mind the mass of social theory and politics that I had spent the better part of last term battling. One thing that could not, however, be forced into that overcrowded storage space was the prospect of a war on Iraq which seemed to hang like a portentous mushroom cloud over my holiday. For sure, the war drums were beating just as loudly, if not louder, over the break as they had been before we left. The inescapable cacophony of gratuitous clichés being mass produced on Downing Street and Pennsylvania Avenue left me with no choice but to think about the war and in doing so, evaluate the level of resistance to it at the LSE.

In the general public, there is no shortage of opposition to this war and for good reason. The evidence to prove that Saddam Hussein would use 'weapons of mass destruction' against the United States or Britain is conjectural; the evidence to support the claim that he is in the process of acquiring the means to do so is flimsy at best; and the evidence that he has the capability to do so now is nonexistent. If anybody thinks a United States led war on Iraq is to rid the country of an oppressive dictator you might want to ask yourselves who armed that dictator in the first place.

What seems to me the more urgent topic that we should be discussing is the role that students should be playing in opposing the impending destruction of human life which will inevitably be the outcome of this war. If the US and the UK go ahead, the consequences not just for the people of Iraq but for the entire political geography of the Middle East could be disastrous.

Our role in resisting this war, at a university such as the LSE, is a crucial one precisely because it is we to whom the wider community looks to for answers, for intelligent explanations, and for critical analysis of controversial and pressing social issues. We are the so-called 'educated' members of society, the soon-to-be 'experts' that will be solicited for professional opinions and chosen to fill vital positions of power in society. There is an important continuity between our time here at the university and our time in the 'real world'. No doubt, our paths are diverse ones. But whether it's in a future boardroom, classroom, or NGO room this is how our role in society has been constructed and it is for this reason that our voice has

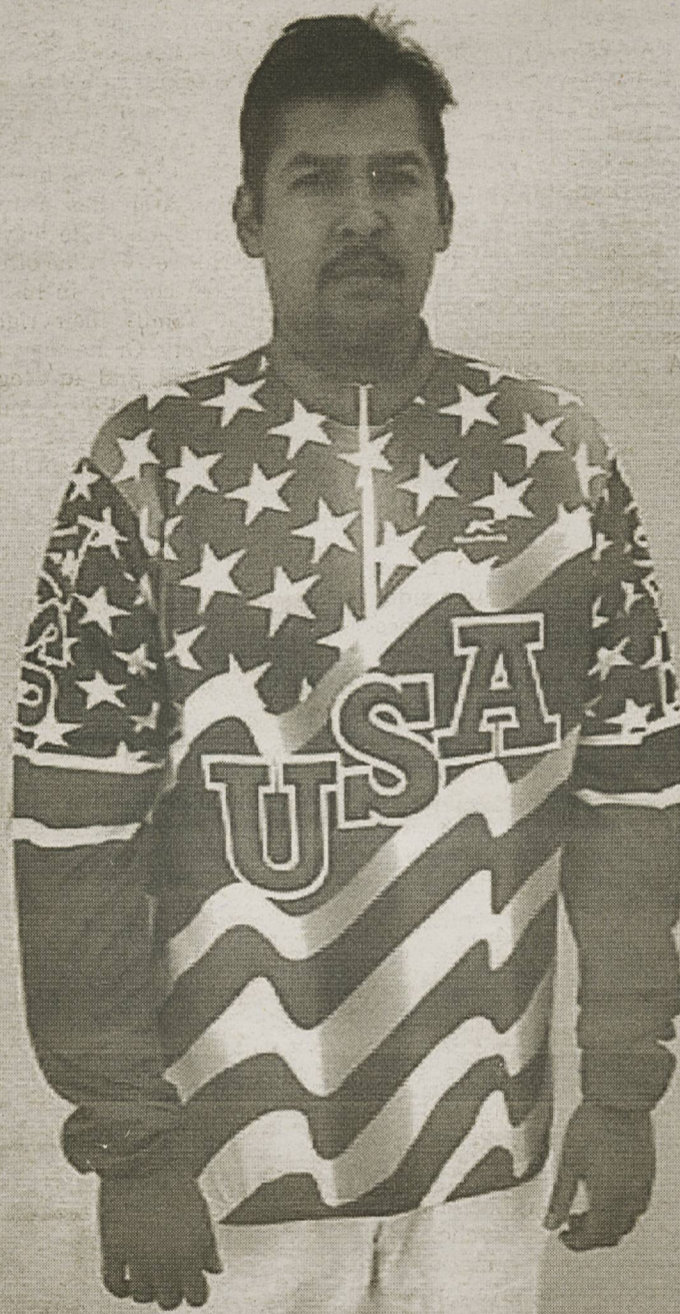
influence and our complicity in this absurd war drive is seen as essential in allowing it to proceed. By not actively opposing this war we are de facto legitimising it and conveying to the current government a general sense of obse-

action? Such sublimated opposition is tantamount to compliance with the rules of engagement formulated by those who are actively pursuing a war of mass destruction and using an endless repertoire of trite diatribes to justify it.

Students' Union to educate and inform students about antiwar activities on campus. The second called for a teach-in that was held in the Old Theatre on 31 October. The teach-in was an occupation of the lecture theatre and functioned as both an active protest as well as an opportunity for students to explore the complexity of issues that are inextricably linked to a war on Iraq. The occupation was highly successful, peaceful, and was followed that night by a strong contingent of LSE students participating in a much larger protest in central London.

Activities such as these have put the impending war at the forefront of campus consciousness. A movement has been formed and those who took part in the events of last Halloween can testify to the kind of electricity and empowerment that this translates into. But more students need to act as the war is now being sold to us as if it were an inescapable reality rather than a preventable atrocity.

The arrogant pursuit of a hawkish war policy by the Blair government can be seen as nothing less than a flagrant betrayal of democratic principles as it flies in the face of mass opposition. It is evident that Mr. Blair needs to be reminded of this opposition. By ignoring the popular will, the prime minister has raised the stakes and the antiwar movement needs to respond through an escalation of tactics. For starters, a massive demonstration has been called for 15 February in London. Nonviolent civil disobedience, a general strike, student walk-outs, and other forms of direct action are all overdue and need to be seriously employed if this war is to be stopped. We need to realise as students and members of the international community that it is no longer enough to be passively opposed to the bloodshed this war will bring. Ultimately, if it happens, it is because we let it happen.



"I didn't vote for Saddam!"

quousness in what should be one of the most critical segments of society.

Have the rigors of analysis inherent in our individual programmes at the LSE blunted instead of sharpened our ability to see through the irrational jingoism of this war on Iraq? Have we been mystified by the intellectually void catch phrases of Bush and Blair to the point that war now looms more like a cheap spaghetti western than a brutal reality which will kill thousands of people? If not (and I believe not), then are we to only enact our opposition through sound-bite quips, editorials, and isolated opinions rather than collective

By the end of this month, 100,000 United States ground troops will be stationed in the Gulf region with enough firepower to permanently send the people of Iraq 'back to the stone age'. The British government for its part is expected to mobilise 7,000 reservists to help with this 'liberating' effort. It seems that war is all but inevitable despite the mass international opposition that has grown impressively over the past year.

Certainly, the LSE community has itself proven to be firmly opposed to the war. The two antiwar motions that passed in the UGM last term make this clear. The first resolution mandates the

At the LSE, we have an important role to play in determining the outcome of this potentially disastrous situation - we have an influential voice and a unique opportunity to help change the course of history. It's the kind of opportunity that does not always present itself in a person's lifetime. We must be willing to engage this struggle and actively resist the impending loss of human life in the same way that the sycophantic politicians and government war mongers are actively pursuing it. If we do not participate collectively on this level, then we willfully relinquish the power to effect history and become nothing more than its forgotten subjects. We have one shot at this and we need to make it count. Get involved!

THE PALESTINIAN DIARIES- TALES OF DESPAIR FROM THE CONQUERED TERRITORIES

ELLIE CHING TOOK THE COURAGOUS DECISION TO SPEND HER CHRISTMAS IN PALESTINE AS PART OF A TEAM OF INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS TO HELP ITS INHABITANTS AS THEY STRUGGLE UNDER A BRUTAL OCCUPATION. THESE ARE HER DISPATCHES FROM A LAND OF NO HOPE

Subject: news

**Date: Tue, 17 Dec 2002 17:20:42
+0000 (GMT)**

Still no phone! But here is what has happened so far.

Arrived in Jerusalem just after a missile attack on an Israeli helicopter (unsuccessful) and was thus a little shocked by the stepped up security, consisting of hundreds of rampaging Israeli female police. My shared minicab was full of Palestinian men, mostly young, and we were stopped every ten yards and checked for IDs, on three occasions, detained for half an hour once, a few moments and then the Palestinians indefinitely before I get taken behind the Bethlehem checkpoint

The next taxi driver is a sweet old guy Who rings his mother to find out where in london his brother studied IT, and concludes "london". He says sadly that it will not be a good Christmas for me to see in Bethlehem this year. Bethlehem is under curfew, lifted from 8am till 4pm on the 16th of December when I arrive and the supermarket is full of families stocking up. Once curfew falls at 4 the town is ghostly, empty streets, the only sounds that of the soldiers shouting "Curfew, movement is prohibited". The next morning curfew is supposed to be lifted at 8 again, but at a quarter to 8 the military drive round to declare that its curfew will be enforced. The people are already on the streets, and the children are on their way to school. Some are detained from 6am till 10am in the open, waiting to be let go. Those who have their cars have their keys confiscated, we come across one man trying to break in his own car later, and another man who is scared because he lives an hour away and doesn't want to walk home while curfew is enforced. We arrange that some internationals will take him home.

Right now I'm in occupied Nablus, and things are quiet for once. Yesterday the IDF injured 13 people, 3 critically by bazookas fired from tanks on Faisel street in the centre of Nablus. The situation was similar to that in Bethlehem, curfew had been lifted but was enforced once the people were in the streets. Today I visited the family I

stayed with in the summer, only the father and grandmother was there because the mother and children are now living in a village so they can go to school, and also because there is no space in their relations' house. Their house has been literally flattened, but they are already rebuilding. I gave him the money I raised and he was happy, but the sight of their reduced lives, the grandmothers distress and how the separated state of the family upset the father really depressed me. So thanks to everyone who helped me raise the money, half the cost is coming from the UN, so there is hope the family will have a place to live again.

Lots of love to you all, don't worry mum, dad, isy, elliexxx

Subject: Nablus to Gaza

**Date: Sat, 21 Dec 2002 17:17:22
+0000 (GMT)**

So where did I leave off? God knows. Anyway, the best thing that I have seen so far happened in Nablus on Thursday morning. There was a march planned to protest a checkpoint in the form of a gate that split Nablus if the I.O.F so deemed, here is a report pasted on:

**PALESTINIANS BREAK
DOWN THE IRON GATE IN NABLUS**

For the few weeks Nablus has been split in half by an iron gate by the destroyed Macata building. Anyone who tries to open the gate is shot at by snipers from the hills, one woman was killed this way ten days ago. Today the Union of Palestinian Maedical Relief Committees led a demonstration to protest the gate. The march was intended to be peaceful and was- there was no army at the gate. Two hundred Palestinians, including many children and fifteen internationals marched to the gate. The children were the first to climb on it, and a festival mood prevailed as the gate was swung repeatedly to weaken it. A youth fetched a spanner and the top part of the gate was unscrewed, after much work the rest was levered off, and everyone helped carry the enormous gate through the backed up traffic. The gate was then

thrown down a hill into the wasteland. There were a couple of injuries as the gate was so large and heavy, but the army didn't show up and wouldn't have been able to anyway because of the ensuing traffic jam. This was civil disobedience at its best, the community taking its welfare into its own hands and saying that their roads will not be closed and their ambulances will not be stopped. Now we will wait to see what retaliation will come.

Except of course I couldn't wait because an hour or so later we had to leave for Jerusalem so we could be in Gaza in the morning. I am glad that I made the decision to come to Gaza, 'the situation' as Palestinians say is very bad here. In the camps of Raffa we are right by the boarder. When I say that I mean there is a twenty foot iron wall. With gun towers twenty feet from the houses we stay in. Hundreds of houses have been demolished here, the rubble has been piled up in place in Block O to cause the latest sewage flood. The army is at work to push the remaining families out of their homes, the shelling from tanks and sniper fire goes on all night (although those of you who know what my sleep is like know that it doesn't bother me.) But I am the only one in Block O or J to sleep through the night.

Gaza is a very different 'situation' from the West Bank. The soldiers are not within sight. They are in tanks or towers or helicopters or F16s. The checkpoints are not manned by people, there is a red or green light. We are told to keep our hands down or the taxi will be shot at. So the level of negotiation is not very high. However, luckily, one thing there are a lot of is collaborators. So the army knows where we are. Strange to be in an open prison. The people can go to school here, but the houses are riddled with bullet holes. Today I was shown a five foot hole blown right above a womans bed. They are still bulldozing and building the wall by block J. Someone is killed here every day. There are not enough internationals, and we are a fairly new thing here.

Tomorrow I must leave my family to stay in the outskirts, where one house is making a stand by staying in their home. All their neighbours have gone. the only problem is that my family are insistent I don't go, they want me to marry their son and stay with them. Somehow I will extricate myself without making them hate me, but its scary!

Anyway, all my love, ellie xxx

Subject: Two children die in house demolitions

**Date: Tue, 24 Dec 2002 12:48:21
+0000 (GMT)**

Last night was particularly harsh for Raffa. Two children lost their lives and twelve families their homes in an Israeli military operation in Block J of the refugee camps. The children lived in Pawapet Salah al Deen and were eleven and eight year old boys, asleep in their homes as they were exploded without warning by Apache helicopters. The boys cannot be named as their families fear reprisals, fear of collective punishment in Raffa is so strong that even being named as having suffered a loss is impossible. During the day the house demolitions began, four houses were brought down by bulldozers. Then the bulldozers retreated, and the international activists, citizens of Britain, Sweden and America, were able to reach the families and stay with them as they waited for their houses to be demolished. At around seven the families were forced out by heavy shelling from the tanks. The electricity for the entire region was cut, and then a massive explosion was heard throughout the area, this came from the Apache helicopters and destroyed the homes. There was no warning, and no effort beyond shelling the area was made to ensure the houses were empty. This is how two young boys came to die yesterday in the name of Israeli security.

Bear a thought this Christmas for the newly homeless families in Raffa, Gaza this morning. The story of how they lost their homes last night begins with the present intifada in September 2000. The next month Israel began the construction of a wall along the Egyptian boarder with the Gaza strip. Raffa lies along this boundary. From this time, along the distance from the Salahidin gate to Block J of the refugee camps five hundred homes have been destroyed, creating around five thousand homeless people. These homes were situated within a hundred metres from the wall. The next layer of houses have been partially destroyed, numbering one thousand five hundred that are mostly inhabitable. This winter sixty seven houses have so far been destroyed, and the world has ignored it. How many more people need to lose their homes and how many more children need to die in their beds before the world takes note?



Subject: please help, distribute

>Date: Mon, 6 Jan 2003

09:41:11 +0000 (GMT)

In Raffah over five hundred houses have been destroyed to make way for a huge metal wall on the border with Egypt. The destruction and constant fire along the border continues. International Solidarity Movement Raffa were staying in houses along the border hoping our dispersed presence would lessen the violence. However, this did not stop bullets from entering the houses or homes from being demolished. So a more proactive step is being taken, we are setting up tents along the boarder. To fire through canvas would kill us, therefore we effectively block the bullets and can challenge the demolitions directly. For this we need more people, our numbers are drastically short. Come to Raffah, Gaza strip to provide international protection for the people of the town.

Subject: getting shot at

Date: Mon, 30 Dec 2002

08:13:23 +0000 (GMT)

So, after much stress about lack of organisation and almost leaving Gaza, I'm still here. On the night of the 28th there was a lot of military activity in the no mans land along the Egyptian boarder in High Salam, the village I stay in ten minutes from Raffa. They had flood lights out, and appeared to be digging mines to blow up suspected Palestinian tunnels to Egypt. They moved down the line, right by the house I was staying in. I stayed up with the adults waiting for the explosions, but as the tanks and bulldozers began to move away, one of the tanks exploded, probably due to a Palestinian rocket attack. There was immediate fire at the house and me and the father crawled out of the room. As the attack happened right by the house I was in, the house was subjected to heavy fire for about four hours. We stayed low, or rather I took a long time persuading the panicking people to stay low. Most of the children somehow managed to sleep all the way through. In the morning the front of the house was littered with gunshot and two bullets had passed through three walls.

Now we expect the house to be demolished in the next few days, and we wait. Last night the electricity was cut and we were all on edge, listening for Apaches. It was just a general fault, but there was a scout vehicle in the village about 3pm, and everyone expected the worst. Living some 25 metres from the border is dangerous, the house has been occupied four times during the intifada. This is the first time however that the family has become a target for collective punishment, the logic of turning your guns on the nearest house to an incident does not bode well for the family.

Subject: still in Palestine..

Date: Sat, 11 Jan 2003 16:45:12

+0000 (GMT)

Hello everybody. I'm not home yet, but I will be soon. In two weeks. Its all El Als fault, I did actually try to come home for a day but they wouldn't have it.

I don't think I said anything about what had been happening except for an appeal for the tent campaign. The tents were a way of acting proactively as our numbers dropped and we all became increasingly frustrated with not being able to stop the continuing house demolitions. In Block J the first tent was erected in response to it having been offered, but the people themselves came out and put it up. Which was amazing and it had a really good effect as it was put up by among the destroyed houses and protected a street that was normally shot down. So we started to think of the tents as a possible way to block demolitions and put ourselves between the army and the people. The next night we put up a tent outside the house in High Salam that I had been staying in. The house was being harrassed, three empty houses had been destroyed around it and a roadblock had been made on their doorstep. The army was still sporadically shooting at it.

Earlier that day our group made the most direct attack on the demolitions. I wasn't present because I was trying to put up the tent before it got dark, and by the time I got there it was over. The group tried to physically stop

three bulldozers from destroying houses in Barazil, a village next to High Salam. The bulldozers just kept on going, nearly crushing one member of the group, who was rescued by a different member. Other people were lifted in the bulldozer scoop. It was worrying, showing that maybe the army were prepared to push harder than us as they showed no fear about killing us.

The tent outside the home I stayed in... was an eventful night. The shebab (youth) hung around, which was very dangerous for them and us. We went into the house for a few minutes to encourage them to leave, luckily they did because we heard the army approaching, firing as they went. Now we made a nearly fatal mistake by going outside with some light. Me and a friend were actually in the dark trying to set up the electric light when the tanks started to fire, at us, at killing height. My friend had the right amount of cowardice to throw himself to the floor and wiggle along the floor to the roadblock the IDF had kindly left there, and I followed. We were stuck behind that mound of dirt as they fired from both sides.

The army came back several times, parked a tank by us, fired a few warning shots. The next day we moved the tent as it had caused more shooting than the family expected. It certainly pissed off the soldiers though, wherever it was. We were gassed, shots were fired again and again. On one occasion the tank managed to fire deliberately at and destroy our megaphone, while shouting 'Shalom lo' or no peace.

Another amusing tent story is that the director of UNWRA turned up to block J with hundreds of press, walked straight in our tent and squatted

down with a vaguely disgusted aura. We explained who we were, and about ISM, he asked about the army's reactions and sniggered when he heard about our megaphone. He also made some interesting accusations about the death of Ian Hunt, basically blaming Queva Butterly and said that the report would exonerate the IOF. So he was obviously a complete and utter asshole, I asked him what he was doing here and he had come to inspect the damage, two and a half weeks too late. The people are going to be rehoused by the UN in Tel Sultan, a village right by the Mawasi settlements. Eventually that is the plan for all the refugees in Block O and J, how many times can you be a refugee in your own country? Anyway the local people thought it was very nice of the UN to mop up the destruction caused by the Israeli army and stand by while it is actually happening.

The tents would be really practically effective if we could get a proper protest camp set up but we would need a lot of people. Now there is only enough internationals in Rafah to maintain one tent, the Block J one. We are still new and strange there so more community work needs to be done, to make sure the people support and welcome our efforts. If anyone knows committed Arabic speakers...

I'm off tomorrow to the West Bank, all rested with cleaned socks.

I miss lots of people and am kind of upset i'm not coming home, though it'll still be difficult coming home.

all my love, Ellie xxx



singles

reviewed by
mr MIKEBURN**LEMON JELLY**
NICE WEATHER FOR DUCKS

Lemon Jelly's recent album acclaim has been very dubious; what qualities exactly do they possess other than the ability to sedate their listener. Nice Weather For Ducks is a insipid excuse for a song yet it forges it's way into the Lemon Jelly aesthetic. This is the new anthem for preschool children everywhere and casts doubt over Lemon Jelly's status as purveyors of fine chill out, lounge electronica.

THE FREE ASSOCIATION
(I WISH I HAD A) WOODEN HEART

David Holmes' Free Association tries so desperately hard to replicate the rare groove sound Holmes loves so much and desperately fails. Like mock antique furniture it just doesn't meet the standards of the originals. This track, although not bad, simply hasn't the edge like what it is trying to imitate. This modern day burnt soul is, however, far more listenable than the majority of chart fodder.

THE EIGHTIES MATCHBOX DISASTER
PSYCHOSIS SAFARI

Brighton's psychotic sons with another slab of intense mentally unstable psychobilly goth metal. 80sMBD are continuing the legacy of the Cramps only with a heavier sound. The single is backed with Casey Chaos produced b-sides which makes it more of an interesting purchase for the fan. This is more frightening than a Hammer horror.

REEF
GIVE ME YOUR LOVE

Floppy haired Cornishmen 'slingin' their axes' has never been a traditional turn-on for the British public, and indeed, testament to this is the fact that Reef decided to record five new songs for their shit-titled 'best of' album, Together. Now if, like me, you'd imagine a Reef best-of album to have all of one song on, then you might be pleasantly surprised by Give Me Your Love, their newest single. Combining overdriving Frusciante-esque guitar with Trent Reznor-inspired whispering vocals, the song rests on the chorus, and a wicked bass-line hook. Successfully avoiding the pub-rock tag through lithe and varied riffing and an understated vocal line, it's unfortunate that it's just not new and fresh enough to really see it making much impact outside of dedicated Reef-fans (not the drink, which probably has more).

LAYO AND BUSHWACKA
LOVE STORY VS FINALLY

Many DJ's number one record of last finally (ha!) gets released. Combining King's of Tomorrow's Finally with Layo and Bushwacka's Lovestory, the track almost manages to surpass both of the originals and together they form a monster tune. Massive!

AUDIO BULLYS
WE DON'T CARE

Fresh of the council estate these two urchins are the champions of what has been hailed as Thug House. This track comes across like a less literate version of Mike Skinner's ramblings in the Streets. The leering chorus of We Don't Care makes for the new boozed up anthem of clubbers everywhere.

ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION
FORTRESS EUROPE

The new line up of ADF sees the vocal sound transformed into more of a fluent rapping style rather than the previous form of diatribe / rant. Adrian Sherwood's production has curiously seemed to have added very little and this song despite its lyrical intelligence lacks anything to really impress. ADF are a band with a more than admirable ideology who are perhaps now lacking their previous musical conviction.

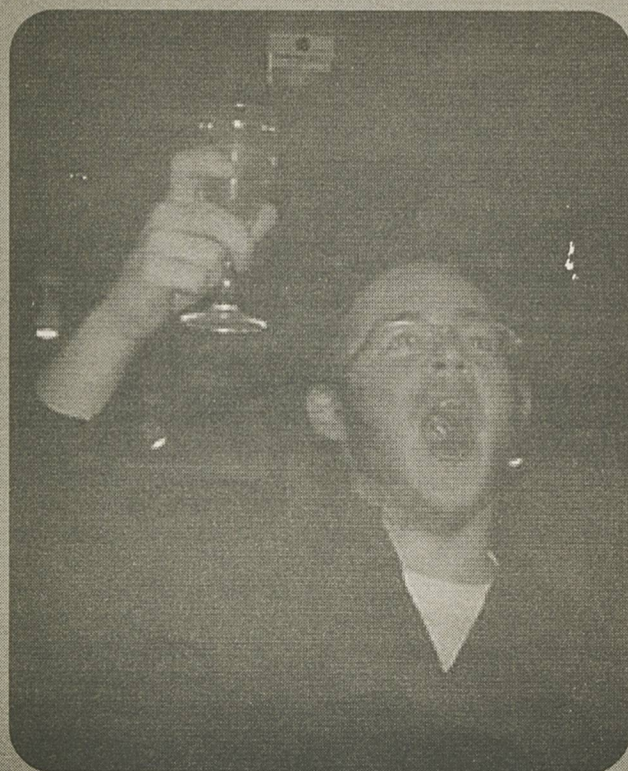
Single of the Week

**ELECTRIC SIX**
DANGER! HIGH VOLTAGE

Although all the cool kids were digging this way over a year ago it is only now it has emerged into the pop domain and thank god it has as a tune this good just doesn't deserve to go without recognition.

This scuzzy blues bar disco anthem has entered the hit parade at number 2 but The Electric Six eat Girls Aloud. A heady mix of disco and rawk this track is setting the chart alight and bringing electrical safety into the consciousness of the masses simultaneously. Which can't be bad.

If you get the chance catch one of their incendiary live performances. They're not much to look at but they sure can rock.



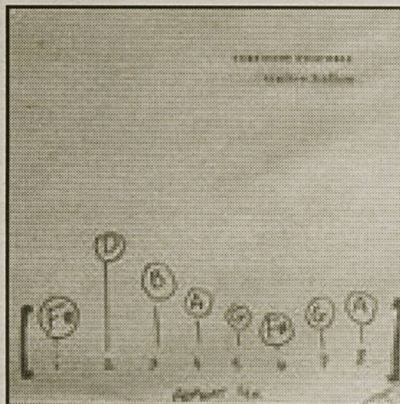
Happy New Year!

Just wishing all you a happy 03. Keep reading BeaverMusic for all your music info needs!

If you want to write for Beaver Music email me at m.r.burn@lse.ac.uk.

Another space filled with a hideous picture of myself. Send complaints to the same address

Take it easy kids! and remember alcohol is poison.



THRENOODY ENSEMBLE
TIMBRE HOLLOW

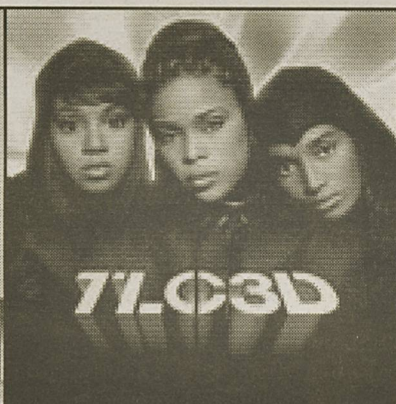
One of the understated successes of Shellac's 2002 All Tomorrow's Parties were the Threnody Ensemble. This esoteric outfit are peculiar in that they do not particularly fit into any musical arena. They hold the traditions of post rock close whilst absorbing the avant classical. Their structures weave the two together almost inseparably and combined, the sound is nothing other than impressive.

The majesty of the six pieces presented here speak volumes. The kind of orchestration post rock has been built on with out actually being orchestral. They delicately exploit a dipping and peaking dynamic and draw out a potent decorum.

This album is not for pursuers of the avant classical in its extremities. It is highly accessible yet manages not to lose anything which would mean it less able to engage with the music.

The Threnody Ensemble have made a record which can float on the fringes of both the neo-classical and avant rock scenes comfortable and without pretension and a record of immense satisfaction to the listener, providing an antidote to the saturation of much modern music.

MIKEBURN



TLC
3D

The new album 3D from TLC is definitely an album for the girls (or should I say those with musical tastes verging on the more feminine). However I can't really make any significant criticism of this great album (ok a few tracks are pretty much run of the mill), it has a nice balance of hard-bitch tracks and sentimental-emotional stuff too.

With the sad and untimely departure of Lisa Left-Eye Lopez, it seems that Tionne and Chilli finished off the album as a mark of respect for her creativity. She's still a big part of their music, with vocals on Quickee and Girl Talk.

Girl Talk, which was definitely underplayed by the main UK radio stations when it was released, will of course be compared to No Scrubs; it's more cynical and damning of men, but still as likeable. But my favourites were Turntable and Damaged, which if not released by the record label as singles I will be forced to burn their offices down (sorry, sick Left Eye joke there).

Black American female music of recent years seems to be getting brighter and bolder, what with Eve, Tweet, Missy Elliott and Alicia Keys (and to some extent Alicia Keys) all getting lots of airplay these days, I just wish TLC got the justice they deserve too.

ELEANRKEECH



VARIOUS
FABRIC 08: RADIOACTIVE MAN

The latest addition to the Fabric CD series sees Keith Tenniswood in his Radioactive Man outfit offer up a plethora of dirty electro delights. A reflection of the Haywire sessions at the super club this mixes is geared towards lovers of bass orientated electronic music. Highlights include the opener from Slam featuring the semi-ubiquitous Dot Allison and Visions (2 Lone Swordsman Mix).

What you have here is a fine mix of the highest quality machine funk around. Keith Tenniswood being the genre's arch exponent (alongside Andrew Wetherall) is more than suitably qualified to take you on this journey.

Other well known artists from the machine funk / electro area are also present here. Anthony Rother's 'Die Macht' is featured as is Kitbuilders' 'Wake Up'.

The most notable track here though are Koma and Bones' 'Powercut' a track which wants you to dance like a mofo and have machine sex.

The mix closes with the sublime Disco D ft Princess Superstar and 'Fuck me on the Dancefloor' but by the time this comes on you already will be. Play this record at your machine funk party.

MIKEBURN



PILOT TO GUNNER
GAMES AT HIGH SPEEDS

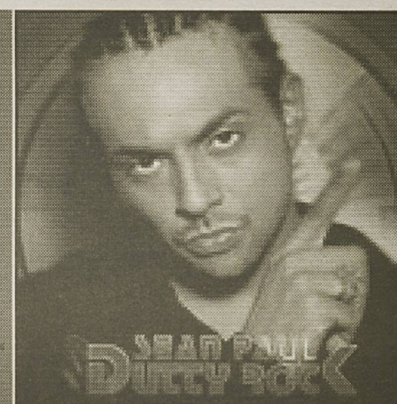
Pilot To Gunner's vocalist Scott V Padden has one of those immediately distinguishable voices that seem entirely suited to the lines being sung and music backing them. Pilot to Gunner would probably been keen to avoid the vacuous emo tag but within current musical threads that is the 'genre' which most accurately describes them.

Other American punk bands like Bluetip and Jawbox have been used to draw comparisons to Pilot to Gunner's sound. It is that of intelligent guitar music. It is that of intelligent lyrics.

Tracks like It's So Good To Be Here In Paris and selected others don't exactly sound like the most original songs in the world; they are not but what the band offers is an extremely accomplished album of art punk.

Further comparisons can be made to bands like the Shipping News and Q and Not U. In fact Pilot to Gunner are almost a hybrid of those two outfits. If you like your rock sophisticated and rooted in intelligence then Pilot to Gunner are for you.

MIKEBURN



SEAN PAUL
DUTTY ROCK

The success of single Gimme the Light might mean you are already familiar with Sean Paul. This album sets out to further his already impressive career. Dutty Rock combines Paul's reggae dancehall foundations with a more conventional hip hop flavour.

2002's MOBO reggae artist of the year is looking set to break through and have considerable mainstream success as this album is highly accomplished. Any album of this ilk these days seems to be judged by quantity and calibre of its guests and joining Mr Paul here are Busta Rhymes, Jay-Z, DMX, The Neptunes, Clipse, Tony Touch and Rahzel amongst others: an impressive role call to say the least.

The tracks here all have elements of hip hop, reggae, dancehall and even rock and Sean Paul seems to pull of this genre eclecticism without sounding trite or cheesy: a considerable achievement. The standout track is of course 'Gimme the Light' which is apparently a 'Street Anthem'.

A notable album, refreshing a genre which was otherwise becoming quite stagnate, Dutty Rock will hopefully bring Mr Paul and dancehall the attention he and it deserves.

MIKEBURN

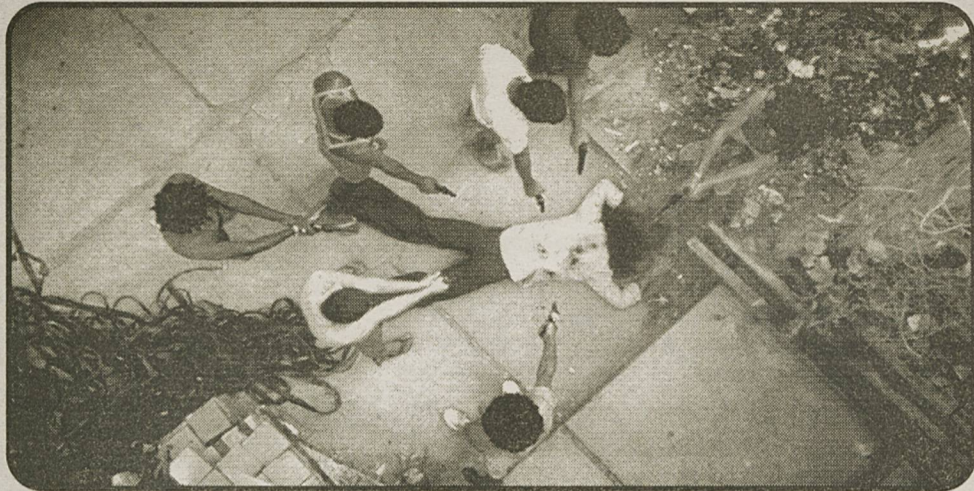
BeaverChart

As if any of you lot care but this is a chart of what your discerning music editor has been listening to over the past month or so.

As ever feel free to submit your own charts of what sounds have been splurging from your speakers.

01. dj broken window - Parallel Universe: Vol1
02. resonance fm - 104.4fm
03. soft pink truth - do you party
04. deep puddle dynamics - taste of rain
05. bonnie 'prince' billy - master and everyone
06. erlend oye - unrest
07. mira calix - skimskitta
08. dalek - from filthy tongue of gods & griots
09. steinski - nothing to fear
10. playgroup - pa

City of God



ELEANORKEECH: Foreign film strikes gold

Director: Kátia Lund & Fernando Meirelles
Starring: Matheus Nachtergaele, Seu Jorge, Alexandre Rodrigues
Running Time: 130 minutes
Certificate: 18
Release Date: OUT NOW!

No doubt you've seen the posters for *City of God* (*Cidade de Deus*) plastered all over London with ★★★★★ on it. And you might have thought that it was all another big film promotion lie, and not given the film another thought. But it is student publications like *The Beaver* that make little-known foreign films a roaring success. Five out of five it deserves; these posters, and this review, are not lying. Rave reviews are abundant, critics are finally happy and this small film proves its valuable worth.

So a little introduction to the plot might help you reach your own conclusions on whether you feel like popping along to the cinema to give it a watch. Set in Rio De Janeiro, it follows the growing up of children who live in the poverty-stricken, squalid and gangster-controlled favelas, through the 1960s, '70s to the '80s. For the teenagers of the favelas, success is measured by whether you are a drugs baron by the age of 17, how many guns you own and how big your gang is. The main character, narrator and "diamond in the rough" (of course all gangster genre films have one of these) is Rocket. He's tempted to drift further

into crime, but his liberation comes in the form of a stolen camera presented to him by his drugs baron buddy. He becomes a rising star of photo journalism in Rio and the crucial link is his connections to the teenage underworld, presenting him the golden opportunity to get the exclusive photos he needs.

Of course, a film like this doesn't come without hideous amounts of shootings, excessive drug use and the odd rape. Think teenage gangland drug ridden killing sprees and you've got it. One scene nearly had me in tears (and that's a rare occurrence) where one child (who must have been about 7 years old) is forced by the local drugs baron to choose between which one of his two friends must die, and then he's forced to pull the trigger. I had the dreadful feeling that the tears running down their cheeks weren't false. Needless to say, the Rio teenage talent that was used performed amazingly.

Critics say that this film is easily comparable to *Goodfellas*. Yes, true, and it is so much more than that. There are untimely deaths, the maturation of young delinquents into time worn racketeers, hope in the future and friendship. And the 1970s also have funk. And whatever the decade there's Brazilian sunshine. This is the perfect way to start off 2003.

★★★★★

Chicago

ELEANORKEECH: Give 'em the old razzle-dazzle...

Director: Rob Marshall
Starring: Renée Zellweger, Catherine Zeta Jones, Richard Gere
Running Time: 113 minutes
Certificate: 12A
Release Date: OUT NOW in London, 17th January everywhere else

So one the biggest stage musicals ever makes the transition to the big screen. *Chicago*, a story of greed, treachery, murder... you know the drill, you've seen the ads on the tube. Here we see the film setting based firmly in 1920s Chicago. It's jazzy, glitzy and glamorous, combining the vaudeville stage scene and the less-than-pleasant prisons of the city. Velma Kelly (good ol' Welsh lass Catherine Zeta Jones) and Roxie Hart (Renée Zellweger) battle it out to become top dog in the celebrity crime scene. They lie, they cheat, they bribe. To achieve fame some people just have to be bumped off along the way, and that's where the trouble begins. In prison their inflated egos get the better of them as they constantly try to outdo each other, and eventually they make up and become a double act after they both side-step life sentences with the help of the charming Billy Flynn (Richard Gere).

But all of this plot retelling is pretty drab, I'm sure half of you have seen the musical at the Adelphi (which is superb). What can we really make of the film though? You might

disagree with me, but it seemed very formulaic. The choice of Renée Zellweger as Roxie was interesting, to say the least. Was it her singing that bothered me? Maybe not, she's obviously well trained but a good singer is more than the sum of their parts. On the whole Zellweger was perhaps miscast, she plays Roxie delicately and portrays her as vulnerable. In essence, Roxie's vulnerable but in no way delicate. She's meant to be ballsy and manipulative.

Zeta Jones's performance really cannot be snubbed, she sings well, flashes her pins and portrays a scheming and murdering starlet exactly. Richard Gere's versatility seems to know no boundaries these days, as Billy Flynn comes across with all the smarminess and sleaziness needed to make Flynn as charismatic as possible. The songs, big sensations as they already are, are the gel of this film. The dance scenes were top-notch, especially the jailbird's song *They Had It Coming*, with its high kicks and precise choreography. Given the recent trend in musical films (think *Moulin Rouge*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*... ok not many but a few more than usual so therefore critics deems this a "trend"), *Chicago* is certainly following suit and trying to cash in where the film-going money is. I certainly can't condemn it as shoddy. But Oscar winner it ain't.

★★★★★



8 Mile

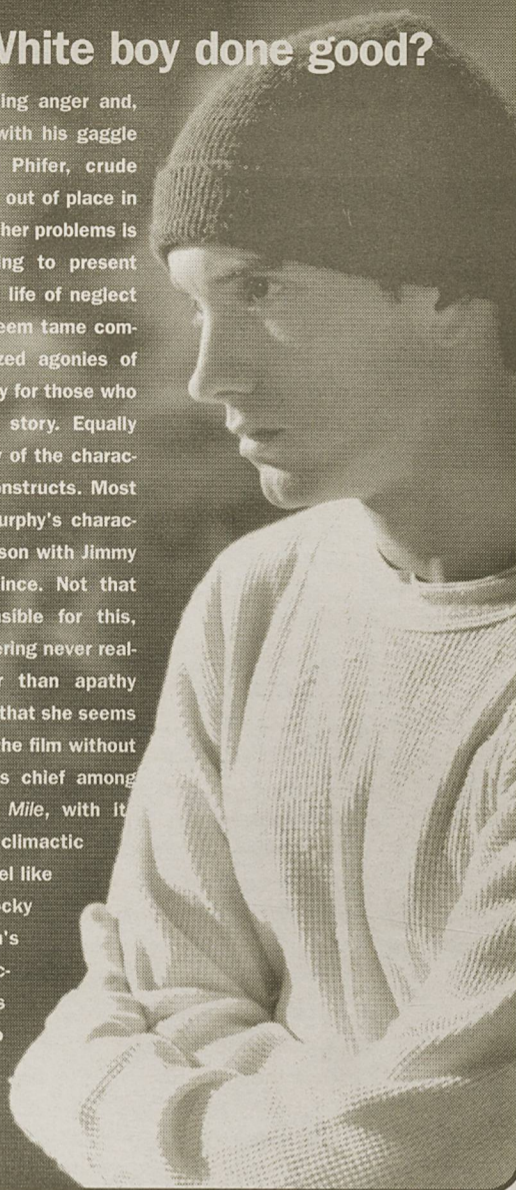
JONCLEGG: White boy done good?

Director: Curtis Hanson
Starring: Eminem, Kim Basinger, Brittany Murphy
Running Time: 110 minutes
Certificate: 15
Release Date: 17th January

As soon as Curtis Hanson was attached to *8 Mile*, a film that appeared to be an Eminem biopic and vehicle for the hip-hop star, it seemed that the film would succeed or fail on the basis of Eminem's performance. Hanson, after all, was on a roll, having directed the critically lauded *L.A. Confidential*, also starring Kim Basinger, and the excellent *Wonder Boys*. That Eminem is superb as Jimmy Smith Jr. should already be obvious - the Oscar buzz that surrounds the megastar is testament to as powerful and emotionally honest a performance as has been seen in recent years - and yet in spite of this, *8 Mile* still doesn't really work. And quite where the blame for this should go is unclear. Certainly Hanson seems to be free from guilt, responsible both for a beautifully shot film that presents Detroit as a dark, bleak, barren landscape mirroring the gloomy prospects that await Jimmy, and able to coax fine performances from almost all of the cast, particularly Basinger, who delivers her best performance since their last collaboration. Where the film does suffer is in occasionally feeling unbalanced. Much like Eminem as an artist, Jimmy pres-

ents a dichotomy of seething anger and, when surrounding himself with his gaggle of friends led by Mekhi Phifer, crude humour that wouldn't seem out of place in *American Pie*. Among the other problems is the fact that despite trying to present Jimmy as having suffered a life of neglect and anguish, his troubles seem tame compared to the much-publicized agonies of Marshall Mathers, especially for those who go expecting the Eminem story. Equally frustrating is that too many of the characters seem to be generic constructs. Most guilty of this is Brittany Murphy's character, who, despite a brief liaison with Jimmy in a factory, fails to convince. Not that Murphy is entirely responsible for this, rather Jimmy's moody glowering never really reveals anything other than apathy towards her, with the result that she seems to have been tacked on to the film without much thought. But perhaps chief among these problems is that *8 Mile*, with its against-the-odds hero and climactic resolution, can't help but feel like a hip-hop *Karate Kid*. Rocky with rap. And for all Eminem's star turn and Hanson's direction, the predictability of this clichéd story does much to undermine them both.

★★★★☆



FILM NEWS - Brought to you by the magical power of SHOHELLUNAT

Seen as many have been busy stuffing themselves with turkeys and celebrating the New Year, I'll fill you in with what's been missed in the glitzy and glamorous world of the film industry...

Firstly the bad news, unfortunately Patrick Stewart will be hanging up his Starfleet uniform and "make-it-so" to retire from his role as Captain Jean-Luc Picard. However, another veteran, Sean Connery has finally decided to star as Indy's dad alongside Harrison Ford for next years filming of the fourth instalment *Indiana Jones*. We know Spielberg will not have the capacity to keep the Indiana Jones adventure going on forever and in compensation Hollywood have awarded him with the chance to be immortalised outside the famous Kodak theatre sidewalk with his own paving slab. It's been a long wait for Spielberg after many great blockbusters, one of which includes his upcoming film *Catch Me If You Can* released in the UK at the end of this month.



Meanwhile, other filmmaking talents of Hollywood, namely Ridley Scott and Baz Luhrmann have also been busy over Christmas period. They have begun racing against each other to be the first to start filming an epic on one of the most original western imperialists *Alexander the Great* - the first bisexual action hero. Whether there will be room for two big epics on the Macedonian, only time will tell. One thing for sure, is that the sword and sandal epics can sell, as shown by Scott's *Gladiator*. Incidentally, Maximus (Russell Crowe) will return from the dead for the planned sequel to the *Gladiator* according to executive producer Walter Parkes.

And finally, although *The Two Towers* took the Christmas number one spot here and in the US, Harry Potter fans can have the last laugh as Viggo Mortensen who plays Aragorn in *LOTR2* was apparently dumped by his girlfriend during the festive period as he rarely washes and mysteriously disappears for long periods at a time (personally, I think not all was well in middle-earth if you know what I mean)...

Oh dear, what a disappointment. 2002 turned out to be just as disappointing as 2001. In a year of sequels and hype there were a handful of gems but the slew of shit-flicks made me retreat to my trusty DVD player and some forgotten classics. First the few, my Top Five™ films of 2002.



Gosford Park: Robert Altman's masterpiece "who cares who dunnit". The dialogue is great and the film itself is a testament to Altman's genius. There were some heavy weight hitters in the film and the subtlety with which they approached the script was refreshing. **Mulholland Drive:** This is possibly David Lynch's finest film. It will have you scratching your head for hours after the movie has finished and definitely screams out repeat viewing. Naomi Watts has never looked better and the eroticism in the film is the stuff of dreams. If suicidal failure coupled with drugs leads to these sorts of dreams then yes please. **Eight Legged Freaks:** oh baby did I ever enjoy this film. This is my guilty pleasure of 2002. A B-movie made in the vein of *It Came From Outer Space*. What more could you want from a bit of retroaction. I loved every second of this film.

Signs: M Night Shyamalan's follow up to *Unbreakable*. Forget the plot holes and just enjoy it as a piece of escapism. There are some truly unnerving scenes in the film and Night seems to handle the idea of an alien invasion without making it seem silly and ludicrous. You won't believe it for a second, but the emphasis on a single father in a moment of crisis centres the film. **Monsters Inc.:** Pixar are fast building a reputation for producing stellar movies. *Toy Story 1* and *2* are arguably the best animated films ever and this film belongs up there with them. There is enough adult satirical wit to keep the more mature audience amused and cuddly monsters for the rest of us. Even the premise of the film is risqué, a multinational corporation that profiteers by exploiting children (Disney, anyone?) this is a nice kiss goodbye as Pixar find another distributor.

No doubt many of you will disagree my choices, but who cares? Seriously though in keeping with the ideals of democratic principles please send any comments to

terance_li@yahoo.co.uk with Beaver Film as the subject. Who knows, your comments just might make it to the next edition of my column.

Films not mentioned are conspicuous by their absence. **The Two Towers** was disappointing, **Bond 20** was adequate and I didn't even waste my time with **Harry Potter**. Next week will be a little more fun. Films that sucked and more importantly why.



The Tuxedo

GILLESUBAGHS: gets dressed up

Director: Kevin Donovan
 Starring: Jackie Chan, Jennifer Love Hewitt, Jason Isaacs
 Running Time: 98 minutes
 Certificate: 12A
 Release Date: OUT NOW

Another year another Jackie Chan movie, and the first thing that springs to mind about *The Tuxedo* is how much longer can the hardest working man (and reportedly the nicest man) in cinema keep it up. Seeing the previews for *The Tuxedo* over the summer, truth be told, I thought this film would be the final nail in Jackie Chan's coffin for selling out big-time to Western film going sensibilities. Luckily though I was proved wrong. Unlike Chan's other American-made films which all have the exact same plot (Chinese cop, or imperial guard, goes to the US to rescue kidnapped daughter of diplomat, or princess, teams up with wise-cracking American and saves the day amidst much humorous destruction, for sequel fish-out-of-water scenario is reversed by American buddy teaming up again to save the day in the far East), *The Tuxedo* sees cab driver James Tong (Chan), being hired as the chauffeur of playboy millionaire and secret agent Clarke Devlin (Isaacs). After an explosive encounter with a skateboard puts Devlin out of commission it's up to Tong to put on his Boss's secret agent high-tech tuxedo which enables the wearer to perform all sorts of high jinx and save the world with the help of sassy female partner del Blaine (Love-Hewitt). The evil plot is lame as hell and one we've all learnt well, evil industrialist who has loads of some commodity (bottled water in this case, but perhaps the film has a point, Evian backwards spells Naïve after all), wants to destroy rest of the world's supply to increase the value of his own (à la gold bullion in *Goldfinger*).

Luckily though this movie has a surprising amount of wit and funny dialogue, and yes the line "The name's Tong, James Tong" does make an appearance, adding a surprising amount of humanity and warmth to such an insipidly stupid plot. But then again who ever watches a Jackie Chan movie for its witty take on modern society? This is where the films biggest flaws lie - there are no noteworthy crazy stunts or memorable action sequences. The press release tells me about Chan's amazing jump off a 150ft silo which I had absolutely no recollection of seeing, which I think kinda says it all. The fights are as always great, but Jackie Chan doing wire work just seems wrong and seems a sign of how old he really is now for these sorts of shenanigans. Granted the MacGuffin piece (c'mon you Hitchcock fans you know what I'm talking about) works well, the film seems disjointed at times with plot holes so big you could throw Chan off a silo through them. This being director Kevin Donovan's first film after doing years of commercial work it should come as no surprise that some of the action sequences that could have been superb are lost by overly complex and short attention span camera use, where the overly flashy editing makes you lose any sense of what's really going on and hence the excitements gone. These gripes aside however this film is still a surprisingly amusing and entertaining film while quite stylishly shot looking like an after-shave commercial most of the time, but no classic (*Supercop* with Michelle Yeoh will always be his masterpiece in my mind). I can't justify spending money on a ticket for it, but it's the sort of film that all 12 year olds would love, and should perhaps best be saved for video.

★★★★☆

Master of Disguise

LAURAWHEELER & SARAHPEET: get dressed up but have nowhere to go

Director: Perry Andelin Blake
 Starring: Dana Carvey, James Brolin, Brent Spiner
 Running Time: 80 minutes
 Certificate: PG
 Release Date: January 17

Poor Dana Carvey. Best known for his brilliant Garth to Mike Myer's Wayne he has been laying low for the past couple of years due to botched open-heart surgery, leaving the star with five further operations and a successful malpractice suit worth \$7.5 million. This, however, is no excuse for the utter crap that the previously well respected *Saturday Night Live* veteran and impressionist has chosen to stage his comeback with. If you are a fan of *Austin Powers*, *South Park* or anything that is actually funny, then this film is not for you.

Dana is 'Pistachio Disguisey', a 23 year old bumbling waiter working in the Italian family restaurant. Pistachio is a bit of a joke to all concerned, never had a girlfriend and seems to have an unfortunate habit of lapsing into impersonations of people (thus leading to many 'hilarious' comedic scenarios). Unknown to him, he is descended from a long line of 'Masters of Disguise' who inherit secret magical powers of transformation to do good. Pistachio's father gets kidnapped thus forcing Pistachio to

learn about his destiny, rescue his father and save the world. All that remains to be said is that this is the worst film we ever seen in our entire lives. And believe us, we spent a long time trying to think of something worse, so this condemnation is not to be taken lightly.

A few points need further clarification. *Masters of Disguise* is a kids film and thus we weren't expecting very many brain cells to be stimulated. But recent films like *Shrek*, *Monster's Inc*, *Chicken Run* etc have all raised the bar for children's comedy, to the point to which you simply just can't get away with rubbish like this. Children are not stupid. They will see through bad characterisation (and believe us, Pistachio is one of the worst), poor script writing and unfunny humour just as much as the next person. And, despite being produced by Adam Sandler and directed by the guy who did *The Wedding Singer*, this film suffers from a total lack of redeeming qualities. Despite the fact we didn't have to pay, we still felt ripped off if only for the fact that we lost 1hr and 20mins of our lives (Laura even feels this way, and she was asleep for most of it!). Please forget this film was ever made.

★★★★☆





Gangs of New York

ELEANORKEECH: is learning to fistfight

Director: Martin Scorsese
Starring: Daniel Day Lewis, Leonardo DiCaprio, Cameron Diaz
Running Time: 168 minutes
Certificate: 18
Release Date: OUT NOW!

On Academy awards time, the films the films are calling... The heat is on for a little golden bald man or two! With a whopping 30 years in the making, care and attention are evident in Scorsese's forthcoming piece of history. Historical as in its portrayal of the some important events of the 19th century and the old style New York, and also as in a momentous turning point in film history. However, I can't really justifiably say it's a turning point. On the plus side, in

terms of watchability, the streets literally flow with blood, there are threatening knives and daggers galore, fistfights (even punching is done in the 19th century style) and more gang warfare (I think after this and *City of God* I need not see any more violence for the rest of the year).

The Protestant natives of New York are headed by Daniel Day Lewis, who has put the time and effort into his performance, so much so that he remained in character in between filming takes. And menacing he is too, brutal and vicious as William "Bill the Butcher" Cutting (oh how very apt). He especially delights in ridding his beloved America from Irish

Catholics by sadistically murdering them. DiCaprio, as you could imagine, doesn't quite have the accent to match the strong Irish American role of Amsterdam Vallon who heads up the Irish Dead Rabbits (scary name! it comes from some Gaelic phrase). The turmoil in his character is apparent as he judges up Bill and becomes his right-hand man, all the while plotting to avenge his father's death. Jenny Everdeane, played by Cameron Diaz, is the local pickpocket who wins the affections of Vallon. However it's hardly disguised that she's been created to fulfil the role of the film's love interest, and she's the source of further conflict between Vallon and Bill.

The production of this epic film is phenomenal, but it's at the expense of the plot which drags during the middle. You might say that it's been filmed to satisfy the modern American public's desire to learn about their roots, since we all know that America is a country with very little rich history of its own. The gore, the violence, the insight into NY history sure do keep you entertained, but looking at the plot as a whole it doesn't seem strong enough to carry the weight of the production. Daniel Day Lewis is the saviour here; let's hope that it coaxes him out of semi-retirement to go on to make lots more worthwhile films.

★★★★☆



ELEANORKEECH is Arwen, just behind her boyf Aragon

The believer's anticipation has been fulfilled! *The Two Towers* is everything we expected it to be, keeping your eyes firmly glued in place. Peter Jackson carefully entwines the storylines with the kind of care only comparable to parents with their newly born babies. Frodo and Sam follow the deceptive and fickle Gollum (computer graphics at their best, combined with the Andy Serkis's nimble movement and eerily childlike voice); Merry and Pippin make friends with the awesome Treebeard and the Ents, using nature to overcome the Orcs; Aragon, Legolas and Gimli along with the return of Gandalf, now the White, resume faith in

The Two Towers

Feelings are split, it's up to you to decide...

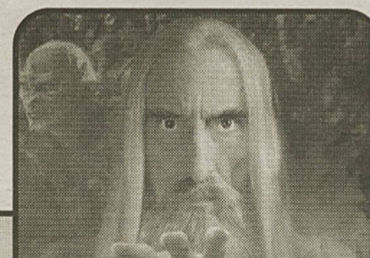
Yes! It's bigger AND better!

the Fellowship's mission (Gandalf is now a mighty match for Saruman); and the revival of King Theoden's and his subsequent awe-inspiring, eye boggling battle of Helm's Deep. Hope is restored and that Saruman's days are numbered. However, we're left with a terrible sense of things to come by Gollum's mumblings and schizophrenia. Computer graphics are neatly balanced against the backdrop of New Zealand's Middle Earth, but the beauty of the natural scenery is never secondary to the CG. Characters are well rounded and intriguing, the plot is thickening and the pace a-gathering. Numb arses have never been so well deserved before; December 2003 isn't far away!

It sucks mucho ass.

Don't believe the hype, *The Two Towers* is a major disappointment. After the enjoyable *Fellowship* I eagerly anticipated the second instalment of the *Lord of the Rings*. So eager in fact that I went away and re-read the books. Don't get me wrong, I liked the books but I cannot agree with the fanaticism that it inspires. As a children's books it is a work of brilliance, but watch *The Two Towers* and you can see just how random the story is. With the Fellowship now split into three it is difficult to pay attention to the meanderings of the story. The tripe that involves Aragon is like bad Shakespeare, only the struggle of Frodo, Sam and Gollum kept me inter-

ested. The part concerning ents was always going to be difficult and unfortunately it is not pulled off in the film. The Battle of Helms Deep was touted by many as the greatest battle sequence ever, I thought it was cheesy especially with Legolas surfing down the stairs firing his arrows. Whilst of course the film was never going to live up to the imagination inspired by the books it is still enjoyable if not overly long. Although why it is soo long is lost on me, the story thread concerning elves is unnecessary and seems added only to give the lovely young Liv Tyler more screen time. Oh well, never mind, here's hoping the final film is better produced.



TERANCELI is Saruman



Legolas! We love you! Especially as Orlando Bloom went to the same school as our new Beaver editor Ib Rasheed...

The Beaver Sports Stuff!! Yeah!!

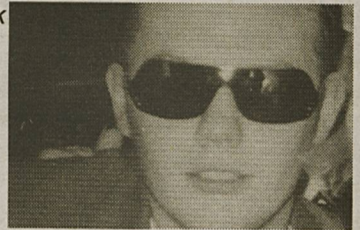
AU In 'Drunken Revelry' Allegations Over New Year!

And Here Are Some Examples...

I went to all these house parties, and had a billion drinks at each one. this random guy came up to me with some fruit concentrate and tried to convince me it was alcohol, and took a shot of it to 'prove it' He challenged me to a drinking competition with this bloody Sunny Delight stuff. We shotted about a litre of it before I started to get bored. The other guy was wrecked though. Then I saw four of my ex's, and decided to drink myself into oblivion. I did. - Oyvind '7th Team Marvel' Johnsen



I went to a pub at about 12 in the afternoon. That's about all I remember. No, wait... I think I walked home... I was in Barnsley. - Rich 'the Grafter' Lomas

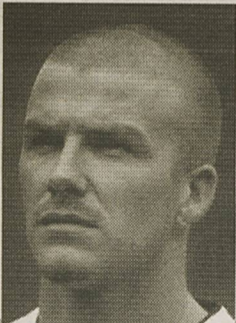


It was shit. I went to Cardiff, and it pissed down. I spent one hundred english pounds on San eff-ing Miguel and went to some pikey bar which had to empty TWICE 'cos some Cardiff w*nker kept pulling the Fire Alarm thing, then some b*stard punched me for dancing with his ugly wife, then I ate the world's most rubbish burger on the way home. I was so pissed and pissed off that I tried to walk home to Swansea in the rain. Luckily, my friends caught up with me and bundled me into their house and made me watch Nickelodeon for five hours. - Gareth 'the Pirate' Carter



Behold! The Perfect AU Body!

As the mountains of festive grub take their calorific revenge upon our once magnificent frames, we at BeaverSports thought it would be encouraging to look at exactly what it is we should be aiming for in our physical form. As you can see, it's pretty much what we looked like last term actually. The tanned good looks of Beckham's visage and the sultry post-coital pout of Elisha Cuthbert's smoulderingly lustful face. The rippling torso of man-mountain Arnie, or the ample pleasures of the shapely Ms Jessica-Parker. The 38" thighs of Brazilian sultan of samba Roberto Carlos, or the streamlined, slender and muscular pins of the delightfully fiery Anna Kournikova. Of course, pretty much all of us are on the road to looking like this, so if you fancy a quick peek at a real-life example, try m.griffiths@lse.ac.uk.



As you can see, the perfect AU body is not a myth!!



For getting this issue done, BeaverSports would like to thank Holly Featherstone, Ibrahim Rasheed and all at the Beaver office, all those featured in Top Trumps, all those whose photos have appeared here, God, my family, the academy, my executive produce, the Marble Arch Massive, the Sultan of Brunei, Kula Shaker, the AU, paper, Mackenzie Crook, Michael Foot, Michael Flatley, Michael Hutchins, the So Solid Crew (but not Asher D), Gandalf, Jam Master J, Georgie Porgy Harrison, Iggy Pop, Nike, Sir William Randolph Hurst and Ralph Fiennes. Cheers.



More Stuff!!! Yeah!!!



First, Holly Gets Angry At Celebrities...

So, as the term starts again, I think what topic can be addressed that affects sport? As I write, I am watching 'Footballers Wives'. Although I realise that this is not true to life (really I do!) it highlights the fact that footballers are celebrities and, in some sense, live by their own rules.

Some footballers love the celebrity, take the Beckhams for instance, who are featured in Hello! or OK! every time Beckham so much as farts. Do we really care that David has had a new tattoo, or Brooklyn has pissed on Victoria's new sofa! I for one have far more important things to think about.

Other footballers are different. For all the criticism of Roy Keane, he is not a footballer who flaunts his celebrity (at least not in the same way). In the recent Channel 4 programme 'Inside the Mind of Roy Keane', he highlighted that no one

was allowed in his house, not friends or colleagues. His house is not opened to the media and I think hell will freeze over before we see Roy Keane making money out of his children by selling the pictures of their first kiss to OK! But Roy Keane has been known to use the old "Do you know who I am?" line, which can be seen as a worse kind of need for celebrity. When sports personalities use this phrase, the response 'a wanker?' springs to mind!

The Beckhams can be seen as just trying to make as much money as they can in what could be a short lived career but the kind of arrogance that can come with such celebrity, in my view, is a great deal worse. The view that they are untouchable by anyone including the law is one that is growing. Take a certain group of Leeds football players who acted (although later denied) in a way that would never have been thought of as acceptable if they

had not been celebrities.

This situation does not seem to exist so much in other sports, because the celebrity created round the players is not as high, they are not allowed into the homes and minds of people on such a regular basis. In the North of England, Rugby League players are treated with such celebrity on the streets but it is not so national, and world wide and therefore they cannot get away with it as much.

But at the end of the day, would any of us turn it down? When these players are surrounded by managers, agents and fans, all telling them that they are a cut above the rest it becomes hard not to believe and exploit it. In conjunction with the possible short careers of sports personalities it could be seen as a necessary evil.

So there are really two issues here that I have managed to ramble my

way through. That sports people put themselves into the limelight and the factor that they are too overly convinced by the celebrity that they create and this in turn gives them a superiority complex. Such players, however, often lose the respect of true fans. It is rarely fans of football who buy such magazines with the Beckhams in and most people appreciated that Ian Wright looked like a twat in the chicken tonight adverts. However, if they start acting irresponsibly then that is a different matter. If children see that there is nothing wrong with Roy Keane kicking someone because they looked at him funny, then the problems begin. At least the Beckhams merely set the example of good family life (as long as you forget the small kick against Argentina!).

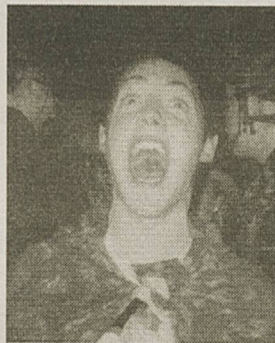
See, none of them are perfect!

...Then Gareth Salutes A Few Of Our Brave Sports Teams...

Division One									
Pos	Team	Pld	Won	Drew	Lost	For	Agnst	Points	Diff
1st	Royal Holloway 2	13	11	0	2	51	19	33	+42
2nd	LSE 3	13	10	2	1	43	19	32	+24
3rd	Royal Holloway 3	14	9	4	1	38	13	31	+26
4th	UCL 4	14	9	2	3	45	21	29	+24
5th	LSE 4	15	8	1	6	26	24	25	+2
6th	Royal Holloway 4	14	5	5	4	21	20	20	+1
7th	GKT 2	10	6	0	4	32	31	18	+1
8th	RUMS 2	14	3	4	7	19	27	12	-8
9th	Goldsmiths 2	11	2	3	6	15	34	8	-19
10th	Imperial 4	13	2	7	4	19	49	8	-30
11th	King's 4	14	1	1	12	10	54	4	-44
12th	ICSM 3	10	1	0	9	5	26	3	-18



The brave warriors of the Men's 3XI bravely enduring a nasty sandwiching between the world's two gimpiest teams... come on our brave lads!



Premier Division									
Pos	Team	Pld	Won	Drew	Lost	For	Agnst	Points	Diff
1st	GKT	10	9	1	0	81	8	28	+73
2nd	Queen Mary	10	8	1	1	69	11	25	+58
3rd	UCL	9	4	0	5	35	35	12	---
4th	LSE	10	4	0	6	29	40	12	-11
5th	Imperial	9	2	0	7	10	58	6	-48
↓ 6th	SOAS	8	0	0	8	5	77	0	-72

Go on our brave lasses! Question: Did all but four of GKT's 81 goals come against the dope fiends from SOAS? We think so...

Premier Division									
Pos	Team	Pld	Won	Drew	Lost	For	Agnst	Points	Diff
1st	UCL	3	3	0	0	80	6	9	+72
2nd	Imperial	2	2	0	0	40	5	6	+35
3rd	RVC	3	2	0	1	25	34	6	-9
	LSE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	---
5th	Royal Holloway	1	0	0	1	5	10	0	-5
6th	GKT	1	0	0	1	5	22	0	-17
7th	King's	2	0	0	2	0	32	0	-32
8th	St George's	2	0	0	2	5	49	0	-44



Well done to all AU teams, and remember: The Force Is With You.

Premier Division									
Pos	Team	Pld	Won	Drew	Lost	For	Agnst	Points	Diff
1st	LSE	2	1	1	0	4	3	4	+1
2nd	GKT	1	1	0	0	4	1	3	+3
3rd	King's	1	0	1	0	3	2	1	---
	Imperial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	---
5th	UCL	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	-1
6th	Royal Holloway	1	0	0	1	1	4	0	-3

The way the universe should be... LSE on top, and the scum from Holloway languishing at the bottom... thanks to the Men's Hockey team for putting the world to rights...

Right, I think this is old... still, unbeaten record at Christmas? Yeah!!!!

The Beaver Sports

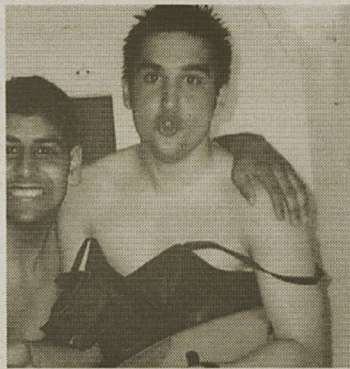
Top Trumps!

Harry 'Hatchet' Stoakes



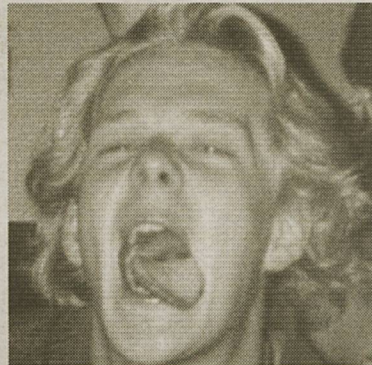
Alcohol tolerance = 188
Pulling ability = 5
Lime-about apps. = 10
Karaoke ability = 8
Special Power = The Drunken
Vomit 5/5

David 'Dave' Bains



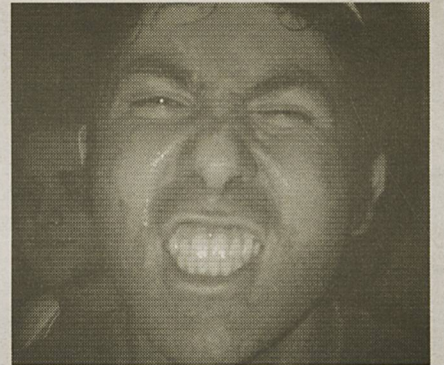
Alcohol tolerance = 155
Pulling ability = 6
Lime-about apps. = 8
Karaoke ability = 4
Special Power = The Ballgown
and Mandolin 3/5

Nicholas 'Oslo' Stavnes



Alcohol tolerance = 177
Pulling ability = 5
Lime-about apps. = 10
Karaoke ability = 6
Special Power = The Foaming
Pint Of Green Death 4/5

Darius 'Pop Idol' Tabbatabbai



Alcohol tolerance = 190
Pulling ability = 6
Lime-about apps. = 6
Karaoke ability = 3
Special Power = The Bull Bar
5/5

'Psycho' John Ficene



Alcohol tolerance = 155
Pulling ability = 5
Lime-about apps. = 9
Karaoke ability = 2
Special Power = The Fearsome
Piers Impression 4/5

Rex 'Supertramp' Walker



Alcohol tolerance = 165
Pulling ability = 7
Lime-about apps. = 5
Karaoke ability = 10
Special Power = The Sabb Shag
5/5

Emma 'Bosh!' Walsh



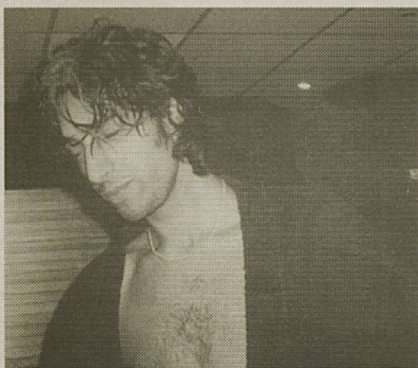
Alcohol tolerance = 160
Pulling ability = 8
Lime-about apps. = 10
Karaoke ability = 10
Special Power = The Lime-about
Frolick 5/5

Holly 'Duracell' Featherstone



Alcohol tolerance = 36
Pulling ability = 2
Lime-about apps. = 1
Karaoke ability = 9
Special Power = The Vicious
Ankle Bite 4/5

Billy 'Bisexual Muppet' Dosanjh



Alcohol tolerance = 150
Pulling ability = 8
Lime-about apps. = 4
Karaoke ability = 3
Special Power = The
Embezzlement of AU Funds 5/5

'Pistol' Pete Riley



Alcohol tolerance = 155
Pulling ability = 2
Lime-about apps. = 7
Karaoke ability = 9
Special Power = Fellatio 3/5

Kate 'Schlaaaaag' Robertson



Alcohol tolerance = 110
Pulling ability = 7
Lime-about apps. = 7
Karaoke ability = 2
Special Power = The Bitch Slap
4/5

Lauren Cox



Alcohol tolerance = 160
Pulling ability = 8
Lime-about apps. = 8
Karaoke ability = 3
Special Power = Rohypnol 4/5

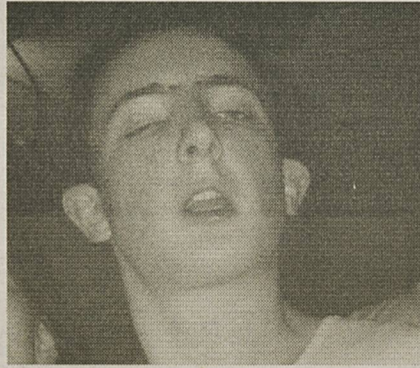
Right, it's pretty easy, just like it was when you were a kid. If you were never lucky cool enough to be invited to a game of Top Trumps at the back of the bus, then these are the embarassingly simple rules. Actually, buggar that, just ask someone who knows, oh, and the Special Power thingy, that's just the same as all the other categories, just they have different names, but it plays the same way. Top tip: Cut them out, and stick them to some card or something to give them some solidity, and play away. Incidentally, don't come crying to us if you're not featured, neither's Gareth, and he's taking it like a man. The way he likes it... joowke!

Terance 'Spiderman' Li



Alcohol tolerance = 42
 Pulling ability = 4
 Lime-about apps. = 1
 Karaoke ability = 1
 Special Power = His Webslingin'
 2/5

Piers 'Colonel' Sanders



Alcohol tolerance = 145
 Pulling ability = 6
 Lime-about apps. = 7
 Karaoke ability = 2
 Special Power = The Naked Run
 2/5

Rachel Urquhart



Alcohol tolerance = 190
 Pulling ability = 6
 Lime-about apps. = 6
 Karaoke ability = 3
 Special Power = Being Really,
 REALLY Fit, Says Gareth 5/5

Jo Martin



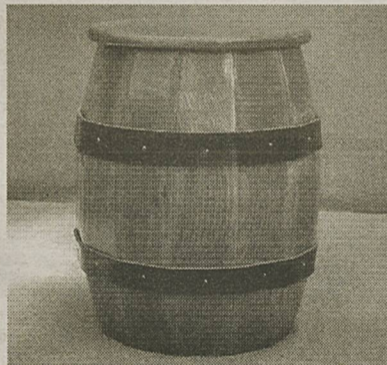
Alcohol tolerance = 190
 Pulling ability = 6
 Lime-about apps. = 6
 Karaoke ability = 3
 Special Power = 'Quick Free
 Kicks' Says Kate 4/5

Vish Suppa



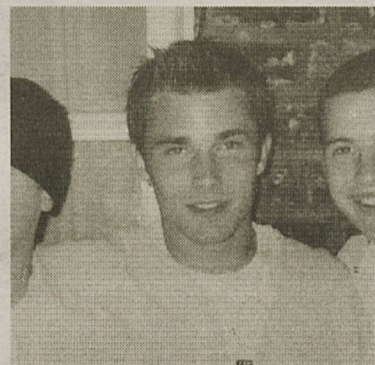
Alcohol tolerance = 190
 Pulling ability = 6
 Lime-about apps. = 6
 Karaoke ability = 3
 Special Power = The 3-Minute
 Meal 3/5

The AU Barrel



Alcohol tolerance = 200
 Pulling ability = 10
 Lime-about apps. = 0
 Karaoke ability = 0
 Special Power = Getting You
 Twatted By Noon 5/5

'Fit' Nick Hill



Alcohol tolerance = 120
 Pulling ability = 10
 Lime-about apps. = 6
 Karaoke ability = 2
 Special Power = The Vogue 4/5

Matt 'FC' Trenhaille



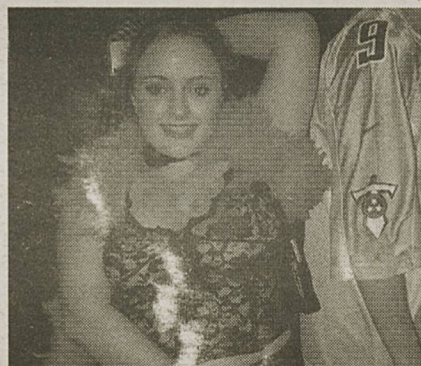
Alcohol tolerance = 190
 Pulling ability = 6
 Lime-about apps. = 6
 Karaoke ability = 3
 Special Power = The Mixed Grill
 Milkshake 5/5

Emma Brunjes



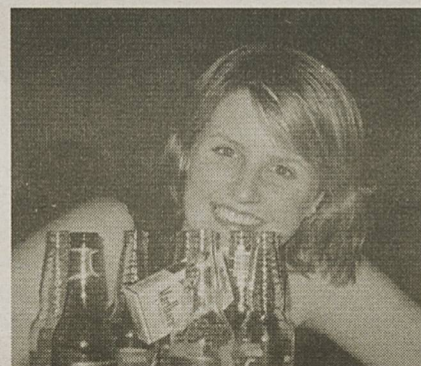
Alcohol tolerance = 155
 Pulling ability = 9
 Lime-about apps. = 10
 Karaoke ability = 3
 Special Power = Persuasion 5/5

Hester... just, Hester



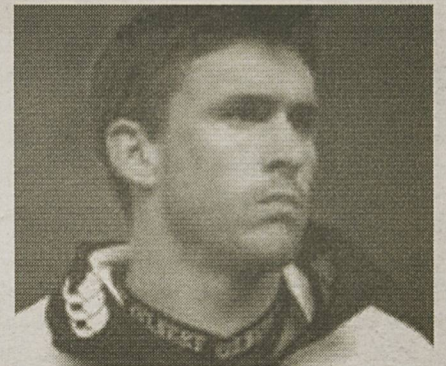
Alcohol tolerance = 90
 Pulling ability = 9
 Lime-about apps. = 9
 Karaoke ability = 1
 Special Power = Again,
 Rohypnol 4/5

Candice 'Big Mac' MacDonald



Alcohol tolerance = 130
 Pulling ability = 6
 Lime-about apps. = 7
 Karaoke ability = 2
 Special Power = Deep-Throating
 Reef 4/5

John 'Not That One' Leslie



Alcohol tolerance = 80
 Pulling ability = 7
 Lime-about apps. = 0
 Karaoke ability = 5
 Special Power = Being A Rugby
 Player 5/5

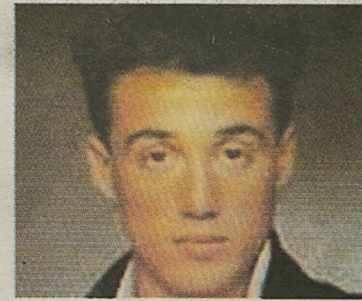
Even at 93, Glitter was still at it... if you've seen this man during the festive season, please ring the police.



"I spent a lot of my money on booze, birds and fast cars. The rest I just squandered" George Best

Wham! Bam! Cheers Oslo!

Christmas Cheer For Scando Army!



By O.Slo

LSE 7	(Santa's Lil' Helpers)	4
RVC 2	(Bad Lil' Boys)	1

Following the bitter double defeat at the hands of St. George's 1st team, who normally play in the 1st Premier Division NOT in Division 4, the sevenths were ready to start the much-talked about winning streak. The vets, who deserve credit for being a bunch of genuinely nice lads who will stop play apologise profoundly if they step on your toes, were the first obstacle. Obstacle? Hah!

o.slo was fast down the wing but admitted to himself that he might shoot m.arch if the first half ended 0-0, like they usually do. But he and g.rafter made sure this would not be the case. Half way through the first period, after dribbling past 16 men but getting no closer to the goal, as usual, g.rafter delivered a smooth pass back to o.slo, who, for once, looked up to



determine the position of the goalkeeper, and curled it round him to make it a deserved 1-0. f.boy, who was reffing, admitted later that he doesn't know the rules of football, by hinting that there may have been an offside pass.

The second goal was a blinder, but made so only by the interference of a defender. Another pass was delivered by g.rafter, this time into what can be classed as no-man's land. But o.slo, so fast, rushed between two defenders, who obviously suffered at

the lack of j.christ@rvc.ac.uk, and got a shot on the ball, which took a heavy deflection and lobbed the keeper.

2-0 at half time, and never have the sevenths been so confident. c.ivan talked of a sino-soviet split down the left flank, and b.radford grinned behind the stubble intended for the g.michael-look. t.j.lesnik was brought on to enhance creativity, and will.will a bit later for smooth distribution. Nothing could go wrong.

o.johnsen approached fellow countryman

o.slo to inform him that he intended to score a goal within five minutes, and complied within two. 3-0. Following the substitution of a.lee, however, will.will only needed four seconds of playing time to knock a vet out of the way and give a way a free kick. A glancing header by an unmarked vet gave them a goal, and thus 100% efficiency in front of goal.

3-1 is a victory; 4-1 is a bashing. The sevenths opted for the latter. A good run down the left by k.waleety (Worthy of



the name? Email n.stavnes@lse.ac.uk) and a quick one-two with g.rafter preceded the kick that sunk RVC.

f.boy blew the final whistle after disallowing o.slo's hat-trick completion goal for a blatant trip on s.girl, who was dazed and confused after an early knock, giving LSE the second double of the year. And thank God, or j.christ@rvc.ac.uk, for that, because we have only beaten two teams in actual played matches this season. Imperial will be added to that list in January.

The balance sheet: o.slo 2 goals, o.johnsen 1 goal, k.waleety 1 goal, g.rafter 4 assists (hence the email alias), s.girl 1 knock, leading to s.w.trains 1 kit bag, on tour to Chessington.

During the holidays, Nicholas Stavnes retires to his cottage in Lapland and, on the night of the 24th December, dons a comedy beard and dresses in a camp red suit, and visits the homes of five year old children. This would be endearing, but, he does it in the summer.

Are You A Beaver Sports Houghton Street Honey?

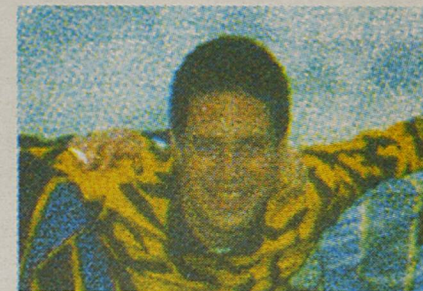
In the world's biggest rip off since D.Bains claimed to have invented the wheel, BeaverSports have 'creatively borrowed' an idea from the men's mag of men's mags: FHM.

We're looking for a bevvvy of lovely LSE ladies to audition for a part in Beaver Sports' very own forthcoming *Footballers' Wives* column. Currently, the vast majority of LSE footballers, and sportsmen and women in general, are enjoying a morally decrepit life of bacchanalian excess and utter debauchery due to their status of

being both at the Mount Olympus of academic institutions and healthily steeped in the legendary status bestowed upon an AU member. However, one appalling case of one-handed loving has become all too apparent. Despite an entire full-page personal profile in one of last years issues, Andrew Jeremiah 'Joseph of Nazareth' Schwartz has yet to cash-in on his modicum of celebrity, nay, notoriety. A complete lack of orgiastic festivity during the holiday period was the final straw for the young 7ths team keeper. We at Beaver Sports are

asking straight and fair for any person, boy, girl, or ladyboy to please make contact with a.schwartz1@lse.ac.uk and register an interest with the hapless half-wit. If only to give the poor child of Jacob a smile and a reason to deign to visit our beloved Three Tuns. Thank you, and remember, whilst a puppy might not just be for Christmas, Andrew Schwartz can be abandoned by twelfth night, no recriminations.

Luvly jubbly.



Please find this boy a loving companion. Please. He likes poetry and not-drinking.

1,176 Hours Before Calellafest: You Know You Want To...