

The Beaver

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Issue number 611



The iPod debate - is it worth it?
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The Director in a pantomime
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Briefing

Budget accepted

The Annual Budget Meeting was held last Thursday at the UGM. LSE Students' Union Treasurer Gareth Carter's budget was ratified with little dissent from those in attendance. A handful of societies lobbied unsuccessfully for more money.

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Entente Cordiale

Celebrations for the centenary of the historic Entente Cordiale agreement between Britain and France were this week brought to a grandiose conclusion at Hatfield House, in Hertfordshire. Students from the LSE and Sciences-Po university in Paris commemorated the event together as guests of Lord Salisbury and the LSE.

News page 3

Sabb threatened

A dispute over payment for karaoke equipment to 'Karaoke Gold' has led to threats being made against LSE Students' Union Treasurer Gareth Carter and the staff of the Three Tuns Bar.

News page 2

EU X-factor

Does the proposed EU constitution have the necessary 'X-factor'? blink asks students and academics at the School what they think about the constitutional treaty and how it will affect the continent.

blink pages 12-13

Giveaway

About features a New Year's party giveaway with a pair of tickets and 3 CDs on offer for anyone with intimate knowledge of the Ministry of Sound.

B:art page 27

Debt strain buries Atlas Bar

Prashant Rao
Executive Editor

Students' Union (SU) Treasurer Gareth Carter announced at the Annual Budget Meeting (ABM) that the Union-run bar at Great Dover Street, the Atlas Bar, would be closed for business on December 31.

The closure of the bar, reported to have lost £25,099 in the 2003/04 financial year, has provoked uproar amongst both residents of the hall and North British Housing (NBH), the housing company that manages Great Dover Street.

Great Dover Street President Ryan Hearity questioned Carter upon the announcement at the ABM, asking how it was that "the SU was 'fully committed' to the Atlas Bar if it had only given a budget for five months?", referring to the Budget's introductory text.

Carter responded by saying that as the situation was being

evaluated on a day-to-day basis, a budget for five months seemed appropriate.

The budget, approved at last week's ABM, funded a deficit of £10,548 to the Atlas Bar for five months, and Carter said the Union expected the bar to amount losses in the range of £27,000 if it were to be open for the full year.

Closing the Atlas Bar essentially removes all communal areas from Great Dover Street, as it also had a pool table, dart board and digital TV.

In effect, according to Hearity, the Hall committee would not be able to stage any parties in the hall itself, and would have to rent a bar or pub.

Rumours have been circulating of a possible vote of censure being proposed against Carter at an upcoming Union General Meeting (UGM), but Hearity denies that he is considering any such course of action.

"Our goal is really only to keep

the bar open, and I do not see how censuring [Carter] would help that.

"If there was a motion of no confidence proposed against Gareth, I, as President of GDS, would not support it," he said.

Hearity confirmed to *The Beaver*, however, that the Hall committee was exploring various options to keep the bar open and in the coming days would be meeting with SU Residences Officer Rishi Madlani and SU Postgraduates Students' Officer Matthew Willgress, as the hall is dominated by postgraduate students.

The decision to finally close the Atlas Bar was made by the SU's Administration and Staffing Committee (ASC), made up of the four sabbatical officers, the General Manager and the Finance Secretary, on November 30.

Upon hearing of this, Hearity sent out an e-mail to all Great Dover Street residents citing

what he and Paul Noke of NBH felt were financial inaccuracies in the Union's year-end financial statement and the budget.

In the e-mail, Hearity points to the fact that the Union reported salaries and wages of £20,767, redecoration and repairs of £1,148 and general expenses of £1,085, all of which he claimed were wrong.

According to Hearity and Noke, the salary of the full-time bar manager in fact totalled closer to £17,000; NBH handles all redecoration and repairs; and the Union never elaborated to either Hearity or Noke on what 'general expenses' was made up of.

Carter has since elaborated on the figures: while the bar manager, Mark Buttery, receives a salary of £17,127, the SU's Assistant Bar Manager was transferred to a managerial payscale at a cost of £3,640, which made up the difference.

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Barrel rolls into new Underground

Chris Heathcote
News Editor

The Athletics Union (AU) Barrel got underway last Friday putting to test the new Underground bar.

The annual event is organised for LSE's sportsmen and women and is normally a day of heavy drinking, costumes, forfeits and streaking.

It is a day the LSE administration usually dread.

Last year the History department closed for the day and teaching time was cancelled.

But this year even the School's Director, Howard Davies got involved and at lunchtime entered the packed Underground bar and to the downed a pint of 'snakebite'; a mix of lager, cider and blackcurrant.

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LSE Director wins respect of AU at Barrel

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The morning began at 11am when around 400 students, mostly AU members queued up to enter the Underground bar.

Some had already been drinking, but for those who had not, the £5 entrance fee had purchased 18 barrels, the most ever, of free beer and cider.

Over the next three hours, team members nominated by their captains were hauled on stage and obliged to pay 'fines' for misdemeanours they had committed, such as missing training.

The punishments were decided by spinning the 'Wheel of Misfortune' and could vary from kissing a member of the audience or downing a pint of beer to downing three pints of wine or sampling 'the mixed grill'; Wright's bar meat blended and topped-up with gin.

One unlucky student was required to drink the concoction twice.

With the fines over and the bar exhausted, DJ and former LSE SU Entertainments sabbatical, Jimmy Baker, signalled that the traditional 'Barrel run' was about to begin.

Leading the run was a first-year rugby player, required by tradition to strip naked.

This year Jonathan Ussher performed the honours.

For most, leaving the Clare Market Building entrance at the start of the run was the first daylight they had seen all morning, since the new Underground bar had been blacked-out in order to try and recreate the feel of its dingier predecessor.

Lining the route were scores of well-wishers and bemused students, some with camera phones to record the moment.

In line with tradition, the first port of call was the Peacock theatre, but there was no luck to be found, since the lecture had been cancelled.

It was the same in the Old

Theatre too, but in the New Theatre a lecture was duly invaded.

"The look on the face of the teacher said it all," commented one student.

"You could tell he didn't have a clue what was going on," added another.

The run officially marked the end of the Barrel and some students crawled home when it finished. Most, however, stayed until Crush.

However, AU Executive member Dom Rustam noted that a larger number than usual stayed in the Three Tuns and continued to drink until Crush.

Asked about the success of the day, Claudia Whitcomb, AU Social Secretary, told *The Beaver* "People were worried about whether the old atmosphere of the Barrel would be lost in the new Underground bar, but the increased size of the bar actually meant that more people could get involved."

When asked if she was disappointed that the School had cancelled lectures on the day, Whitcomb replied, "I think everyone was really let down as although there is a little disruption, it only happens once a year."

At the end of the day, there were reports that one student may have been hospitalised, but returned to the Tuns later.

"But apart from that I think injuries were pretty much restricted to people's pride and dignity," said Rustam.

Meanwhile even two days later, *The Beaver* was unable to contact AU President and host for the day's proceedings, Pete Davies. Some colleagues speculated that he may not yet have recovered from Friday's festivities.

The real hero of the day, though was undoubtedly Howard Davies.

"What a legend," remarked Rustam.

"Despite his promises I don't

think anyone realistically believed that he would come."

Whitcomb added; "We would all like to thank him and let him know that he has gained the respect of the AU."

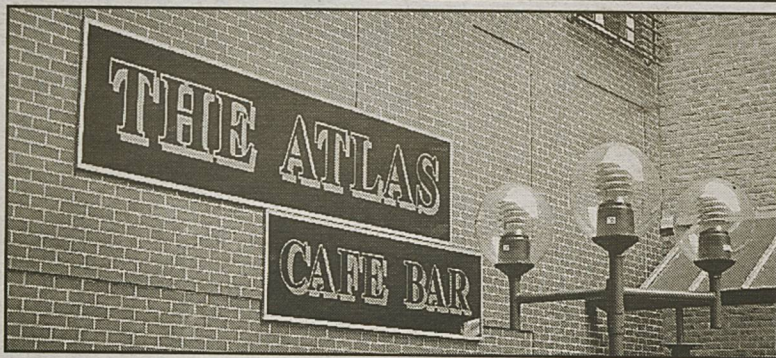
SU Treasurer, Gareth Carter said "I've lost eight hours of my life, but from the photos it looked like we were having fun."

For the first time in three years, the International History department, which is situated on the planned route of the Barrel run, did not close.

When asked why, a spokesperson commented that they had arranged for security to be in attendance should the Barrel run have caused any problems.

However, this year, the run did not pass through the department and any potential trouble was averted.

The department said it originally closed on the day of the Barrel because of the excessive damage and disruption caused to its property.



The Atlas Bar at Great Dover Street will not be open next year.

Continued from page 1

In addition, while NBH pays for all redecoration and repairs to the Atlas Bar, the Union is responsible for bar equipment and the £1,148 was made up of £987 on a cellar cooling system and £161 was on maintenance to the dishwasher.

General expenses were made up of £520 of solicitor's fees, £145 in legal training for Buttery to be a licensee and £420 was in reimbursement to Harmon for congestion charge.

Speaking to *The Beaver*, Noke also questioned the legality of the

Union's actions, saying that the agreed-upon contract stipulated the SU give six months notice before, as opposed to the one month's notice actually given.

Carter dismissed this argument, however, stating that the contract was signed by a member of the Union who did not have the authority to do so.

Asked by *The Beaver* if the ASC would reconsider its decision, Carter said "It would make a mockery of the decision-making powers of the ASC," he explained.

"There is no reason to revisit it," he added.

Visit to decide LSE degree future

Nazir Hussain

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) visited the LSE to begin the process of deciding whether the School should be given the power to award its own degrees.

It also carried out an 'institutional audit' of the School.

LSE students currently have their degrees awarded by the University of London (UL), with students' degree certificates carrying the names of both the University and the LSE. All other aspects relating to the degree, including the awarding of marks, however, are decided by the School.

The first visit involved meetings with the Director, senior academics and lay governors, senior School management and the Students' Union (SU).

The SU executive officers were involved in a one-and-a-

half hour meeting with the audit team. Issues raised in the SU's nine-page written submission for the institutional audit were discussed.

In the submission of its 'critical self-analysis document' to the QAA in September, the School stated that the awarding of degree-awarding powers "would clarify possible confusion, particularly in markets overseas, about the School's standing in relation to its status and the University of London", and that the School "would be in a stronger position to stand alone if current arrangements for the University of London were ever changed."

Following the visit to the School, the QAA will prepare a degree-awarding powers report by February.

Current LSE students hoping to graduate with an LSE-awarded degree will, however, be disappointed.

The School has stated that if

granted the powers, it would keep them in reserve, as "any decision to leave the University, either voluntarily or because of some exterior force, would have major implications for governance and finance, as well as in academic terms."

The second part of QAA visit will examine teaching quality and will take place in mid-January.

The departments selected for Discipline Audit Trails (DATs) are Government, Law and Social Policy. In the meantime, the QAA audit team will conduct meetings with staff and students to follow up on particular academic issues such as teaching and learning.

SU General Secretary Will Macfarlane said, "This is a hugely important process for the School. We look forward to being involved this week and hope that many students will get involved in their department's audit trail at the start of next term."

NUS marches on Cardiff to block top-up fees for Wales

Alexander George

Five thousand students from across the United Kingdom gathered in Cardiff last Thursday for a National Union of Students (NUS) demonstration against top-up fees.

Although the decision to introduce the controversial changes to University charging has already been made in England and rejected in Scotland, top-up fees have not yet been introduced in Wales.

As necessitated by the government's controversial Higher Education Bill passed last January, the Welsh National Assembly must approve the fees before they can be applied to Wales.

The Assembly has, however, already ruled out top-up fees for the academic year 2006/7 and is awaiting the recommendations of the Rees Commission.

The Commission, chaired by Cardiff University's vice-chancellor, Professor Teresa Rees, is not due to present its findings to the Welsh National Assembly until February next year and the protest was an attempt to demonstrate the continued opposition by students to the introduction of top-up fees.

Unlike the Westminster Parliament, in the Welsh Assembly, the Government currently wields a majority of just one in the assembly, making a victory for the NUS all the more possible.

As the NUS stated in a press release, "In January 2004 we brought the Government majority of 169 down to just five. If we can achieve that, imagine the impact we can have in Wales. We believe we can win it, but it will need a united show of force."

Indeed, should the Welsh Assembly decide against the introduction of top-up fees, England will be the only part of the UK with the policy students in Scotland pay a graduate tax instead.

At the same time as the demonstration, students who could not attend were able to ask questions to Higher Education Minister Kim Howells on an 'Education Guardian' web chat.

The NUS, however, said that

Howells only answered a handful of questions.

NUS President Kat Fletcher said, "We are delighted that so many students turned out in Cardiff to show our united opposition to top-up fees and student hardship."

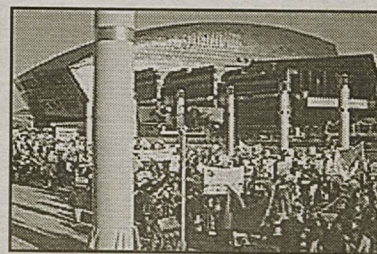
She added that students would continue demanding answers from the government and would work together to prevent top-up fees being introduced throughout the UK.

No LSE students attended the demonstration in an official capacity.

The LSE Students' Union General Secretary, Will Macfarlane, said that the combination of last week's Annual Budget meeting, AU barrel and

the visit of French students from the Sciences-Po University in Paris for the Entente Cordiale, meant that there were too many commitments which made it impossible to attend the demonstration.

Macfarlane told *The Beaver* that the LSE SU nevertheless supported the opposition to top-up fees in Wales.



NUS on the march in Cardiff

To contact *The Beaver* News team, email thebeaver.news@lse.ac.uk

Champagne makes Entente Cordiale

Sam Jones
News Editor

Students from the LSE and Paris' Sciences-Po met last Thursday to celebrate the centenary of the Entente Cordiale alliance between the French and British Governments.

Upon their arrival in London, French students were greeted by LSE students at Waterloo station.

Their trip, sponsored by Eurostar, began with a lunchtime reception in the Shaw Library where they were addressed by LSE Director Sir Howard Davies as well as LSE SU General Secretary, Will Macfarlane and Chair of the LSE SU French Connection Society Ségolène Dufour-Genesson from the LSE.

The group was also welcomed by one of the principal organisers of the events, Yves Djimi, who was previously General Secretary of the Science-Po's equivalent to a Students' Union and is now a student at the LSE.

LSE SU Communications Officer Khurshid 'K' Faizullaev has also expended a considerable amount of time, on behalf of the SU, to the project.

The French students were given a tour of the LSE campus and a visit to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The climax of the trip for the visiting students was a reception hosted the Marquis of Salisbury at his mansion, Hatfield House, in Hertfordshire.

The evening included a champagne reception and tours of the 17th Century property.

The function, which was also attended by dignitaries involved with the Franco-British society in London, included speeches by Lord Salisbury and the UK Ambassador to Paris, Sir John Holmes.

Macfarlane and his counterpart, Andrei Lorman the General Secretary of the BDE Sciences-Po also addressed the guests, speaking of the importance of continued relations between the youth and future leaders of the two countries.

The evening concluded with a party at the West End club Attica which was attended by a group of LSE students representing the LSE SU.

On the following day the French students were treated to the Annual Budget Meeting and London sightseeing before returning by train to Paris that evening.

The event marked the formal closing of this year's entente cordiale celebrations, which began in April at the Château de Breteuil, near Paris with a delegation of LSE students in attendance, the guests of Sciences-Po.

The entente, signed at the Château in 1904, has been credited with a hundred years of benevolent Anglo-French relations.

English and French speakers alike, however, joked at the often less than cordial relations between the two countries.

LSE Director Howard Davies jokingly referred to the alliance as one of the biggest mistakes in British diplomatic history.

The initiative received the



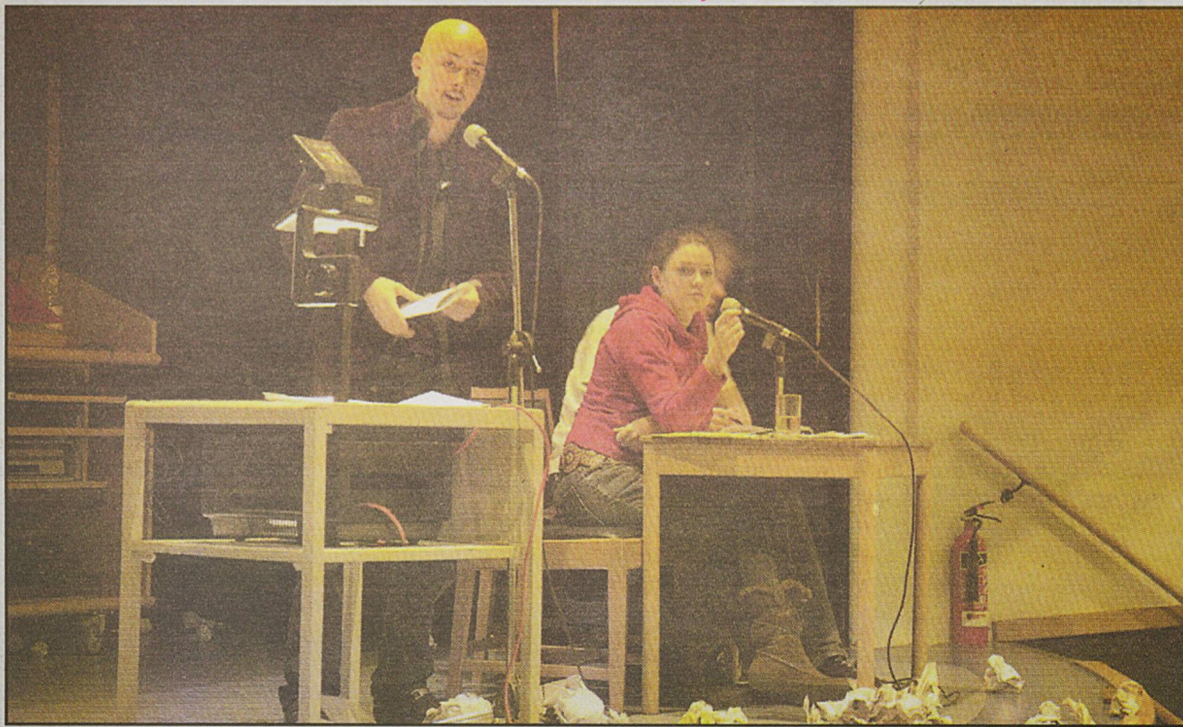
Top-bottom; Yves Djimi addresses the crowd assembled in the Marble Hall at Hatfield House. / Photos: Mark Donahue

backing of both the British and French governments.

French President Jacques Chirac met Dufour-Genesson and Djimi and promised to lend his "full support" to the venture.

The British Government supported the venture after the Lord Chancellor was questioned in the House of Lords by LSE alumnus and governor Lord Williams of Elvel.

Budget breezes through for Carter



Relaxed; Carter drank whiskey as he outlined the budget for the year ahead. / Photo: Mark Donahue

Nazir Hussain

The Students' Union budget for the forthcoming year was passed without contention at last week's Annual Budget Meeting.

SU Treasurer Gareth Carter enjoyed an easy ride during his near hour-long presentation before the busy and at times lively audience in the Old Theatre.

This was in contrast to his predecessor, Jo Kibble, whose budget was passed only after two consecutive UGM sessions.

Notably present at the meeting were those anxious to prevent cuts to their society budgets.

Three societies had tabled motions for increases in their budgets - the Wine Appreciation Society, Filipino Society and MSc Accounting & Finance Society, all

of which had failed to get their amendments through.

The Filipino Society and MSc Accounting & Finance Society did not even send a representative to make a speech on their behalf.

The motion tabled by the Wine Appreciation Society on the other hand was discussed at considerable length.

Having first proposed to take £50 each off Question Time and

Television Society, and £100 each of Debating and Investment Society, the Wine Appreciation Society amended its proposal to instead take money off each society with an allocation above £60.

The Society, with 98 members and a budget allocation of £200, failed to convince the meeting of the need for a higher budget on the grounds of high cost of wine and the commitment of its members which was demonstrated by them paying a £10 membership fee.

The speech against the motion was made by the Treasurer himself, who said that the SU should not be funding purely social activities.

It was also suggested to the society that they should consider sponsorship to finance themselves as many other societies with expensive pursuits resort to.

Most pages of the budget were approved unanimously, with the few questions that were asked being mainly intended as jokes by members of the AU.

Even the earlier concern about the high cost of the Three Tuns refurbishment, barely featured as Carter demonstrated that he controlled the Union's deficit within the target of approximately £96,500.

The meeting finished five minutes before time.



Union Jack

Jack normally looks forward to the UGM of Week 9 with the kind of anticipation he normally reserves for a colonic irrigation session.

Previous Budget Reports have seen Jarlath O'Hara scare us all into voting to accept every page, Peter Bellend send us to sleep before he even started reading, and Jo Kibble evoked the ire of the Balcony as he nonchalantly ran up a £100,000 deficit.

However, Jack feels that the annual Treasurer's budget report could be taking a turn for the better.

Always a fan of tradition, Jack applauds Ming the Merciless for restoring the treasurer's custom of sipping a glass of the finest Grouse whiskey as he blinds us all with figures.

A similarly blinding figure was that of beloved Gen Sec Big-Macfarlane, whom, Jack fears, has been blowing his £24k salary on one too many Wright's Bar sandwiches.

Jack reckons the buttons on McFarlane's jacket were designed by the same people that made the Thames Flood Barrier, such is the tide they hold back.

The Budget pantomime had several walk-on parts.

A particularly smarmy looking American took to the stage asking for more money to buy more wine.

Jack empathizes with this poor Yank, in between buying chinos and polo shirts it must be hard to scrape together enough of the Queen's Sterling to purchase a decent bottle of plonk.

His suggestion that the money be taken from other societies' accounts was laughed down by the assembled throngs.

Paper throwing was there in abundance this week, due to a particularly raucous AU balcony presence, getting in some anarchic practice before the Barrel the next day.

Jack hopes that this is a sign of things to come from the Balcony, who have been noticeably quieter this term than previously.

Much like Afternoon Tea is not complete for Jack without a snifter of snuff to perk him up, the UGM needs an AU presence upstairs.

This is the last Jack before Christmas, so Jack thought he'd reveal what he's getting the various UGM characters for the 25th.

Jack predicts that Oliver Ranson will wake up to find a mail order bride in his stocking, Narz will get a new pair of trousers and Dave Cole will manage to procure a shirt even more lurid than his current offerings.

Ken Clarke closes LSE 'chancellors reflect' series

Alexander George

Former Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke spoke on the quest for the 'holy grail' of low inflation and growth as well as sending out a warning for the current chancellor Gordon Brown as he concluded the 'Chancellors Reflect' lecture series at the LSE last Monday. Clarke, who was Chancellor in the Major government from 1993 started by joking that he was grateful that Conservatives could now come to the LSE without police protection.

Clarke, who previously served as education secretary, health secretary and home secretary, said he never expected to become Chancellor. However, he got the post thanks to his predecessor Norman Lamont's mishandling of Black Wednesday and the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM).

Unlike Lord Lamont, Clarke said that he did not have any problem in principal with the ERM. He said that the problem Britain suffered was because the

government did not follow the fiscal discipline the ERM required.

Clarke described himself as a fiscal conservative. Influenced by past Chancellors Geoffrey Howe and Nigel Lawson, he believed economic policy should aim to achieve low inflation, which would help stimulate growth.

Clarke said he consequently had to follow a combination of tax and spending to achieve healthy public finances. His 1993 budget featured the highest increase in the tax burden since the Second World War.

Unfortunately for Clarke, the Conservative Party fought the 1992 election on reducing taxes. Clarke described this a 'constant nuisance' and 'totally irresponsible.' Nevertheless, he introduced taxes like the Insurance Tax and Airport Passenger Tax.

On monetary policy, Clarke - like his Conservative predecessors - said that he favoured an independent Bank of England.

Clarke recalled a conversation between Thatcher and Lawson, in which the Prime Minister said she feared an independent bank

'could raise interest rates on the eve of an election.'

Although he didn't work with an independent Bank of England, Clarke had tried to make it more transparent by allowing it to produce its own inflation report and not editing any of the Governor's speeches.

Clarke said that Britain has experienced twelve years of growth and low inflation, not enjoyed by at any other time in British history. He took credit for the first four years. He said he wanted to fight the 1997 election on the economy, but instead the Conservatives were too obsessed with Europe and Labour broadly agreed with Clarke's policy in any case.

Clarke warned his successor, Gordon Brown, against complacency. He said, 'Gordon was walking on water until two or three years ago', but thinks he is heading for a fall.

Britain is not Europe's fastest growing economy, according to Clarke, and his public spending plans are unsustainable without raising taxes significantly.

Clarke, a well-known



Kenneth Clarke, MP who spoke at the LSE last Monday

Europhile, re-iterated his support for the Euro and said he believes Britain will eventually join.

In answer to a question from the audience, he said he will campaign in favour of the European Constitution should there be a referendum.

In his concluding comments, LSE Director Howard Davies said Clarke's lecture was 'a great end to a fascinating series.' By Davis' calculation - based on Brown seeking an unprecedented third term at the Treasury - the next five chancellors will come and speak in 2057.

Visa charge doubles

Shams Sooltangos

The UK Home Office caused renewed anger amongst students last week as it launched a new consultation process over a plan to double the top charge for a visa extension to £500.

In September last year the Home Office introduced charges of £155 for postal visa renewals and £250 for those wishing to renew in person.

This decision will affect the estimated 275,000 overseas students that are currently in the UK, and who bring a total contribution of £10bn a year to the home economy.

The decision was unsurprisingly not favourably received by overseas students. One US postgraduate told *The Guardian* newspaper that "it is very expensive to renew visas now and it was very difficult for me to come up with enough money.

"This is a source of stress for international students; we don't have loads of extra cash lying around to pay fees that suddenly come into existence," he added.

One Turkish student went further by saying, "Britain tries to attract foreign students and then rips them off in this way".

Opponents to the increases believe that overseas students are specifically identified as a group of people who are committed to staying in England, already paying considerable amounts of money, and considered as a well-resourced captive market which will have no choice but to pay.

Nevertheless, the Home Office argued that the charges are not imposed to deter people from entering the UK, but to make sure the scheme is self-funding and that the British tax payer does not have to pay the cost of foreign

nationals' visa applications.

However it has been pointed out that it is unconceivable for a visa renewal to be worth £155, £250 or even £500 since the original application, which can easily be processed in less than ten minutes, only costs £36.

Salah Mattoo, LSE SU International Students' Officer, commented, "the charges are absurd, and the UK is turning into a money-making enterprise. This reflects opportunism and sheer indifference."

Catherine Marston, policy adviser to Universities UK, emphasised the unethical nature of the visa charges. "Although visas are granted for the length of study, people's circumstances change," she commented, "some students start in FE and move on to university, postgraduates often need longer to write their theses, while others either fall ill or run short of cash and have to suspend their studies."

Critics of last year's visa charge hikes felt that student's problems were exacerbated because they were introduced during the summer vacation, many students consequently had made no financial provision for their return.

Given the fierce international competition for the revenues generated by overseas students, it is feared that the charges will deter prospective students from studying in the UK. Two weeks ago, a survey of vice-chancellors, conducted by Tories and published in *The Guardian*, revealed that charges to visa processing, particularly in India and China, had led to a 14 percent reduction in the number of people entering the UK on a student visa in 2003. In financial terms, this amounts to a loss of £30m of fees income.

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University spin-off companies encouraged

Kheng Soon Lim

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown has stated that he will remove tax barriers incurred by university spin-off companies that were unintentionally created in a previous budget.

In this previous budget, a tax loophole for firms that provided their workers with share options rather than bonuses was closed.

However, this had the effect of increasing the tax burden incurred by university spin offs that had been created to market patents or research ideas.

As a result, many universities were discouraged from creating such spin-offs.

Speaking to *The Beaver*, the LSE was cautiously optimistic about the news. Although welcoming the tax breaks, the Press Office pointed out that spin-offs tended to be more related to the natural sciences rather than social science based: "The challenge for the LSE is to ensure that social sciences are not forgotten in this science boost" said one LSE spokesperson.

However, a closer inspection of the Chancellor's plans did indicate a strong pro science bias.

The Chancellor has promised to look into Research and Development (R&D) tax credits for medium-sized science companies, to spend GBP100 million on promoting Manchester, Newcastle and York as 'science cities' and to invest GBP2.5 billion overall in science over the next ten years.

Brown also pledged to introduce a pilot scheme in which universities can build up endowments via matched funding. The LSE remained taciturn, "we are looking into what could be the positive implications of this scheme for the School" they said.

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Candle-lit vigil held for LSE SU AIDS week

Saalim Chowdhury

As part of the LSE SU's calendar of campaign weeks, AIDS awareness came to the School this week.

The aim of the week was to remind people that HIV is an issue for everyone, with thousands of new cases being diagnosed every year in the UK alone.

The Students' Union coordinated events by the Development Society, DESTIN and People & Planet. A stall was on Houghton Street from Monday to Friday promoting the 'Treat AIDS now' campaign, which lobbies for greater attention to be given to the issue, alongside handing out red-ribbons, dental dams and condoms.

The week started with a photograph exhibition held in the Underground bar, highlighting the lives of Zambian orphans affected by HIV. There was also a reception with the photographer who, after a brief talk took questions about his work for Pepaids, a British charity operating in Zambia.

Exhibition organiser, Dinka Jasarevic, said she "was delighted that so many people showed interest in the exhibition, and made use of the chance they had to increase their awareness."

Tuesday and Wednesday saw a number of panel discussions.

One drew on the wealth of experience in the postgraduate student body, bringing together individuals who had been working with AIDS education and related affairs in Ghana, Ecuador, and El-Salvador. They shared their experiences with others and discussed what students can constructively do in the fight against the virus.

Another brought together



LSE Students contemplate poignant photographs of Zambian AIDS sufferers. / Photo: Mark Donahue.

LSE academics to speak on the effects of urbanisation and AIDS and discuss the roles that NGOs can play in dealing with the spread of AIDS.

The keystone event was on Wednesday, which was World AIDS day itself. To mark the occasion a candle-lit vigil was held outside the entrance to the Old Building on Houghton Street at 5pm. Many SU officials were regretful that they were unable to attend, due to a clash with entente cordiale events.

Thursday saw the showing of a film, 'Women are Leading Change' made by UNAIDS, the

joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, which was followed by the Development Society/DESTIN's Condom and Candy Party held in the Underground bar, promoting 'healthy loving', which was well attended.

Sian Errington, the Students' Union Education and Welfare Officer who had been co-ordinating the week's events, hailed the whole week as being "really successful in raising awareness across the campus and funds for charities".

The monies were raised for Pepaids, a British charity operat-

ing in Zambia which runs a peer education and support programme that works by teaching life skills needed to overcome cultural pressures and thereby avoid contracting HIV.

"The LSE SU has long been acknowledged as being a campaigning Union and almost every week focuses on one issue or another, but this year's AIDS awareness week has been particularly visible. This is due in no small part to the excellent co-operation between everyone involved," said Tina Sloane of the LSE SU People and Planet's stop AIDS campaign.

Brief News

Edinburgh to rejoin NUS

The Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA), the oldest Students' Union in the country, has voted 52 to 48 to rejoin the National Union of Students, after a 25 year absence. 21 percent of the university's 16,000 students turned out to vote in the first referendum on the matter in more than 20 years. As turnout was low, however, the difference between the Yes and No counts was only 165. EUSA President Steve Cockburn expressed his pleasure over the vote, and said he looked forward to working with the NUS.

Clarke vs Fletcher

NUS National President Kat Fletcher may contest Education Secretary Charles Clarke in his Norwich South parliamentary seat in the upcoming general elections, basing her campaign on a platform of saying no to top-up fees. Clarke, who was himself NUS National President from 1975-77, won his seat by less than 9000 votes and would face a fierce challenge from Fletcher, who attended the LSE SU's Union General Meeting last week, as the constituency includes the University of East Anglia and its several thousand students.

Strategic degrees

Education Secretary Charles Clarke, according to The Times newspaper, published a list of university courses he considered to be of 'national strategic importance' and presented it to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). The list includes a protected list of courses to do with science, technology, engineering and mathematics, considered to be essential to the country's productivity. Asian languages such as Mandarin and Japanese are also on the list as they are necessary for 'business and trade purposes'.

Arrest in library

Police were called to the Library last week in order to arrest and remove a former LSE student. According to LSE students in the Library at the time the unknown individual screamed obscenities over the railings and accused the LSE of being a racist institution for having only awarded him a 2:1 in his degree. As a result he was now on antidepressants, he yelled at the Library. The same individual was also said also to have assaulted promoters for the LSE SU Mexican society. Six Police came to the scene in order to restrain and remove the individual.

Get Carter: crazed karaoke compere threatens sabb

Simon Chignell

A dispute over payment for karaoke equipment has led to threats being made against LSE Students' Union (SU) Treasurer Gareth Carter and the Three Tuns bar.

The SU has hired out the company Karaoke Gold for karaoke nights for the last seven years.

However the week in question was beset with problems as most essential pieces of equipment did not work for the event.

Despite the failure of the equipment, and subsequent failure of the karaoke event with only one full song being sung, the SU resolved to pay half of the £110 fee to Andrew Goldsmith, the organiser and owner of Karaoke Gold.

Goldsmith, however, invoiced the Union for the full rate.

Returning the following week, Goldsmith reputedly demanded Carter's mobile phone number from the audience.

Goldsmith, better known as 'Andy Gold' was said to have told those seated in the Tuns that there

would be no karaoke until somebody gave him Carter's number.

Unable to get through to Carter, Goldsmith left an abusive voicemail message on Carter's phone, demanding a full payment for his services.

He told Carter that he would never be coming back to the LSE, though he threatened: "I will get my f***ing cousins and uncles out and we will come round there and extract the f***ing money from the bar" if he was not paid soon.

As a result of the aggressive message and abrasive behaviour in the Tuns, Goldsmith was sacked by the Union.

Carter expressed no concern over his threat and emphasised that should Goldsmith turn up again at the LSE in order to attempt to intimidate bar staff or students, security would "deal with him as they would with any other random thug."

Carter confirmed that the SU was looking to finalise a new contract with a different karaoke company.

No British friends?

Adrian Li

Almost two thirds of overseas students studying in the UK have very few or no British friends, according to survey published last week.

Most instead choose to make friends with people from their own country, or other international students, according to the results of a poll of 5,000 overseas students appearing in *The Guardian* newspaper last week.

Will Macfarlane, the LSE SU General Secretary commented, "a lot of our students take the one-year postgraduate [courses] which are very intensive and don't guarantee accommodation either, which can make socialising difficult."

"I think we can do things to improve it, providing a cultural shift in university activities away from the drinking cultures, to providing more activities for more groups."

The report also claimed that overseas students found the boozy culture on campuses alienating and probably felt uncomfortable and unfamiliar with a 'pub-centred' social life because

of cultural and religious differences.

It was also speculated that overseas students were dedicating their lives to their studies rather than their social lives.

LSE SU International Students' Officer, Salah Mattoo was more critical of the findings of the survey however. Speaking to *The Beaver* he said "Every student has the liberty to do what he or she wants to. That is, they can socialise with anyone they want to. I think a survey does not tell us anything. Correlations are not tantamount to truth."

The LSE is recognized for its diverse student population, with 62 percent of students hailing from outside the UK, from more than 120 different countries.

Yuri Saito, a second year BSc International Relations student from Japan said, "I do have more international friends than British friends. It's nothing to do with discrimination or racism as such, but a difference in perceived lifestyle. Anywhere in the world, I think you will find that people will find most comfortable with those who share similar backgrounds, values and lifestyles."

Briefing

Bad spelling marrs
News section

The News section of *The Beaver* was hit by embarrassment this week after a further series of mistakes ruined the otherwise excellent paper. Words including 'mar', 'honorary' and 'it' were all spelt incorrectly.

News pages 98, 99

Churchill bombs
Curds

LSE Honorary Vice-President Winston Churchill has ordered the systematic gas fumigation of all LSE catering facilities after it was alleged that the cheese sold in its catering facilities was past its sell by date. C&S originally ruled the removal of the cheese unconstitutional but have bowed to political pressure and reversed their decision.

News pages 96, 97

Library to close

The School has announced that the BLPEs is to close because, in the words of the Chief Librarian, "we just couldn't get it right." The decision was made after several meetings of the Library's non-users committee, the Disinformation Services Department (DSS). Students reported they were unable to do research due to the depository's new four-minute loan period of all material not otherwise hidden in the black hole of the vortex.

News pages 55, 56, 57

blink Approach

Privatise my sex life argues a right-wing postgrad in this week's award-winning blink section. Also in blink this week, we challenge the overwhelming and stifling intellectual hegemony of the human rights discourse, concluding that international conventions for protecting people against murder, rape, and torture are a ridiculous and utopian concept.

blink pages 67, 68, 77

SU to disaffiliate from School

Mehk Power

In a shock move, the LSE Students' Union has announced it will be moving to disaffiliate from the School.

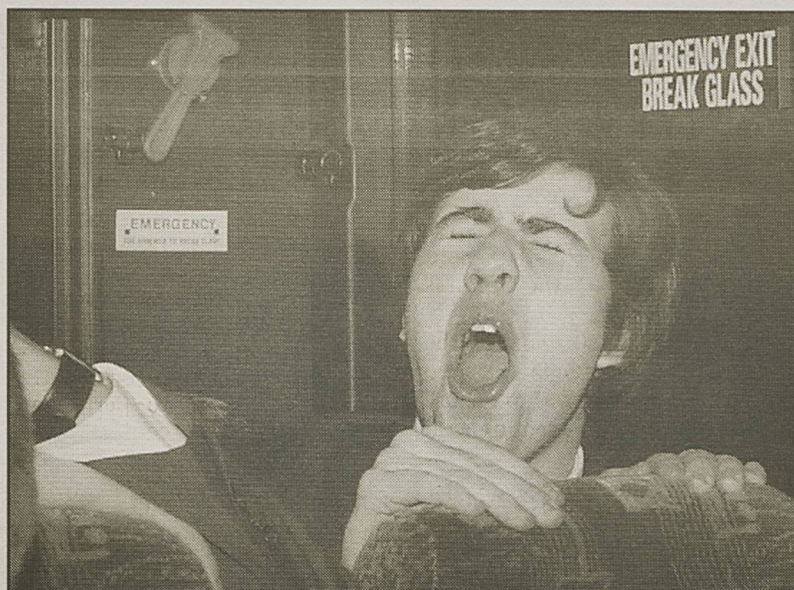
After a campaign led by the well known and poorly regarded James Eyton, who often claims Viking heritage, and Matthew Sinclair, Badger Managing Editor, students overwhelming voted in favour of the SU disaffiliating from the School.

Speaking to *The Beaver*, Eton said "Students have come to the proper realisation that the School no longer represents a body that we, as decent students, should be associated with. It's a dirty, filthy, and sullied institution, quite innappropriate for LSE students."

Elaborating on the theme of LSE being unsuited to itself, Matthew Bodger claimed to be proud to have led such an historic vote. "Blair took until in his forties until he started smashing higher education institutions, I'm only 21", said the thrilled disease spreader.

The vote was unusual in the unity it fostered amongst LSE hacktavists, from the left and right.

Matthew Ferret, generally regarded to be the power house of the left, said "there is broad consensus on the uncontroversial issue that students would be better off being associated with a more progressive organisation."



James Eton, President of the Scandinavian Society, gives his thoughts on the French at the Entente Cordiale celebrations.

He added on a wistful note, "I hear SOAS are looking for additional departments, they're not reactionary at all."

Speaking from the right, Daniel Inmate, said "LSE students are so much better than their School, they should affiliate to something who shares their objectives and aspirations."

When asked for an example of such an organisation, with a gleam of 1979 in his eye he replied "the Tory party would be an obvious start" prompting fears that the unity over the vote would be short lived.

Uproar has surrounded a last-minute effort by Commissars &

Soviet Committee (C&S) Chair Eleanor "on balance good for China" Zedong, to have the decision ruled unconstitutional on the spurrellios ground that the SU's non-affiliation to the School would vitiate the purpose of its existence.

Speaking to *The Beaver*, the C&S chair saw no irregularity in taking a stand against the clearly expressed will of the student body, pointing to broad support from leading figures such as Vladimir Unkovski-Illych and Anna Proto-Communist.

continued on page 67
Editorial Comment, page 88

Passfield fire: bin burned to death

SWSSam Jones

Champagne Socialist

In a tragedy of unrivalled precedence, a third Passfield bin was, last night, burned horribly to death. A cigarette butt was arrested at the scene, but released without charge.

189 of Passfield's 192 residents were also killed in the tragedy. Passfield returning officer and fairy godmother Jimmy Tam, future queen Simon Bottomly and curiously named Fynn Prager (also returning officer) were the only survivors.

The bin, which contained a

highly volatile mix of uncounted ballot papers and political ambition, was rushed to hospital and treated with soapy water. After 24 hours of plastic surgery, the bin was declared dead.

Tam's hopes at re-election, alas, remained un-scorched.

Fire-fighters, arriving at the scene reported that not a single fire alarm had gone off on account of Passfield election hustings held downstairs. Quite why remains unclear, though one non-existent Passfield insider/fire chief speculated that Bottomly was to blame.

The doors to the bar, in which

the 189 incinerated residents gathered for the hustings, were mysteriously found to have been tied shut with tinsel and other camp Christmas regalia.

Fighting their way through the construction debris, firefighters eventually made it to the site of the fire. Deploying "Fallujah" tactics, the firefighters were able to ensure that nobody survived, though the fire was put out.

Tam told *The Beaver* he had nothing to do with the purge of Passfield's "false voters". Bottomly remained less focused, and refused to comment, though his body language spoke volumes.

The Beaver Postbag

Dear Sir,

In case my point was missed in my previous letters (*Beavers passim inumeratum*) I would like to clarify once again the position of myself, the director residential facilities services, halls, hotels, and firealarms in relation to every story covered in *The Beaver* this year with so much as a tangential relation to my department.

The Beaver has once again completely exaggerated out of all proportion the totality of the incident.

I think you'll find, and the SU Residence Officer will back me up on this one that I am, as always beyond reproach, with regard to every issue raised by *The Beaver*

about my department (cont pages 94,95,96,97,98 and 99)

Yours,
David Tymms
Director of Truth and Information Services

Dear Sir,

I find Daniel Freedman's column to be offensive.

Yours ever,
Farhan Islam
LSE SU Anti-Racism Officer

Dear Sir,

I feel I should voice my intense disapproval at Sir Howard Davies' downing of three pints of snakebite and a litre bottle of Asda own-brand vodka at last week's Barrel.

I, of course, enjoy a good shot of Bacardi as much as anyone but I feel that this obvious pre-election AU campaigning is more than a step too far. If the re-branded "Howie D" does indeed intend to run for Gen Sec he would be better suited to concentrating on his current, albeit less-senior, position of the "Director of the LSE" rather than shamelessly attempting to woo potential voters at such events.

If my membership of the fabulous Islamic Society, the absolutely super German Society, the LSE BNP and the Women in Business Society has taught me anything it is that students only vote for candidates who have firmly held beliefs which they would never

swing from just to curry favour with voters.

As you all at *The Beaver* should know, I have no idea what my plans for next year are, except to say if I were to serve my fellow students further by becoming a Sabb next year, it is possible that the world economy would collapse and many small children would die, and as such, I am undecided on any potential candidacy.

Besides that, I am totally focused on my role as SU General Halls Secretary, and believe others should stop being so curious about such things.

Yours wonderfully,
Rishi ;-)

The Beaver

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If you have written three or more articles for *The Beaver* and your name does not appear in the Collective, please email thebeaver@lse.ac.uk and you will be added to the list in next week's paper.

The Beaver is available in alternative formats.

The Beaver Comment

Atlas carries SU debt

The closure of the Atlas Bar at Great Dover Street is, though a sad event that sees the only Union-run bar in halls close at the end of the calendar year, a necessary one at a time when the Union is not in the best of financial shape.

While the Students' Union's role is to provide all students at the LSE with a plethora services at affordable prices, it must also do everything possible to at least break even on these ventures to ensure their long-term viability. The Atlas Bar, going on the Union's financial projections, was not a viable long-term venture.

With belt-tightening necessary throughout the SU, a bar that was projected to lose approximately £27,000 in the current financial year was simply unsustainable. According to SU Treasurer Gareth Carter, for every pound that the bar made, the Union lost £1.62. Sometimes, the numbers speak for themselves.

The unfortunate consequences of the decision made by the SU's Administration and Staffing Committee are that Great Dover Street no longer has any communal areas, except for a TV room with a capacity of twelve, in a hall with 450 residents. For the Great Dover Street committee to now have to schedule hall parties in pubs or bars ruins the atmosphere for students who choose to live in halls of residence.

Surely it is possible to, no doubt at some cost, install shutters on the actual bar to keep the common areas open?

It is the least the Union can do for a Hall committee that has worked incredibly hard to advertise the Atlas bar, put forth proposals to keep it open, argue passionately against its closure and fight for the welfare of the Great Dover Street students.

This year has seen *The Beaver* report on numerous incidents to do with the LSE's long-term planning for halls such as the ones at Drury Lane and Crispin Street, which involves constructing new high-priced halls that have little or no communal areas so that extra rooms can be installed.

With that in mind, to see the substantial common area at Great Dover Street closed off to its residents is something the Union must take responsibility for.

Though the projected financial losses may be great to keep the bar running for the entire year and will hurt the bottom line, the non-fiscal losses of students missing out on the total hall experience will be much longer lasting.

Absurd visa charges

While most international students have come to grips with the fact that the tuition fees and living costs associated with going to university in this country are incredibly high, being charged £500 for something so elemental as having a visa renewed is nothing short of absurd.

The stereotype that international students bleed money and all live in expensive accommodation and can afford any unforeseen expense is one that must soon be quashed. The fact is, there are many international students at the LSE who live their lives on the fringe - many work part-time within the School and others seek employment in and around London. Several of them are on some form of student support, either by way of a loan or a scholarship.

An extra £500 just to renew a document that gives them the right to live in this country is unfair on them and sends a negative signal to any prospective international students; it is one more hurdle among many for students who wish to study in the UK and at institutions such as the LSE. £500 in a foreign currency, especially for students from developing countries, is an incredibly steep price to pay for the right to an education.

Our university is particularly affected by the hike in visa renewal charges, with our large numbers of non-UK/EU students who must apply for visas to study here.

Both the Union and the School have done a commendable job in voicing the concerns of international students, and have done so since the issue of increased visa charges was first raised a year ago when the Home Office first made the decision to charge up to £250 for visa renewal.

The Home Office, however, has shown no signs in the past of giving them any credence. Why would it do so now?

Apology

The Beaver would like to apologise for the language used in the blink article titled 'Talking 'bout our education' published in Issue 610 which contained offensive words in Hokkien.

Correction

The Beaver would like to make the following correction: the caption on the front page of Issue 610 of *The Beaver* should have read, "NUS National President Kat Fletcher faces the UGM."

Letters to the Editor

The Beaver offers all readers the right to reply to anything that appears in the paper. Letters should be sent to thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk, and should be no longer than 250 words. Letters may be edited prior to publication. The deadline for submission is 3pm on the Sunday prior to publication.

Dear Sir,

I have read the article from Kheng Soon Lim and am disappointed that *The Beaver* had allowed the writer to hijack the paper with his narrow-minded and stereotypical view of the Chinese and Indian population in LSE. The writer's "holier-than-thou" attitude and biased view without offering any constructive arguments serves to perpetuate the general perception that Chinese people have 1) no life and 2) no non-Chinese friends.

Besides being hardworking and talented, Singaporeans possess political awareness and ambition that one envies and admires. Most of the Singaporeans I know excel not just in academics, but also in sports and making friends with other nationalities, necessary due to their geopolitical condition, rendering the writer's conclusion unwarranted.

Hong Kong may be influenced by Far Eastern fashion, but does that make its followers inferior to any of the American-influenced fashions adopted by far too many LSE students? Personally, I don't think anyone should give two hoots about what other people think about their dress sense.

I am a Chinese Malaysian, and proud to be one. Malaysians are brought up to live harmoniously with different races and it is not uncommon to find one with many friends of differing race and nationality.

Turning to yet another misconception, it is narrow-minded and patently fallacious to assert that there are two types of student at the LSE. Such spoutings are made in blind disregard of the inevitable consequences of our celebrated diverse student population, both nationality and character-wise. Further, an interest in 'school politics, national politics and world affairs' is not a necessary prerequisite to being an active and participating student. Such assertions merely serve to demonstrate either an extraordinarily crude attempt at sensationalism, or just the extended blatherings of an individual unbalanced by a proverbial chip on his shoulder.

Fortunately, Kheng Lim did propose some commendable issues of consideration, but unfortunately these were drowned out by the incessant bashing of different nationalities. The Chinese have come a long way, emerging from poverty status in just one generation. Most come to the UK with a single-minded desire to succeed and advance through education, improve their English and experience Western culture. I hope the writer shall reflect deeply upon the fact that many do not have the same privileges as him, respect them for who they are and how they choose to conduct their life, and not lecture them about education.

Tey Chun Kee

Dear Sir,

Recent events in Passfield and decisions taken on the future of the GDS Atlas bar have shown that it must be a priority for the position of Halls of Residence

Committees relative to the Students' Union to be clarified.

There are a number of areas where the SU should not be allowed to interfere with Hall Committees which are independently-funded bodies specifically in existence to serve their own residents and not other LSE students.

Accordingly, Hall Committees must be allowed to set their own priorities, represent their own members specific needs, and write and amend their own constitutions and governing documents. This independence must be maintained especially in the process of hall committee elections. When possible, these responsibilities would surely be best-served passing to administrative staff who are independent of any student politics. As a hall president, my committee and I have overseen an election of a Committee member already this term and although it was a fair and well-conducted election, I believe that this situation could be improved upon.

The SU must continue to move to co-ordinate more between halls, rather than impose its own structures upon them. It is my belief that the atmosphere and localised politics of our halls of residence enable those who may typically stay in the background to become involved and make a difference to their fellow students. This good-humoured corridor politics should stay in control of the only people it is relevant to: residents.

Simon Chignell
Rosebery Hall Society Committee
President

Dear Sir,

Instead of focusing your editing on the *BeaverSports* section, why not turn your attention to Daniel Freedman's 'The Right Approach'. Instead of removing swearwords, remove conspiracy theories. Instead of toning down sexual content, remove his constant barrage of Zionist propaganda. Just cut the damn thing.

Expressing opinions is all good and well, but to dedicate a weekly section of *The Beaver* to a one-sided rant about the plight of Israel in face of its 'terrorist' opponents is pushing it. Until Mr Freedman has something useful to offer in his writing (perhaps some historical accuracy?), I suggest he be confined to the occasional UGM appearance where he's open to debate and lacks the protection of his narrow, self-obsessed column.

Alex Habachi

Dear Sir,

So according to your law correspondent, it would seem that the Iraqi 'insurgents' are war criminals who have forfeited their rights under the Geneva Convention. I wonder what this must make the American troops, or does killing, raping and torturing innocent Iraqi civilians no longer fall under the Geneva Convention?

Atif Ali

Dear Sir,

I was appalled by Daniel Freedman's column last week implying that the well-known incident of Israelis shooting the 12 years old Al-Durra was a "made-for-tv set-up". France2, the channel that recorded the incident is currently taking legal action in response to the vicious defamation campaign going on for the last 4 years.

May I remind Mr. Freedman that Mohammed was buried in Gaza along side an ambulance driver that rushed to rescue him. A second ambulance driver was lucky to survive his wounds.

According to Amnesty International (Oct 2004), the Israeli army carried out "unlawful, as willful, killings" of more than 550 Palestinian children since September 2000.

Last week, the *Washington Post* reported the disturbing story of killing a 13 years old Palestinian girl. The shocking transcript of the Israeli military radio transmission said: "She's running defensively.. a girl of about 10.. scared to death". Four minutes later, troops opened fire on her. An Israeli captain walked to the spot and fired two bullets into her head. He started to walk away, but pivoted, set his rifle on automatic and emptied his magazine into the girl's body, saying into the radio: "...even if it's a 3-year-old, you have to kill him. Over."

I have no doubt that if this incident was caught on camera, someone would try to dispute it too for the next 4 years.

With such prejudiced reporting, I can foresee a bright future for Mr. Freedman. After all Fox news is hiring.

Fadi Salem

Dear Sir,

In response to Mr. Freedman's contention in last weeks issue of *The Beaver* that I have been "selective in which minority groups [I am] concerned about" as Anti-Racism Officer, I would like to point out some of the things that I have been doing since my election to the Students' Union last year.

The main focus of the campaigns that I have been involved in has been around fighting the BNP. I'm sure Mr. Freedman is well aware that the BNP are a threat to all racial and religious minorities in the UK.

The Respect Not Racism Week tried to create an awareness of these dangers, while also celebrating diversity and multiculturalism of LSE, especially through the International Food Fair, to which all societies were repeatedly invited. I must thank all the Exec Committee for all their help and support; the week would not have been possible without them.

Perhaps Mr. Freedman can advise me on some other measures that he feels should be taken to help equality and diversity on campus, or on some of the successful policies that he enacted as Equal Opportunities Officer last year.

Farhan Islam
LSE SU Anti-Racism Officer

Features

Features Correspondent: Steve Gummer

blink

Editors: Tracy Alloway &
James Upsher

Features

Santa Claus uncovered

"...soft drink capitalists did not expect a second result: the establishment of Santa Claus..."

pg. 8

It ain't what you do it's the way that you do it!

"Should Houghton Street be made the target of such campaigns?"

pg.9

Point and counterpoint: digital music

pg.10-11

Law

Does the proposed EU constitution have the X-factor?

"we ask whether the draft constitutional treaty will appeal to EU citizens and will strengthen the EU."

pg. 12-13

International

Country Fact File : Iran

pg. 14

Business

Financing development: why we need a global tax

"It is not charity – it is an economic necessity."

pg. 15

Harry Potter and the Disappearing Dollar

"...we have a really big problem Harry and only you can help! The dollar has disappeared and we need you to find it!"

pg. 16

Politics

The Politics of Denial

"...an acknowledgement by Israel of past crimes is an essential first step towards any form of coexistence or reconciliation."

pg. 17

The people and their Viktor(s)

"The situation in the Ukraine can lead to a demonstration effect..."

pg. 18



Santa Claus uncovered

Arthur Krebbers explores the true origins of Santa Clause, by looking at the legend of Saint Nicholas.

He is big, fat and jolly. He wears a red costume and never shaves his long beard. His arrival is like a second birthday for the children. He is truly their biggest friend. They like him for his generosity and grand collection of presents. No one knows what he is up to between January and November. But they do know something: he will be back in December, regardless of his state of health, the weather or the economy...

Of course, there can be only one person to whom I am referring to. And I know you are all waiting to shout out his name; Saint Nicholas! What? Yes! The good ol' friendly Saint Nicholas. Who is this holy guy, whom many of you (excluding possibly some Catholics) are probably unfamiliar with? Well, let me tell you this. He is the true Father Christmas. Santa Claus is merely his clone. This deserves some explanation, doesn't it? Let me start by outlining the life of Saint Nicholas.

He was born during the third century, the nephew of the Archbishop of Myra (present day Turkey). Like many of us, he had rich parents. Unlike many of us, however, he did not welcome his rich heritage. Rather, he spent his life giving away everything which was not absolutely necessary for his survival. Such irresponsible behaviour meant there was really only one employer left for him: God. Thus, Nicolas became a priest.

And not just some ordinary priest. Oh no, he also 'did' a few miracles besides the usual communion. Some say he resurrected a drowned sailor who fell from a mast during his voyage. Others say he healed almost a hundred persons in Alexandria during a 'stopover' in Egypt.

And if you don't believe me, ask any other Saint about his colleague Nicholas. Saint Peter Damian, for example, called Mr Nicolas "the glory of young men, the honor of the elderly, the splendor of priests and the light of Pontiffs." Not bad, eh? I'm absolutely confident such words of praise

would make you watch 'St Nicolas - The movie' if ever released.

That St Nicolas sounds like a very special person, doesn't he? He certainly deserves his holy stature. Now, here comes the interesting part. The stories about St Nicolas have made him the patron Saint of children. After his death, his legend gradually spread across Europe, including The Netherlands. In this (beautiful) country, people started celebrating St Nicolas on his remembrance day, the 6th of December. This tradition lasted throughout the Middle Ages and even survived the reformation. Many Protestants have tried to abolish the festival, but unsuccessfully. Many people kept celebrating St Nicolas and the businesses weren't complaining. This is because part of the St Nicholas tradition involves giving presents (supposedly from the saint himself) to children. This is what good ol' Nicholas did when he saved three girls from prostitution by throwing

"He is the true Father Christmas. Santa Claus is merely his clone."

sacks of gold in their room, in order to pay for their dowry.

So the Orthodox Protestants, realising their fight was an uphill struggle, tried to make the most of this 'barbaric' festival. They used the tradition to stimulate family values and good traits amongst the young generation. It became common doctrine that St Nicholas only gave presents to good children. Those who had been naughty would be punished. Even the schools starting using St Nicholas to scare students (he would probably be a great director of the LSE).

Over the 20th Century, several other elements have been added to the festival of St Nicholas. In Europe we now give presents on the night before his remembrance day, on the 5th of December. Hard-working St Nicholas has also been given a score of servants to help him buy and pack all the presents. Interestingly enough, these servants are all pitch black. (I don't know who made this up, but I suspect some British National Party-related person...) They are called 'Black Petes' (or 'zwarte pieten' in Dutch) and are intensely trained before allowed to work for the Saint. Being liberally minded, they are also specialised in certain jobs. This means there are all kinds of petes: a horse-pete (who takes care of St Nicholas' horse), a present-pete (who buys presents), and a clumsy-pete (what task he is assigned I am not quite sure).

Over the years another silly Dutchman decided to change St Nicholas' home country. He no longer lives in his homeland of Turkey anymore, but has moved to Spain (either he joined the Arabs and Mohammed around 600 AD or he fled after the fall of the Ottoman empire - I don't know). Finally, Nicholas travels either by horse or by steamboat and comes to Holland every year around the 15th of November.

Now time for the final part of the jigsaw. What is the relationship between old friendly person number one (St Nicholas) and old friendly person number two (Santa Claus)?

As the Yanks among you will know, New York was originally called 'New Amsterdam' and was founded by Dutch settlers. These emigrants brought with them their tradition of St Nicholas. Gradually, in the 19th Century, this festival developed and got mixed up with the Eastern European tradition of receiving gifts from Jesus around Christmas. There wasn't a definite universal merging of the two personages until Coca Cola introduced an advertising campaign with drawings of Santa Clause as we know him today. The motive behind this campaign was to boost sales of cola in the Winter. These soft drink capitalists did not expect a second result: the establishment of Santa Claus as we now know him today.

blink management

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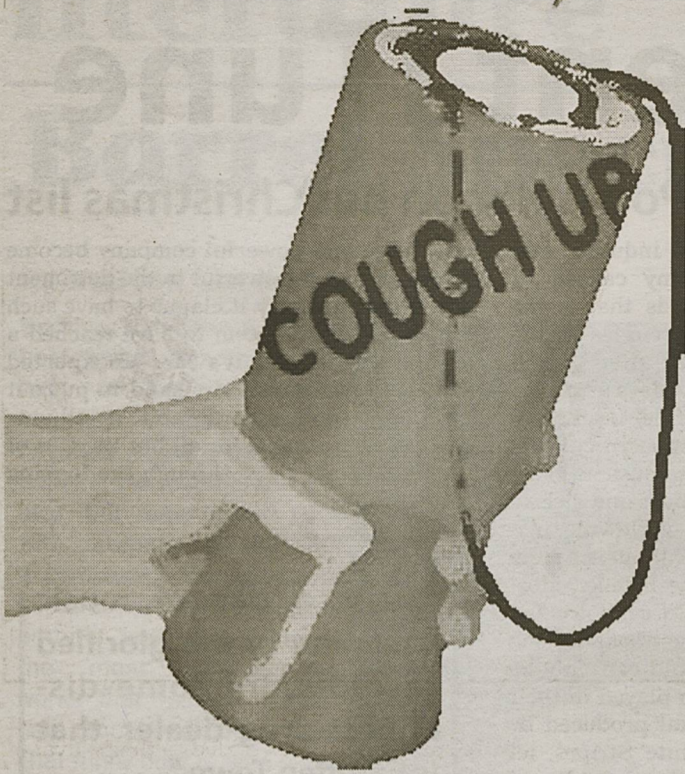
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Features

Features Correspondent: Steve Gummer



It ain't what you do it's the way that you do it!

Features correspondent *Steve Gummer* investigates the yellow-clad charity workers operating on Houghton Street.

"I already donate." I must have said it over ten times last week as an excuse to escape a conversation with one of the charity workers seeking to collect debit details on behalf of Amnesty International. It is normally hard enough to wander to class on Houghton Street, but now we have a new barrier to block our paths. Don't get me wrong; I can avoid making eye-contact with the best of them, but when I can't look left for fear of the union groups or right for fear of being asked to make a charitable donation, the only place left is at the floor. Whilst this is novel at first, it rapidly loses its appeal as this reporter trips over in public yet again. And who should help you up? Why, the trusty yellow arm of a friendly chap in an Amnesty jacket. As I dust myself off and recover from my humiliation the question arrives hammering at my bruised ego: "Could I talk to you about making a donation?" It is at this point that you get fed up, you have one bruise too many.

Don't get me wrong, I consider myself as charitable as the next guy but this week has made me strongly consider changing sides. I applaud all who work for charitable groups and spend their time helping those in need but the continual repetition of being told the same information over again, as well as the hostile manner in which my attention is sometimes acquired has just been too much. Described by Student Union General Secretary, Will McFarlane as "a bit overaggressive" and by many others as "a nuisance," popular opinion reflects that this week's charitable bombardment has gone too far. Should Houghton Street be made the target of such campaigns? Or should the streets of our campus be restricted to our campaigns only?

It is important to stress that the workers on our streets this week do not strictly work for Amnesty International. They work for an agency called Dialogue Direct which collects money for 10 different charitable organisations. This point was apparent when I spoke to Chris Grollman, the Co-Chair of the SU's Amnesty International Society: "It isn't Amnesty International who has been telling these people to come to Houghton Street."

There is nothing peculiar about this, in fact the use of charitable agencies is very common in London, for many people though, this has not been the problem.

More particularly, it has been the conduct of the 'Dialoguers' that has caused problems this week. At points many have considered them overly forceful and whilst there have been no specific complaints

about their conduct, some claim that they have placed more pressure on foreign students, who, with their weaker grasp of the English language, have found it much more difficult to say no. Furthermore, it has been questioned whether our high foreign student population has been the reason for their work in the area. After all, London has many more populated and more affluent areas than Houghton Street, are students just easier to intimidate than the average Oxford Street shopper or the stereotypical businessperson rushing off to a meeting?

"...are students just easier to intimidate than the average Oxford Street shopper or the stereotypical businessperson rushing off to a meeting?"

While questioning Sarah McMillan, head of Dialogue Direct's dealings with Amnesty International I was told that where her group operates "is largely governed by the local authorities or owners of 'private sites' which grant [them] permission to fundraise within their areas." She further explained that: "It may well be the case that students and young people are more responsive to the causes we represent."

This point is certainly reasonable; it is entirely possible that the LSE student body represents a more conscientious target audience for charitable groups. However if this is the case why can't large charitable organisations focus on using internal members of the LSE or at least work with groups such as the SU's Amnesty International Society?

Another problem discussed has been simply about location. It is hard enough to sprint down Houghton Street, frantically trying to attend the class that started 10 minutes ago, without being stopped three times along the way. One unnamed source described his experience and claimed they "just don't get the message." He explained how he had been asked to donate and tried to use the excuse "I don't have my bank details on me." Following this, one of the 'dialoguers' offered him a mobile phone with which to call his bank and discover

his details. In an attempt to further his excuse he then protested that he didn't know the number of his bank. The response to this was the production of a list with all the local banks' numbers printed on it.

However it would not be fair to portray this as a technique of just Dialogue Direct. Many Charity fundraisers use it when asking for donations on the streets. It may even be considered helpful behaviour. The problem is quite simply the length of time it takes for a student to escape the clutches of an average 'dialoguer' when trying to get around the campus.

A further complaint concerns the strategy of 'dialoguers' on Houghton Street, this reporter asked two of them the same question concerning their strategy: "Who is your target audience?"

Answer 1: "It's not about harassing people, it's about letting people who already have donating on their to-do list get it out of the way."

Answer 2: "It's about encouraging and attracting totally new members and creating an awareness of Amnesty International where there was none before."

Hmmm... These two ideas don't exactly correspond do they? However to judge these workers in this way seems too harsh as it is likely that they will all have different motives and goals when conducting themselves in the workplace. Indeed another passer-by claimed that: "They told me a lot about Amnesty International and didn't mention money once."

Perhaps we are being too harsh. Is it hypocritical to agree with a cause and then say it is a great plan, just don't bother me with it? Amnesty does raise a great deal of money and support for its causes each year, as well as for the worthy causes of others. With this in mind should we perhaps concur far more with Chris Grollman who explained: "It is logically in the charities' interests to try to raise money wherever they can; they are having success in signing people up in this street."

Yet whether advertent or not, one does wonder about the location of such a group at the LSE. Is the student body being grilled for money as it is unlikely they will say no or are these groups genuinely interested in recruiting the next generation of 'dialoguers'? Are we reluctant to be reminded that there is a continual need to help others less fortunate than ourselves? Or are we simply suggesting that the timing for such debate is wrong when we are sprinting down Houghton Street in a vain attempt to attend class on time?

Musings Asian bird flu

Matthew Sinclair

It's not really such a small world; there's plenty of space to hide. After years of searching and two wars the relevant authorities have admitted that Bin Laden's trail has gone cold. This causes something of a problem, at \$569,000 per Tomahawk cruise missile such wars are expensive; also people die. When Al Qaeda's leading lights gave their opponents the slip at Tora Bora and then disappeared off into a Pakistani nowhere it made such expenditures seem somewhat imprudent. Wasteful.

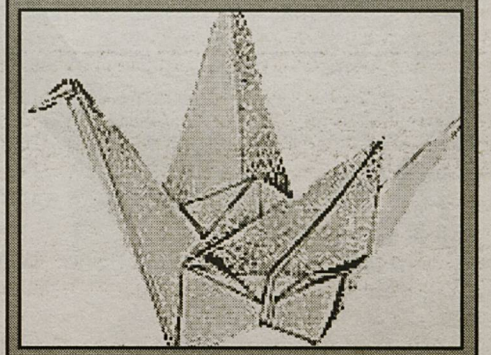
If our American cousins aren't finding much success with their current explosive mix of bombs and Bob Hope perhaps new strategies are required. The Dutch concoction of tolerance and marijuana seemed to be working until someone went and made the modern version of "Monty Python's Life of Brian" and, as part of a witty rejoinder, was gutted like a fish. Another failure.

The Thais have chosen another path. This week the Thai nation went on a paper crane binge. Almost one hundred million paper cranes were dropped onto Southern Thailand and its Muslim Malay population recently after a nationwide campaign to create the necessary origami. It is hoped that the 'peace birds' will send a message of hope to the areas of the country still under martial law. With 550 people dead from militant attacks and security reprisals perhaps the message might be taken slightly differently; "if this crane were a bomb you'd be dead by now."

Should militant attacks continue then the crane initiative could become a pretext for greater repression from the security services; "they refused our offers of origami, swines - best start shooting people".

Should the Thai technique prove successful then instead of our current rush to find Arabic speakers and hostage negotiators we could promote paper-folding to the national curriculum. Even if presenting paper cranes fails to placate our enemies teaching the slow and precise art of origami might calm down the youth somewhat. Far better than teaching them media studies and then hoping they can snare sufficient local wildlife to keep themselves alive through the winter; Stevenage is devoid of cats and suspiciously free of homeless people.

Things can't really get a lot worse. Currently the British response to terrorism consists of sending out helpful material letting us all know just how to hide under the stairs in the event of a biological attack, this was felt to be slightly more helpful than the, unpleasantly realistic, "Scream. You're all going to die." We can learn from the Asians and their magnificent paper avian creations.



Point and Counterpoint

Singing to a different iTune

Sarah Taylor tackles the fashionistas and explains why the iPod is not on her Christmas list

At the best of times, let alone the morning after an unprintable night out, it's nigh on impossible to face the outside world in all its sickening glory, so drowning out reality has become something of a profitable market. Thus, the personal stereo has become an essential for any self respecting music fan and we're a long way from the simpler times of the tape Walkman. The discman is falling into disuse because of its tendency to skip and bulky inconvenience. My current machine of choice is a minidisc recorder, which can fit four albums onto a disc the size of a credit card, has valiantly survived 18 months of battering in the bottom of my bag and doesn't need recharging every few hours.

These are but relics, however. With the iPod revolution in full swing the number of white headphones attached to swaggering idiots suggests that not only are we well and truly into the much prophesied digital age, but also that with its inception music lovers have become perfectly happy – nay, eager – to wear the equivalent of a “Do mug me, I'm carrying a £250 piece of machinery” sign in deepest Shoreditch.

But I digress. My loathing of those white headphones is but a minor factor in my hatred of the iPod. As is the fact that with puny playback and a flimsy mechanism, it is a vastly overrated piece of technology. I can even overlook the fact that the iPod's competitor, the Creative Zen Touch has the same hard-drive space, better playback time, can support WMA and .wav files as well as mp3, and is significantly cheaper.

My main beef with iPod is the old chestnut about downloading killing the music industry. I'm not, however, a solicitor getting wet at the thought of the easy killing of a 12 year old 'pirate.' Indeed, I'm a firm believer that peer-to-peer file sharing is a positive influence on music as a whole, allowing the skint and needy to find chart music and rarities alike on the net; broadening our collections and encouraging us to attend more gigs, as well as using the better programmes as venues to talk serious music with like-minded criminals. With excellent programs on offer through which you can share full albums in minutes, there's no excuse to download three minutes of static from Kazaa.

The main casualty of peer-to-peer file sharing seems to be the single, a medium which based on the charts is aimed mostly

at children and crazy people and I would venture that the £3.99 price tag for one song and two pointless remixes probably isn't helping the slump in sales. By contrast, this year the UK has seen a three percent increase in album sales, making 2004, despite music piracy, the best year for albums in history. Admittedly almost all of the top selling albums are complete tripe, but it's still compelling evidence that giving music away is not necessarily harming these individuals in the way that the whimpering bed-wetters at the British Phonographic Industry would have you believe. As *The NME* pointed out last week, it is a bit much for Pete Waterman, the man responsible for Steps, to accuse *anyone* of “damaging music”.

My problem is actually with the new legal downloading sites. One practical gripe is that they are ludicrously legally complex because of the varying attitudes of record labels concerning the number of downloads, copies and streams you should

prove far greater than any caused by Kazaa. A further problem is that it has become fashionable in some circles to suggest that anything recorded after 1969 is worthless, and albums nowadays are nothing but 2 good songs and 9 filler tracks. The truth is that even in the supposed cultural wilderness of 2004, exciting music is being made by angry, intelligent boys and girls in garages and cheap studios worldwide. It is as true as ever that a good album is a form of communication with the listener. Most excellent albums have some kind of cohesion, a glue which sticks the tracks to each other and to your brain, and can only be properly appreciated when played in their entirety. The best material produced by The Libertines or The White Stripes, let alone The Velvet Underground or David Bowie, most certainly has not hit MTV.

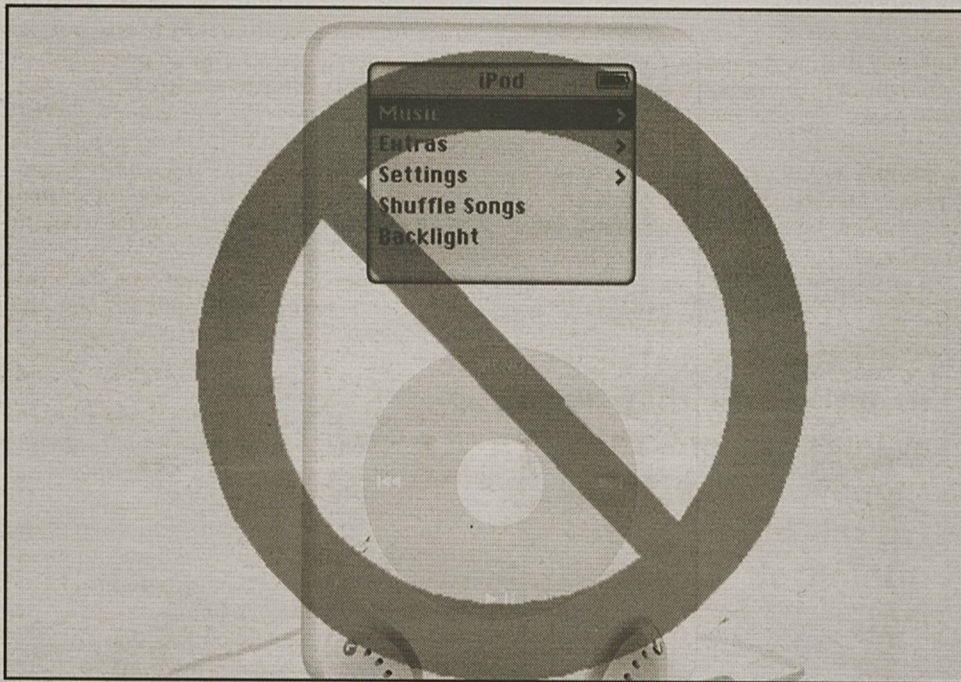
The iPod is the weapon deployed by Apple to kill this. With the ability to make playlists on the machine and the purchas-

very large and powerful company become larger and more powerful to the detriment of the very industry it claims to have such an interest in. We seem to have reached a sad stage where it's an unexpected achievement for an indie band to put out even a second record, and if albums become unprofitable for all but the U2s of the world then we're through the looking glass, people.

“Make a day of music shopping in the glorified record-store-come-dishonest-drug-dealer that is Camden Town.”

It's indefensible when you consider the alternatives. Ignoring file sharing, a 14 track recent album will cost £10 from a decent record store, cheaper than downloading the whole thing from iTunes. Remember: Virgin and HMV are soulless vacuums. Don't encourage them by buying anything in there other than in a dire emergency. Quite apart from anything else, proper record stores are fun. Fopp has a great “suck it and see” returns policy and sexy staff who will gladly advise or chat to you about bands, gigs and what Pete Doherty has been up to lately. Make a day of music shopping in the glorified record-store-come-dishonest-drug-dealer that is Camden Town. For your money you not only get the music free from stupid licensing laws, but you get an actual physical item complete with artwork, lyrics and pretentious rants. Gets you out the house, too.

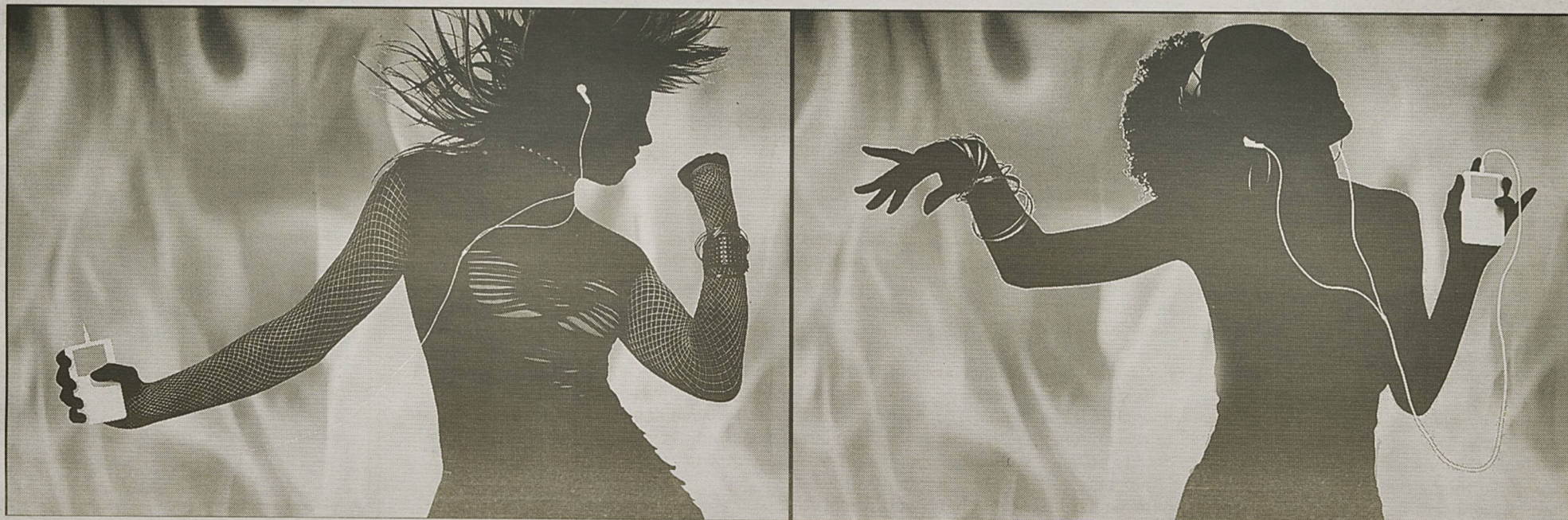
I'm well aware that the iPod will continue to flourish, and perhaps even iron out some of its own glaring kinks. I know that my views on how we should listen to our chosen music, and what that music should be, could be considered snobbish. I certainly hope that I will be proved wrong and that album sales will continue to grow. Furthermore and I'm deeply ashamed to admit this, I accept that even I have come to a point where I need a digital device capable of handling a large amount of music data. I'm going with a Creative though. An indie girl will always back the underdog.



get for your 99p. Moreover, the iPod doesn't actually support files from many of them.

My main hatred, like all irrational ones, is more sentimental. Now that consumers are actually being encouraged to pick and choose which tracks they deem fit to own, swathes of people are downloading just the singles, ignoring the tracks in between which make up the delicate tapestry of the record. This is a development whose nega-

ting of individual tracks without the deterrent threat of legal action, it has become easy to fall into the instant gratification trap, playing only the songs you know well and neglecting the rest of the album. All rather safe and boring, the very things decent music claims to fight against. By buying into the Apple Empire with its alluring colours, caché and enormous advertising budget, we are helping one



Point and Counterpoint

The Apple of my eye

Proud owner *Stacy-Marie Ishmael* defends the iPod

The most traumatic of my recent experiences here at the LSE – more appalling than the sight of a naked rugby fresher dangling through the Brunch Bowl, more dispiriting than the fruitless search for library books during an essay week, more depressing than a 9am class on a freezing Monday morning – was the loss of my iPod.

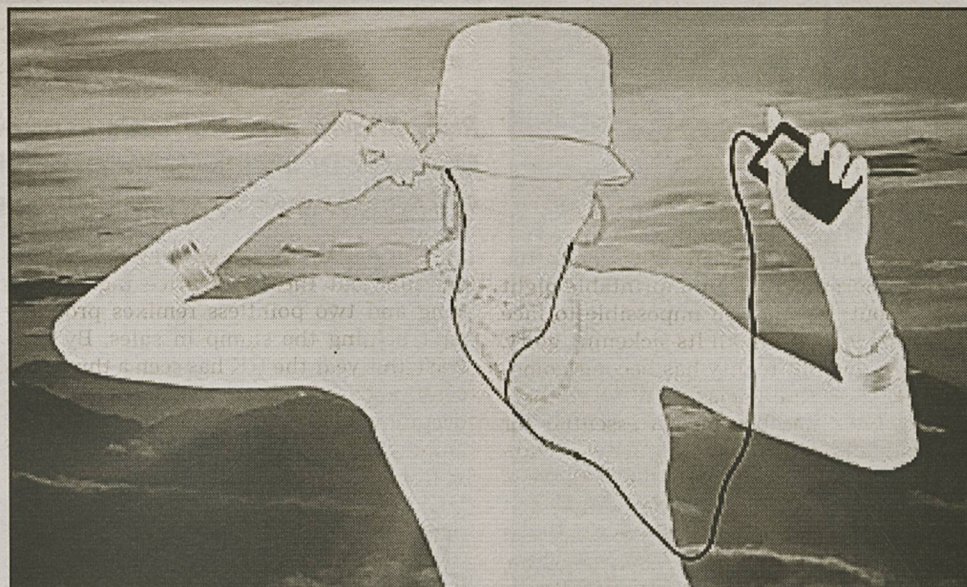
Thirty gigabytes of painstakingly procured, lovingly labelled and carefully categorised music of every conceivable genre, epoch and persuasion: gone, in an instant. In the lonely, music-less weeks that followed, I realised for the first time just how dependant I had become on that ice-white gadget. Nor am I alone in this obsession: by 2006, there will be over 23 million people worldwide sporting those ubiquitous white headphones. The members of this so-called iPod Generation, although disparate demographically, are unified by an abiding love of music and a related willingness to invest ludicrous amounts of time and money on their “Walkman for the 21st Century.”

There is a common (mis)conception that the digital music revolution is leading to the obsolescence of the album format: the end-user is merrily downloading singles at 79p a pop, to the detriment of album sales. There are several reasons why I believe this to be, if not a fallacy, at least an exaggeration. First, people who are actually willing to pay for music from online sources are likely to have extensive record collections as well. In my case, over 80 percent of the

music on my dearly departed iPod was ripped from albums purchased the old fashioned way: in a record store. Furthermore, it would cost approximately £7,900 pounds to fill an iPod to its 10,000 song capacity if one relied solely on purchasing singles online.

It is also interesting to note that on the iTunes Music Store (ITMS), for instance, some albums are only available in their entirety. This is a clear recognition that some albums just cannot be broken up into discrete tracks. Indeed, certain records (such as Nirvana's legendary Unplugged) are cheaper to purchase in their entirety – £7.99 for fourteen tracks. Finally, and sentimentally, the rush of going to Reckless Records and searching through the cluttered racks for that elusive calypso classic, finding it and dashing home to reverently flip through the liner notes is not one that can be matched by adding a digital track to an online shopping cart and clicking ‘buy now.’ No self respecting music addict will deny that.

As for peer-to-peer sharing, the issue is one of quantity vs. quality. While you can find almost anything on Kazaa, for instance, much of it is rubbish. People who regularly drop acronyms like VBR and AAC into their daily conversations, and who can wax poetic on the merits of Ogg versus MP4 are unlikely to source much of their music on Kazaa or similar file-sharing networks. P2P networks can be useful, however – they are quite handy for finding obscure tracks that might not be available



in stores or from other, legal alternatives, and they are particularly good at introducing one to new artists and genres. In 2001, out of the ashes of Napster's demise, a website called Audiogalaxy emerged, phoenix like, and changed my life forever – or at least, for the year before the RIAA shut it down. Audiogalaxy offered an amazingly intelligent ‘if you downloaded these people, you'll love them’ feature alongside its repertoire of digital music. What set Audiogalaxy apart from its peers was the fact that it offered free web space to musicians who wanted to promote their music. The range and quality of the music available for download was unbelievable. My musical horizons widened proportionate to the depletion of my hard drivespace.

Yet, the changes wrought by the rise of digital music have not only affected the way that we obtain music. The ability to

have at one's fingertips any where from four to four hundred albums – as well as the dynamics of shuffle and infinitely customisable playlists – has had a profound effect on listening habits. Owners of digital music players often find themselves listening to songs that they had long neglected, rediscovering old favourites or finally realising, upon the 15th listen, that the Libertines are massively overrated. The daily commute or queuing in Natwest are rendered (almost) bearable by the quality tunes stashed in one's pocket.

Digital music has also, for better or worse, made DJing more accessible to the average Joe or Jane. An iPod (yes, there is a clear bias here), a laptop and some speakers are all that is really needed for a truly legendary house party. Assuming, of course, that one's taste in music is at least as good as one's taste in mp3 players.

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Eyes to the Left



ID Charades

James Caspell

Britain is becoming a police state. The legacy of the Queen's Speech, combined with the plethora of 'anti-Terrorism' legislation already introduced proves that this Government pays scant regard for the concept of freedom which is demanded so fiercely of so-called failed states.

Isn't it us, the 'free' world who are supposed to be bringing peace and democracy to 'uncivilised' countries such as Iraq, albeit by killing off all of the opposition?

Our apparent reluctance to intervene in the illegal Israeli occupation of the Palestinian lands patently refutes any doctrine of moral interventionism.

Instead, it is clear that New Labour has jumped into bed with the politics of fear and continues to pass off its draconian legislation as serving the interests of the public.

ID cards do not protect the public - they protect the establishment by purging dissenting voices in our society. Neither did they prevent terrorist attacks in New York, Madrid or Istanbul - why would they here?

They do however provide a good electioneering tool and waste money that could otherwise be spent on schools, hospitals - or perhaps even another war?

Simultaneously, habeas corpus is being replaced by indefinite detention without trial. The unprecedented Extradition Act passed last year allows the USA to extradite a British subject without any British court hearing. Britain does not have the reverse of this privilege.

Unsurprisingly, the first victim of this miscarriage of historical justice is a British Muslim. Babar Ahmad was cleared in Britain of any illegality, after police beat him whilst forcing him into the Muslim prayer position. He is now to be extradited without trial. Even a racist Conservative such as Winston Churchill saw that 'we can judge a society by the way it treats its prisoners.'

If the Government really wanted to protect the public it would listen to the chief of Interpol, who last week declared our passport controls as 'too weak.' Moreover, it would listen to the concerns of the Arab world; it is not unreasonable to desire the withdrawal of foreign military occupiers from one's home country.

Some complain about a 'nanny state' telling us what to do - but it is a police state that compels us to do it, whilst alienating and persecuting already ostracised groups in our society.

If Labour wants to limit the threat of terrorism, it should consider where it chooses to pitch illegal wars before fighting them. It should listen to the dissenting voices before forcing them to resort to terrorism.

Alas to do this would be to put the interests of the public before the interests of big business and oil companies. Could we ever expect that from a New Labour Government?

Law

Law Correspondent: Alykhan Velshi

Does the proposed EU

Ruby Bhavra asks the LSE's very own Louis Walsh, Sharon Osbourne and Simon Cowell, a.k.a. Dr Damien Chalmers, Dr Imelda Maher and Professor Martin Loughlin, their judgement on the proposed European Union constitution and compares their opinions to those of LSE students.



Dr Damien Chalmers

We caught Dr Chalmers just as he was planning a quiet lunch...

b:Law: What do you think is positive about the draft constitutional treaty?

DC: It will make the EU more coherent, giving greater Parliamentary control over the executive and ensuring accountability. It will also enhance Fundamental rights, which will make negotiations within the EU more visible. Democracy will also be enhanced as the draft treaty will be concentrating on policies on Asylum and Immigration.

b:Law: What do you think is negative about the EU constitution?

DC: It's 'dodgy' in the sense that it is highly contentious. It will increase administration and bureaucracy in the Council. Moreover, the public hate participation in the EU: "Sun run Europe" or "Boris Johnson Council!"

b:Law: When do you think the draft constitution will actually come into effect?

DC: I don't think it will come into effect in the near future. If there is a referendum in the UK and Poland, they are bound to vote 'no'. There is also big debate in France about this with French socialists and issues on tax varying.

b:Law: Do you think the proposed EU constitution is another phase towards a federal structure in the EU? United States of Europe?

DC: There are probably going to be common policies, especially between France and Germany. However, the EU won't really become federal like the USA: it won't have its own football team! It certainly won't become a federal Europe of 25 states either. The EU will probably enlarge more, which is good. I see enlargement like the Berlin Wall, liberalisation! The EU should be open and states should have a choice to join.

b:Law: Are you 'for' or 'against' the UK's membership in the EU?

DC: I support the UK's membership. I think the EU itself is a good thing, for example it introduced social policy in the UK's legal system. It is true however that the EU has its unattractive side as well and is highly contentious. In particular, I am disappointed with certain judgements of the European Court of Justice. I see the EU as an 'Ocean' and a 'horizon,' as it is forever challenging, especially in the context of a constitution in the EU. Others may label it as 'faceless bureaucracy,' or remember Peter Mandelson as soon as the topic of Europe comes up!



Dr Imelda Maher

We discussed the proposed EU constitution just as she was grabbing her "happy coffee"...

b:Law: How do you think member states will react to the draft constitutional treaty?

IM: It really depends on what on the UK and France, and their referendums. However, the problem here is that the people don't know enough on the EU, so how will they vote? That's the main issue here.

b:Law: Do you think the proposed EU constitution is another phase towards federalism in the EU? United States of Europe?

IM: I don't think you can compare federalism in the EU with the USA model. USA is more about migrants and all. The German model is perhaps a better comparison.

b:Law: What effect do you think the proposed EU constitution will have on democracy in the EU?

IM: I think the draft constitutional treaty will enhance demos in the EU because it will make the EU more accessible to people. With a book of rules, the people can just take a look and know more about the EU.

b:Law: So, you think the draft constitutional treaty is a good thing?

IM: To an extent, yes, because of this idea that it will make the EU more accessible. It will perhaps make legislation stricter and reduce the possibility of the elite taking over the EU. The weakness is, however, that it is not just that the people don't know enough about the EU or the draft constitutional treaty; it's the fact that they aren't interested either.

b:Law: Are you 'for' or 'against' the UK's membership of the EU?

IM: I don't think it is in my place to say. The UK will always have this issue on whether they are the 'top dogs.' I don't think the UK can really afford to be apart from the EU, particularly for economic reasons. Blair goes on promising Bush good trade, which he is getting from other EU member states! The alternative is that if they aren't part of the EU, then they could be part of EFTA, which will guarantee them trade, but the EU is much stronger. In some respects, the EU constitution will probably benefit the UK because they don't have another codified constitution which they can compare with, like the French or German states.



Professor Martin Loughlin

This interview was the most active, via exchange of emails...

b:Law: How important do you think a constitutional order is within an organisation such as the EU?

ML: Almost all associations require constitutions, as they establish the purposes of the association and the terms on which it carries out its businesses. The LSE SU and its societies all have constitutions in this sense. The EU is no different; the existing treaties create a constitutional framework for decision-making.

However, the debate over the EU constitution extends beyond this technical question. We must differentiate two strands of debate. The first is whether the proposed EU constitution will enhance the effectiveness of the EU's operations. The second, which is more contentious, concerns the nature of the EU project. Is the EU simply an organisation created by nation states using their treaty-making powers to promote common objectives? Or does it involve the building of new relationships between the peoples of Europe and their institutions of government to forge a new unitary framework of government rooted in a common identity of a European people?

b:Law: What affect do you think the draft constitution will have on member states?

ML: The main effect is likely to be the extension of qualified majority voting, which will complicate the dynamics of political decision-making at the EU level.

In the UK, farmers like the EU and fishers hate it; just as environmentalists embrace it while market traders shun it. But I suppose the question really concerns the UK government. The Government must be in favour of the Constitution, or they wouldn't have signed up.

But what was the Prime Minister doing in announcing the referendum? This did not go to the cabinet - supposedly the supreme decision making institution in government - and seemed motivated by the desire to keep the issue off next year's general election agenda. We should not regard this referendum - called by government at the moment of their choosing in relation to the particular questions they propose to fix - as a device of democracy. Rather, it is an instrument of governing, wielded by those in authority for their own perceived advantage. Now, I suspect, the Government are praying that the French will reject the constitution in their referendum, making ours irrelevant.

b:Law: Are you 'for' or 'against' the UK's membership of the EU?

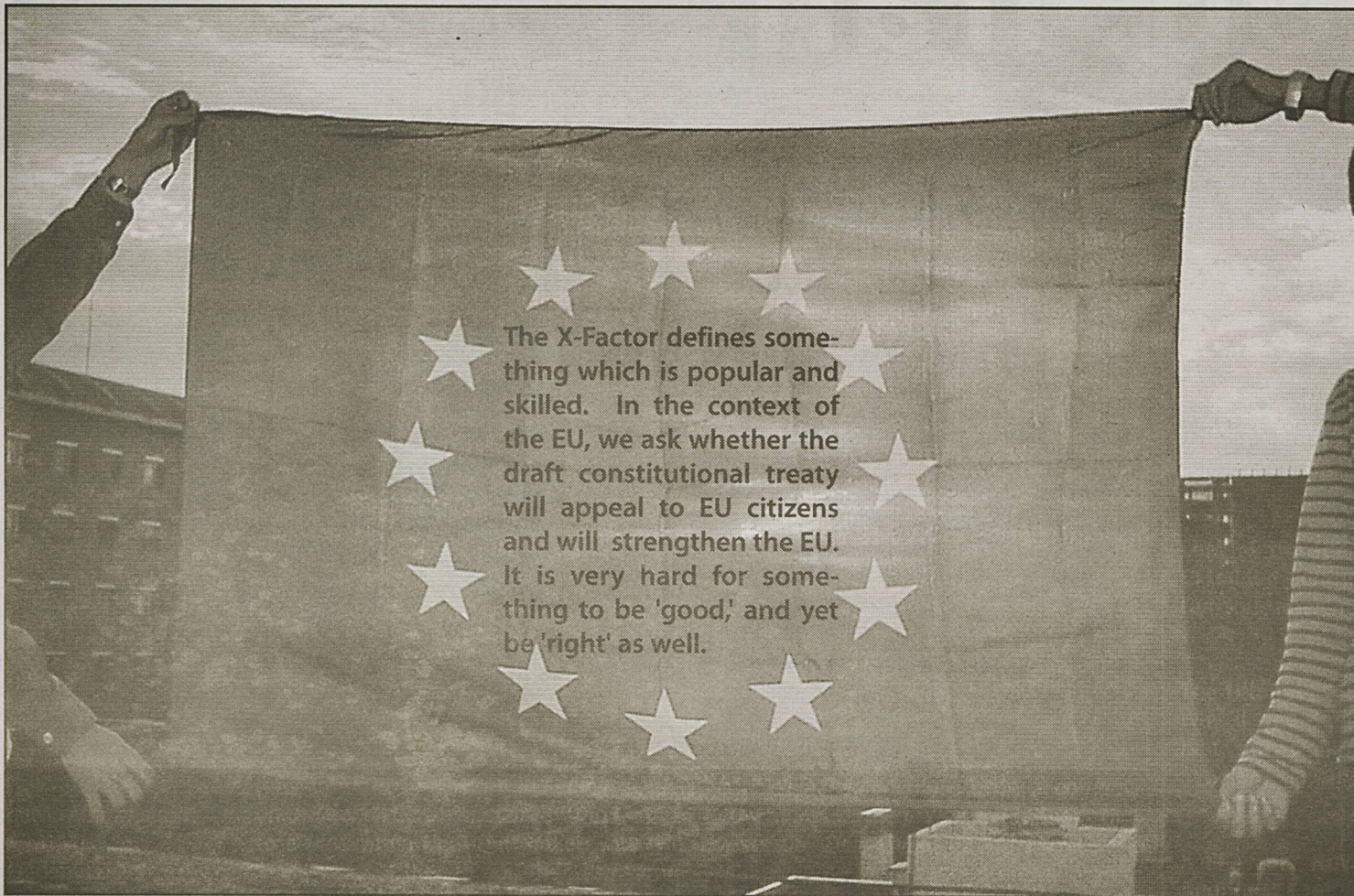
ML: What day of the week is it?

Law

Law Correspondent: Alykhan Velshi

The Right Approach

constitution have the X-Factor?



2084

Daniel Freedman

Imagine Britain in 2084. Imagine some of the amazing technological advances: flying cars, evening trips to the moon, and personal robots. Imagine some of the ways the state can look after you "better": compulsory morning exercises; fatty food intake limits (alcohol and cigarettes, of course, already illegal); CCTV in every home monitoring parents; and monthly thought-police checkups to weed-out any politically incorrect views.

Sound appealing? Why not?! "But it's for your own good." How can you object to everyone leading a healthier life? Surely you want to ensure children are safe? Why would you want anyone to have politically incorrect views? "You fascist, selfish, capitalist pig!"

Unrealistic? I'm not so sure. Orwell might have only been a century out. Slowly but surely the state is interfering more and more in what we do. First smoking. Now fatty foods, sugar and salt. Next, quite logically, alcohol. Then, quite logically, how about: stilettos (risk to ankles); Grand Prix (too dangerous); toy guns (inciting violence); "mummies and daddies" in playground (homophobic and sexist). Continue this logic for another 50 years and CCTV will make sense. The nanny state's argument of: "but it's for your own good," has no limit.

One big assumption of the nanny state is, of course, that the government knows best and can't be wrong. Huge assumption. The second, even bigger, is that people shouldn't be allowed to make their own "mistakes," if that's what they want. In a free society the greatest right we have is our liberty. The right to live our life how we choose. Grown-ups, aware of the consequences, have the basic right to do something healthy, dangerous, or just plain stupid to themselves if they want.

Just to make clear - I don't smoke, get drunk, or eat excessive amounts of fatty foods. But to paraphrase Voltaire: I may not do what you do, but I'll defend to death your right to do it.

Big Brother isn't just found on ITV and on the Lib-Dem and Labour benches in Westminster. It's also frighteningly present here at the LSE. The left in the Students' Union (SU) - even more arrogantly considering their age - spend their time trying to control what you do. Whether it's boycotting goods (you can't decide for yourself if you like a country or not); regulating library hours (you can't be trusted to get a good night's sleep if the library is open 24-hours); or restricting advertising on the SU website (advertises for alcohol and co. might sway your simple minds).

That is essentially the difference between the political left and the (classical-liberal) right. The left want to - and believe they have a right to - run your life for you, not trusting you. On the right we believe you have the fundamental right to live your own life and trust you.

Ronald Reagan famously turned an old axiom backwards and told state employees: "don't just do something, stand there." Sound advice, socialists take note.

What the people think



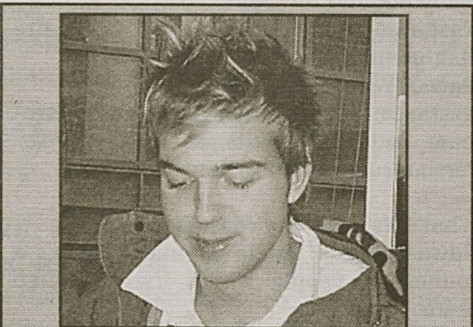
Jimmy, who recently went as a delegate to an EU conference organised by The Netherlands for young people's issues:

"I don't think people have been informed enough about it. There is a lack of EU identity in the UK. The whole point of the EU constitution is to bring national states together and uniform policies, but in practice it probably won't work. It's all about politicians deciding rather than the people."



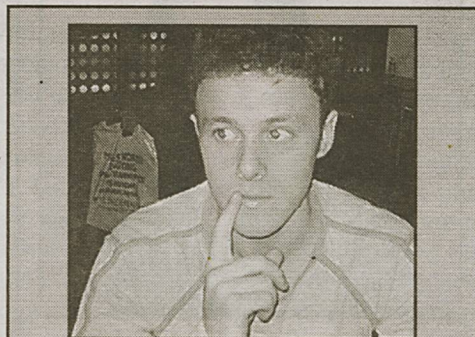
Protesting Sarah

"People don't know enough but if given more information they would. It's all about what the government thinks is best. People aren't interested. Perhaps if the EU wanted people to get interested, then there should be TV or radio documentaries."



Studios Lee

"Last time I checked I thought we won the war."



Question Time Society Chair Simon:

"It is important to produce an entrance document of the EU's work. Very unlikely that the average people will understand, and British people are adverse to change. Europe is a big challenge, but people aren't interested."

Final judgement: the EU-consta-what?

So does the proposed EU constitution have the X-Factor? Perhaps it does in the sense that it will certainly strengthen the EU by increasing demos and more importantly making the EU legislation stricter. However, in terms of popularity, it is questionable, especially as most EU citizens don't know enough about it. However, as many have said, it is the decision of governments rather than the people.

Focus on: Iran



The Starting Point

Our two subjects share some of their initial knowledge of Iran

Zoroastrianism is one of the earliest religions. Zoroastrians believe that fire is the most sacred element since it's the source of heat and light. The sun is hence the most important body. There are still some in Iran till this day.

Iran, which was once Persia is famous for its scholars. We had Omar Khayyam, a mathematician and Zakaria Razi, who discovered alcohol and its medicinal uses. Today many of America's leading scientists in the fields of medicine and physics are Iranian.

Saa'di, a famous poet from Iran has a quote from one of his poems on the UN building in Geneva.

The majority of Iranians are Shi'ites. It's one of the two main sectors of Islam, the other being Sunni.

Tehran is one of the most polluted cities in the world.

It's illegal to have satellite TV in Iran, but everyone has it anyway.



Nastaran's Iran facts



Nawaz's Iran "facts"

Good food...it'll be like Lebanese style: rice and all.

The Taste of the Cherry. Iran has good films and this is one of them.

Some people from Bombay are of Iranian descent.

They put the dead in tall towers, they're called Towers of Silence, and leave them to the vultures. That's one way in which the Zoroastrians of Iran get rid of their deceased.

Nastaran Tavakoli-Far was born in Iran. She educates (and is insulted by) **Nawaz Imam** who surprisingly knows quite a lot about Iran. **Stefanie Khaw** and **Kristin Solberg** supervise the process for blink.

Where is Iran and what are its neighbouring countries?

Nawaz: It's in the Middle East. Isn't it neighbours with Iraq or Kuwait?

Nastaran: It's Iraq and Turkey on the left; Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan above and Afghanistan and Pakistan on the right.

What are its main imports?

Nawaz: Nuclear weapons blueprints from Pakistan.

Capital goods...

Nawaz: Yeah, as in nuclear weapons.

Nastaran: No, capital goods as in machinery for industry and consumer goods as well.

What are its main exports?

Nawaz: Really good films. Mohsen Makhmalbaf and Abbas Kiarostami are really popular directors.

Nastaran: Makhmalbaf's daughter, Samira Makhmalbaf directs as well.

Nawaz: Yeah, she's really hot.

Nastaran: But our main exports are petroleum, nuts and fruits, as well as rugs. Persian rugs are really famous.

What's its form of government?

Nawaz: Sharia law is enforced. There's a council of people which the Ayatollah heads.

Nastaran: It's a theocratic republic -more specifically its an Islamic republic. An Ayatollah is the supreme leader and he's the head of state. We have a president who is voted for by the people.

What's the capital of Iran?

Nawaz: Tehran. T-E-H-R-A-N.

Nastaran: Indeed it is.

To what extent is Iran westernised?

Nawaz: I think it used to be westernised when the Shah was still in power. But

when the Ayatollah came into power things changed. I believe that Iranian women are among the most suppressed in the world.

Nastaran: Actually female university students outnumber males students. My cousins are very influenced by Western culture.

What's its national sport?

Nawaz: Shooting Americans.

Nastaran: That's harsh. But incidentally, Iranian women do really well at shooting in the Olympics.

Nawaz: You mean shooting at Americans at the Olympics?

Nastaran: Anyway, the answers are wrestling and weight-lifting. Football is very popular.

Are there any famous people from Iran?

Nawaz: Apart from the film directors and radical leaders, I don't know.

Nastaran: Loads. Shirin Ebadi won the Nobel Peace Prize last year. The acclaimed artist Shirin Neshat is Iranian and Freddy Mercury was Iranian. Andre Agassi is half Iranian. So is Darius, but he doesn't really matter.

Is it a rich country?

Nawaz: Not really. Not anymore.

Nastaran: It's pretty average for the region. But its not rich at all compared to Western countries. There's huge income inequality as well.

What's the culture like?

Nawaz: Basically very Islamic and secular at the same time. Revolutionary. They like to have fun. Violently.

Nastaran: That's insulting. Iranian people are not violent. That is an awful stereotype. We are a peace-loving people. Iran has a very rich culture dating back to thousands of years. Iran is famous for its poetry, mathematicians and music.

Business

Business Correspondent: Aanchal Anand

Financing development : why we need a global tax

In the age of globalisation, *Lucie Gadenne* makes the case for a global tax to finance development.

In 2005 the UN General Assembly will begin its review of the implementation of the outcome of the Millennium Summit. In the run up to this there has been much talk as to how far we actually are from reaching the Millennium Goals (which include halving the 1.2 bn people living with less than of a dollar a day, the 840 mn undernourished and the one bn without access to drinking water) before the deadline of 2015. One major concern is the insufficiency of the flows of funds currently allocated to development – \$50 bn overall per year – which needs to be at least doubled if we hope to reach the targets. However, in a time where most developed countries are talking about limiting government expenditure, it seems unlikely that such an amount of money could come from the states themselves, most of which do not even reach the minimal threshold of 0.7 percent of GDP spend on funding development.

The UN acknowledges this and has launched a study this month whose task is to examine new and controversial ways of raising money for development – including global environmental taxes and taxes on currency flows. But some individual countries (Spain, France, Brazil and Chile) have anticipated this move by pronouncing themselves in favour of the establishment of global taxes during last September's summit in New York on reducing world poverty. The idea of a world tax is not new – it was launched by Nobel Prize winner James Tobin in the 1970s – but has generally been rejected as unrealistic and potentially harmful to the development of the world economy. However recent studies by the world's leading economists are starting to suggest that a global tax is fact feasible and might improve the functioning of the global economy.

It is not charity – it is an economic necessity. This is one of the conclusions of the French Landau Report for the government on "new financial contribution" (to which Sir Tony Atkinson, ex Professor of Political Economy at the LSE, and Fleming Larsen, director of the IMF for the EU contributed, as well as Jacques Cossart, a French economist who is coming to speak at the LSE next week). They argue that the rationality behind taxes in nation states also exists at the world level. Economic orthodoxy agrees that taxes are necessary, even useful, to the functioning of the market insofar as they correct the economic distortions which arise through externalities and provide a means of financing public goods. Negative externalities are ominous on a global scale – think of carbon gas releases for example, or of the negative impact on local communities of arms sales – and taxing them is a way of making firms bear their financial costs, which today are only borne by the public community in the form of pollution or continual warfare, and provides a strong incentive for the development of alternative, less polluting energy resources. It is estimated that a tax of \$21 per ton of carbon gas release would yield a revenue of \$125 bn per year. 'Global public goods' is another notion which economists are starting to take very seriously. Security is an example of an issue which cannot be tackled efficiently by one state, and needs to be funded, and organised, on a world scale. Social rights are another global pub-

lic good, one which is seriously threatened by the inter-state 'fiscal' competition brought about by globalisation in a typical case of the well know Prisoner's Dilemma: it is in every country's interest to provide workers with a minimum protection form hardship and yet it is rational for individual countries to cut down on the taxes needed to finance this protection in order to attract investments.

"The rationality behind taxes in nation states also exists at the world level."

When you add to this the observation that the wealthiest firms nowadays hardly pay any taxes because they manage to locate themselves in tax havens (whereas small ones cannot escape their country's tax burden), it seems that creating a world tax on firms' profit is a mere adaptation of national tax systems to the fact that the main economic actors have now gone global. An acknowledgment that they should be globalised too, if they want to uphold tax justice (everyone is equal before the law, including tax laws), and not see tax revenue drastically diminish. The principle of this is very simple: wherever a multinational company establishes a part of its production process it should have to pay the same tax rate on its profits. This would not only prevent developed countries from a fiscal race to the bottom, but it would also mean that some of the wealth produced in developing countries actually stays there and is redistributed through taxation.

It's not about charity, it's about justice," as Bono said recently concerning the Millennium goals. The problem with the way development is funded today is not only that it yields too little money, but also that it is still seen as a gift from the rich to the poor. As such it is very unstable, and depends on the economic, historical and political links between the donors and the country receiving the funds. Yet what is needed to finance effective development is a long term flow of funds which is not submitted to the country's opening up to certain foreign firms or its use of its vote in the Security Council: with two billion dollars per year over a 10 year period for example, every child in sub-Saharan Africa gets to go to primary school.

Thinking of the legitimacy of global taxes is a way of accepting the idea that redistributing wealth from the rich countries to the poor ones is a matter of global justice, exactly in the same way as we think it is just to fight against inequalities in our countries between those who benefit from the market and those who are unable to take part in the economy because they are old, sick or unemployed. The development of market forces on a global scale has created enormous amounts of wealth, through multinational companies and foreign



Clockwise from top left: President Chirac, PM Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, PM Lagos & President Lula are leading voices in the argument for global tax.

direct investment but also financial transactions. Those actors benefit immensely from the opening up of countries to world trade, and it seems just and fair that they pay taxes in compensation, to provide funds for those who do not benefit from globalisation, or who might even suffer from it ...

So this provides another incentive for a global tax on multinational companies: they make the most money out of globalisation, their activities will not (according to the Landau report) suffer much from the implementation of a tax and in the long run they will benefit from more people accessing food, shelter and education as they might even turn out to be emerging markets for their products! The revenues

"In other words, no global tax can exist without a global consensus as to why we need them."

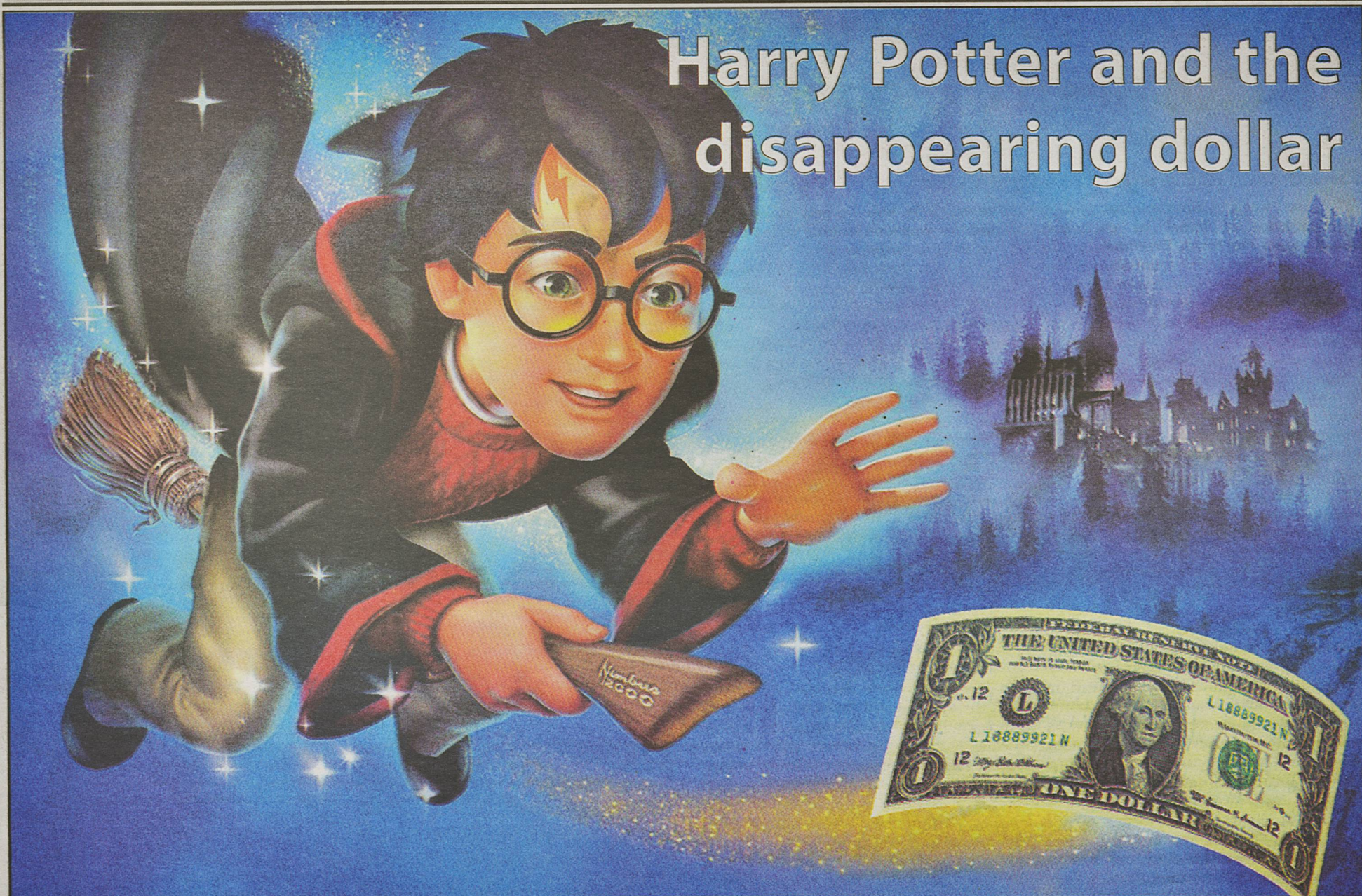
coming from such a tax could be very substantial: it is estimated that a 25 percent tax rate on the benefits of the thousand biggest global firms would yield \$200 bn per year – four times the increase in funding needed to meet the Millennium Goals by 2015. Taxing financial transactions has also often seemed very attractive to proponents of a world tax, not only for the sake of financing development. Indeed the reason Tobin suggested such a tax in the first place was to reduce the profitability of high risk portfolio investment and thus limit the systemic risk of the whole financial system: the idea is that it would discourage investors from speculating on risky assets something which has often led to financial crises in the past, affecting pri-

marily developing countries. Such a tax could be very low, so as not to disrupt the functioning of financial markets, and still yield considerable resources: a 0.01 percent tax on currency speculation for example, would give a 110 billion dollars per year flow of potential development funding.

So there is an economic, as well as an ethical, case to be made in favour of the implementation of a world tax on activities with negative externalities, on multinational firms' profits or on financial transactions. The reason such a step isn't likely to be taken in any near future, despite the urgency of the need for more reliable funds for development, is that it necessitates a huge reform of world wide institutions and the effective implementation of some sort of global governance. None of these taxes is ever going to work if the major world economies of the G8 as well as the fastest developing countries commit to them, simply because of the mobility of the resources which would fall under such taxes. Allocating the funds has always been an issue, and such taxes could only be legitimate and applicable if there were maximum transparency and some sort of democratic control as to how the resources would be allocated. In other words, no global tax can exist without a global consensus as to why we need them, a debate as to how to allocate them and world wide transparent institutions to monitor the whole process and provide feedback on how development is affected.

This is a hugely political issue and relates to the idea of a global governance needed to tackle not only development, but also security and protection of the environment. However the merit of addressing the question of the feasibility and the desirability of a global tax is that it shows that the money can be found, and a system of redistribution of wealth can be developed on a world scale similar to those which have been developed in most countries of the world over the last centuries. It shows that there is a way in which political action and coordination can use the wealth created by economic globalisation to tackle inequalities in development across the globe.

Politics



Harry Potter and the disappearing dollar

The dollar has disappeared but where did it go? With the help of Harry Potter, *Malcolm Bell* tries to find it.

Harry was fast asleep in his bed at the Hogwarts School of Magic when the phone next to his bed began ringing.

"Hello" he said sleepily, "Harry?, is that you?" said the person hurriedly on the phone in a thick American accent. "Yes, it's me...who is it and what do you want?" Harry asked. "It's me, Alan Greenspan at the Federal Reserve of Wizardry, we have a really big problem Harry and only you can help! The dollar has disappeared and we need you to find it!"

Harry was stunned. He had rescued the Prisoner of Azkaban, found the philosopher's stone and unlocked the chamber of secrets but could he find the dollar? He was terrified. "I'll do what I can and I'll let you know," he said assuredly before hanging up the phone. His friend Ron ran through the door, "Harry, have you heard the news? The dollar has disappeared and everyone is talking about it!" Harry was immediately more puzzled. "Where did it go?" he wondered. "In the last three years it has fallen 35 percent against the Euro and 24 percent against the Yen! Now it is \$1.33 to the Euro, \$1.90 against the Pound!" Ignoring Ron's surprising knowledge of international currency movements, Harry realised how serious the disappearing dollar really was.

But like so many of his pursuits in the past, maybe there was a simple answer that nobody had thought of. Harry kicked Ron out of his room and began to think about the facts.

America is the largest economy in the world with over \$10 trillion in GDP a year, more than the next five largest economies combined. Britain has just \$1.4 trillion. For years he knew that America's dollar was the 'reserve currency' of the world, cru-

cial commodities like oil were priced in dollars, now at a high of \$50 a barrel. But, he thought to himself, the dollar wasn't just a currency any more, it was a commodity too. In the early 1970s a weak dollar was terrible for the world economy, contributing to inflation and recession. In the 1980s too Harry thought, the dollar weakened America's economy and inflated the bubble in Japan. It was not surprising that the Federal Reserve of Wizardry and the President of Magic George Bush were so worried. Why had it disappeared and where could he find it?

Harry set about drawing diagrams and writing things down. The price of the dollar he thought, like all currencies and commodities, is determined by demand and supply. The dollar's price is falling because either demand is falling or supply is increasing, but which one is it? Or worse, is it both?

The Federal Reserve of Wizardry has increased the supply of dollars over the last 18 months, largely because of the rising oil price. They have also reduced interest rates to one percent, making savings and investment into the US undesirable. At the same time, Harry noted, the US has a trade deficit that would have bankrupted most countries a long time ago, approaching \$800 bn by 2006 which is 6.25 percent of GDP. The growing deficit, low interest rates and sluggish US growth over the last 18 months have deterred investors. But, wait a minute, shouldn't a weaker dollar be helpful to the US?

A weak dollar makes US exports more attractive because they are cheaper to buy. It reduces the value of their internal and external debt and allows them to compete more with Europe, China and other large

producers. Also, Harry remembered that about 18 months ago the Federal Reserve of Wizardry were very concerned about deflation.

Deflation had plagued Japan for years, caught in a liquidity trap so that no matter how much they reduced interest rates, people would not spend, prices fell and the economy shrunk. If only the proud Japanese had reduced the value of their currency, they could have saved themselves. Maybe that was what the Americans were doing. Suddenly, it all became clear to Harry and he realised that he had found the disappearing dollar. In fact, it wasn't disappearing at all.

Although President Bush says that he wants a strong dollar, he really doesn't. The Federal Reserve of Wizardry are purposefully allowing the dollar to fall in value so they can reduce their trade deficit. This would explain why they have not yet intervened to stop the sliding dollar as the European Central Bank had done in 2001, buying back Euros from \$0.88 against the dollar to increase their value. The dollar will continue to fall in value until they intervene Harry thought, but they don't want to.

Feeling confident he had the answer, Harry got back into bed and called Alan Greenspan.

"Hello" said the voice with a nervousness. "It's a disgrace!" Harry yelled, "you know fine well what is happening to the dollar, it's all your magic and you don't care if it falls in value, you want it to!" There was silence on the other end of the phone, seconds seemed like minutes. "Okay, okay so you caught us, we knew all along the dollar hadn't disappeared and we thought that you wouldn't be able to find it

either and we could say we had tried!" Harry laughed, "that's what your doing in the media too isn't it, saying you want a strong dollar but doing nothing to stop its fall." Harry could feel Alan Greenspan grinning. "I don't know why you think this is funny" Harry screamed, "it can't go on like this forever." Alan Greenspan yelled back "And why not? Who is going to stop us?"

"You know fine well what is happening to the dollar, it's all your magic and you don't care if it falls in value, you want it to!"

Harry sat back in his chair and thought about the awesome power of the Federal Reserve of Wizardry. If they wanted a weak dollar why couldn't they have one? Harry thought of something important.

"You know fine well that a persistently weaker dollar could cause an even greater shift in demand away, a debt default by stealth, bond yields will soar, recession will loom and the clouds will turn grey. Is all that really worth risking just to reduce your trade deficit? What a price to pay!"

The line went dead and Harry realised that there was little he or anyone else could say to the Federal Reserve of Wizardry. They would just have to figure it out for themselves.

Politics

The politics of denial

Matt Axworthy takes issue with columnist Daniel Freedman's refusal to acknowledge Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people.

Last week's *Beaver* featured a defence of Israel by columnist Daniel Freedman. Freedman claims that Israeli troops did not shoot dead Mohammed al-Durra, and committed no massacre in the Jenin refugee camp.

His article does not simply represent the views of one fervent supporter of Israel, but is symptomatic of a wider problem of many in the pro-Israel camp, who will go to any lengths to deny the crimes being perpetrated against the Palestinian people. This article will attempt to assess the arguments put forward by Freedman and those who share his views and discuss what they may be hoping to achieve.

In his article Freedman claims that the image of Mohammed al-Durra being shot dead by Israeli troops, was actually "a made-for-TV set-up". But lets look at the facts. On the 30th of September 2000 a 12 year old Palestinian named Mohammed Jamal al-Durra is alleged to have been killed by Israeli gunfire while in his father's arms. A tape purporting to show this killing was aired around the world by many News Channels. In the tape bullet holes can clearly be seen appearing in the wall around two cowering civilians. Then the child slumps, apparently having been hit by gunfire, while the father also appears to have been wounded.

Mohammed's father has been interviewed many times and shown the scars from this "alleged" gunshot wound. He claims that the Israeli army killed his son. Hospital officials report failing to resuscitate a child who had been shot and bore the name of Mohammed al-Durra and a funeral for him took place. Is Freedman suggesting that Mohammed was never killed? This seems doubtful. He seems to be suggesting that hours after the boy died the media faked images of his death.

No suggestion has been made as to how a cameraman based in the Gaza strip is able to get the Hollywood style special effects of making bullet holes appear in a wall beside Mohammed and his father. Or

more crucially, how he gets Mohammed's father - or someone looking very similar - to act in a recreation of his son's death just hours after it occurred. Critically, the main piece of evidence he cites is a study by a physicist who claims the shot could not have been fired from the Israeli positions. However, what Freedman neglects to mention is that the area where the killing took place had been bulldozed by the Israeli army, like many thousands of Palestinian homes in the Occupied Territories. The physicist's study was based on a model of what the area supposedly looked like. And do you think the Israelis conducting this investigation spoke to Mohammed's father or to the camera man? No, they spoke to the soldiers who are accused of killing Mohammed and based their model on what they had to say.

Freedman didn't mention that the Israeli human rights monitor Bt'selem, attributed Mohammed's death to "Israeli security forces live gunfire". The claims that the footage was a hoax did not even come from the Israeli army who are alleged to have killed Mohammed, but merely a small group of Israeli students and academics.

But Freedman's claims have importance beyond this one death. As he rightly states, the image of this child's death "perhaps

"...by casting doubt on the most famous killing of a child by Israeli forces, they can somehow distract from the deaths of all those other children?"



best captures the second Intifada." He neglects to say why this is so.

Between the start of the Intifada in late September 2000 and 15th of November 2004, Bt'selem has documented the killings of at least 603 other children by the Israeli security forces. Some other sources put this figure higher still. Thousands of children have been wounded by the Israeli authorities according to the Palestinian Red Crescent, a branch of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mohammed al-Durra's death symbolises the conflict because so many other children have been killed in a similar way. Is it believable that a journalist happened to create a brilliant fake of a child's death at the hands of the Israeli army? At the beginning of a conflict which then saw that same army kill hundreds of children? Or is it more realistic that a few people who are determined to protect Israel's reputation believe that, by casting doubt on the most famous killing of a child by Israeli forces, they can somehow distract from the deaths of all those other children?

A similar strategy is employed by Freedman in the case of Jenin. Freedman claims that "only" 52 Palestinians were killed in the invasion of Jenin camp. In reality the number simply is not known. During the attack on Jenin refugee camp, then home to 15,000 people, over one third of the homes in the camp were destroyed. Almost all homes suffered at least some damage. In the wake of the invasion a large proportion of the population was left homeless, well over 5,000 people. Many of these families have relocated to other parts of the West Bank, some may have left Palestine entirely.

At a time when the Israeli occupation is creating a humanitarian catastrophe in Palestine, no aid agency has the resources to track down each of these families and attempt to find out who is still alive. This would be an immense task, since Israeli restrictions make travel in the occupied territories extremely difficult. The number of people the UN and Human Rights Watch reported killed was the number of people they could *prove* had died. They both stated they were not able to investigate fully what had happened to all the missing and in some cases no one knows where whole families are, or even whether they are alive.

By focusing on simply the official number of people killed, Freedman and other supporters of Israel are attempting to distract the public from other aspects of the invasion. Even though we don't know for

sure the final death toll, there are certain facts that we do have. Amnesty International and Bt'selem have documented testimony from many civilians, aid workers and soldiers describing a number of acts that constitute war crimes.

Only one ambulance was allowed into the camp during the attack, and it was destroyed by Israeli gunfire, killing a doctor and severely wounding the driver. The army made no attempt to provide medical aid to this wounded man, or to many other wounded civilians. We know that Israeli bulldozers buried families alive under the remains of their homes and that some survivors were later dug out after nearly a week. Search and rescue teams were denied access to the camp and residents had to dig each other out with little more than their bare hands.

The entire population of the camp had their water and electricity cut off. They were placed under a 24 hour curfew for days on end. At times this curfew was enforced with live ammunition and prevented Palestinians going out to get food for their families. It has been documented that during Operation Defensive Shield males were rounded up indiscriminately. At least 7,000 arrests have been admitted to by Israel, some of them of children as young as 14. The number of Palestinians interned without trial in Israeli prisons increased by 849 by the end of the Operation.

Bt'selem documented reports of civilians being forced at gunpoint to act as human shields for soldiers raiding houses. They claim this is standard Israeli policy. All of these actions violate international law and constitute war crimes.

The attempt to focus solely on the disputed death toll in Jenin serves to distract from these widespread abuses. It serves the same purpose as focusing on the death of Mohammed al-Durra but not mentioning the hundreds of children who are known to have been killed by the army.

While it may not be possible to fully make amends for all that has been done, an acknowledgement by Israel of past crimes is an essential first step towards any form of coexistence or reconciliation. There needs to be a recognition of the crimes that have been committed against the Palestinian people, in the interests of peace. Therefore the attempts to deny any wrongdoing by Freedman and those who share his views, are an impediment to resolving a conflict that has led to so much suffering.



Politics

The people and their Viktor(s)



At a time when the liberal advocacy and policy of 'democratisation' has faced severe challenges around the world, the dramatic nature of events in Ukraine not only appear as a surprise but also as a significant affirmation for the principle of participatory political culture. The sight of a multitude of people protesting and camping out in support of the opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko seems to have definitively established the success of an emergent civil society in the Ukraine, a country that has shrugged off its long communist past just a decade back.

The nature of the popular protest has been remarkable for two principal reasons: One, the persistence of the huge demonstrations for more than a week in the face of plunging temperatures and snow; two, the fact that the protests, despite their scale, have hitherto been non-violent in nature. Journalists in Kiev report on how crowds have sustained their enthusiasm by singing and dancing but have eschewed from consuming alcohol. Furthermore, the crowds have responded to the inherently tense confrontation with riot police by adorning their bayonets with flowers. Both the persistence and peaceful character of this popular dissatisfaction appear to have been fundamental to the decisive success of the protests. It is easy to spot the correlations between the enormous protests, the interest it generated in the international media, the subsequent external 'mediation', and the eventual ruling by the Ukrainian Supreme Court annulling the election that gave victory to Viktor Yanukovich. There can be no iota of doubt that it was people and their protests that lay at the heart of this dramatic sequence of events.

Ukraine seems to have become irresistible for the international media not only because of the decisive political struggle at work in the country but also because of its significance as a theatre for the replay of the almost defunct ideological struggles that had defined the Cold War. Margaret Thatcher went far ahead (or back

"the crisis in the Ukraine is in essence a question of the 'east-west' orientation.."

perhaps) to suggest the onset of a new 'iron curtain'. Some commentators have urged the media (and Thatcher) to temper this perception of an emerging East-West divide in Europe by pointing out how dependent both the EU and Russia are on each other and how Yushchenko is not as explicit a Westerner as he is made out to be. While such qualifications are valid, it is clear that the crisis in the Ukraine is in essence a question of the 'east-west' orientation. The domestic motivations that propelled the popular protests cannot be perceived as products of specific 'domestic' considerations. An examination of those domestic considerations (such as jobs, opportunities and democracy) are funda-

Deepak Nair and Adhir Ramdarshan take a look at the regional and global consequences of the Ukrainian protests.



mentally tied to the larger issue of alignment with the EU or Russia. Any remaining doubts about the character of this crisis would be settled when one considers how the international media and community seem to have concretely defined the contours of this political struggle along the dichotomous lines of the 'East' and 'West'. This international interpretation seems to be increasingly influencing the behaviour of the actors directly involved. The Russian Duma, for instance, has passed a resolution by 415 to eight, blaming the EU for fomenting the crisis in the Ukraine.

"The situation in the Ukraine can lead to a demonstration effect: it could potentially trigger new processes for change in neighbouring Russia.."

This would bring us to the quite unsubtle role that Vladimir Putin has had in the ongoing crisis. No leader would commit the faux pas of congratulating either of the contesting candidates in an election until formally announced. Putin's congratulatory message to Yanukovich was not a faux pas but a deliberate show of where, and in whom, his preference lay. The crisis in the Ukraine is terrifying for Putin. The sight of such 'people power' in a country so close, historically, geographically, culturally and strategically- to his increasingly authoritarian domain presents a significant challenge. Putin's own popularity and legitimacy has so far rested on his image of a hard and stern politician. He has been among the biggest beneficiaries of the political trends post 9/11. He succeeded in

exploiting the 'war on terror' to centralise and consolidate his control over Russia. Democracy or even an enhanced role for civil society and the media could present significant challenges for Putin's present political strategy.

The situation in the Ukraine can lead to a demonstration effect: it could potentially trigger new processes for change in neighbouring Russia. After the peaceful revolution in Georgia early this year, and the possibility of an EU and NATO friendly Ukraine, Putin has all the reasons to fear for the strength of his own position. His support for Yanukovich is not only an attempt to offset the expansion of the European border into Russians' neighbourhood but also to secure his own style of politics. His unusually early congratulatory message has to be understood in this context. It was a classic case where external sovereignty was employed to cement internal legitimacy for Yanukovich in the Ukraine.

It remains to be seen how the events in the Ukraine will finally unfold. The possibility of violence cannot be ruled out and the group most vulnerable to this prospect are the pro-Russian Yanukovich supporters who fear increasing alienation. The role of the outgoing president Leonid Kuchma will also be interesting to follow. His clear support for Yanukovich stems greatly out of his desire to provide security for himself after exiting politics. His alleged involvement in a grisly murder of a journalist exposes him to future indictment and the question of who sits on presidential throne in Kiev could have a crucial bearing on this matter.

Despite the eventual outcome, the Ukraine will be constantly recalled by academics and politicians for the sheer 'people power it' has demonstrated to the world.

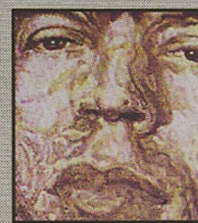


B:art



Literature

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Visual Arts

Art that Rocks
page 26

Edited by Carolina Bunting

Comments, questions, artwork or articles submit to: thebeaver.art@lse.ac.uk

Pantotime

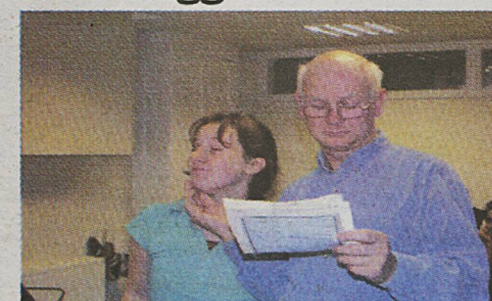
leannehiggins and saalimchowdhury on the beauty and the breasts

LSE SU Drama Society Pantomime

The Old Theatre. LSE

Thurs 9th Dec -8.30pm | Fri 10th Dec- 7.30pm

£4 Drama Society Members, £5 Non-Members



It is here.... Can the festive season mean anything else than panto? Ok yes, Noel Edmonds, James Bond films, Eastenders Specials, your gran whacked on Sherry Trifle, but that's beside the point. Is there anything more fun than heckling actors and getting into the spirit of things without the need for 'Agadoo' or the 'Birdie Song'? I see this is a serious bone of contention... Ok, is there anything better than seeing the head of the LSE, Sir Howard Davies in drag, acting as the head of a ~~where~~ burlesque house (no we're not referring to his day job) - I knew I'd beat you there.

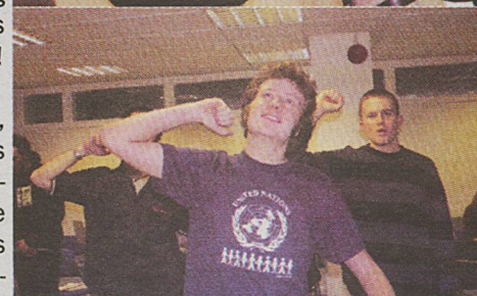
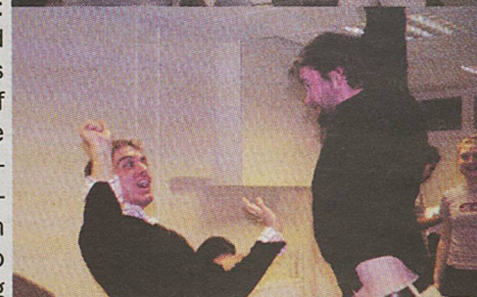
Beauty and the Breasts is a traditional style panto (loosely) capable of entertaining an adult audience, something quite tricky. In the post-Shrek era, following a traditional panto story line is no mean feat. Which is why we gave up completely and bring you this magical, if just slightly sordid fairytale. To keep an adult audience's (well LSE students) attention using a medium reserved for 5 year olds and Strand Poly students the world over takes some doing.

It was quite a trial to choose a script that enlists obvious humour, tried and tested favourites, along side childish/student (in some places disturbing) innuendos. Arguably with panto a rudimentary understanding of folklore and tales is required, embracing diversity - this being the LSE - that's not the case with ours. This is a production rooted in panto spirit (hurrah) but much like the our institution not schooled in tradition. All pantos hinge on innuendos and naughty jokes and this, sadly, is true of this production. It's suitable for an adult audience, but too tame for Soho, so don't be perturbed - you can always go there after.... In its original form the script was a gem waiting to be polished ready for the LSE. Originally performed by the PantoSoc of Bristol University, it was no mean feat

adapting it for the distinctively cosmopolitan LSE platform. However with a mass cast effort we feel we have a literary masterpiece on our hands worthy of a Pulitzer or, dare we dream, an Oscar (ok I'm getting carried away, where are the men in the white coats - they're in the panto...) *Beauty and the Breasts*. Interesting title I hear you say (O no it isn't... Oh yes it is...) It is based loosely on *Beauty and the Beast*, amongst other favorite classics. An epic tale taking us through Pantoland, meeting enchanting and peculiar characters, such as the charismatic Beetleman, a girl with a rampant wood fetish, and a Prince Charming that more than just loves *The Beaver*. Ewe wont be disappointed (there's a clue there...)

The story has all the magic ingredients: scandal, intrigue, jam, romance, music and free love... A genuine LSE Christmas Cracker... Showing on the 9th and 10th of December, it is a really great way to end the term with your friends, indulging in the cultural highlights of the Drama Society's calendar (that and the delights of Howie D in fishnets). The show will finish in time to go to Crush on Friday!!! Howard will be starring both nights, so you won't be denied this once in a lifetime opportunity, I assure you!

With a huge and simply wonderful cast, such diverse characters and amazing songs (you will never fully appreciate this, especially the "Beetleman" if you don't come along - in fact you will lose all your friends for being so hideously ignorant of this classic) there shouldn't be any reason for me to tempt you at all! For those of you who are still in touch with your inner child, those who know how to have a good laugh and those who are just curious there is something for everyone. Come and see a traditional(ish) panto and start the holidays .



Panto-what???

rehanahmed on traditional festive entertainment.

Were British immigration officials ever replaced by my theatre editor, all visa applicants would undergo a knowledge test about pantomime, apparently an emblem of English cultural life. Not that it shall transpire (he's a social psychologist), but it does show a disturbing trend amongst local intelligentsia. I shall attempt to correct this cultural snobbery by informing you about this rather intriguing phenomenon, in case you hear of a certain Saalim Chowdhury at Whitehall. Mind you, not being British helpeth not. The best I can come up with is a cross between Mother Goose tales and the tail

end episodes of 'Are you being served?' (the torrid Christmas party ones). I happened to catch my first performance in Malaysia of all places, having won free tickets on the radio. I was not quite addicted, somehow aware of double entendres flying by me.

A pantomime is essentially Christmas season entertainment, with much in common with my beloved comedia dell'arte. Growing out of the Harlequin and Burlesque traditions of the 17-18th centuries, it has for the most part maintained elements such as the male lead being

played by a lady and vice versa. The usual fodder for such performances happen to be children's tales such as Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk and the ilk. As such content began to take prominence Harlequin (a topic for another day) disappeared, replaced by slapstick, satire and political incorrectness.

There are those who will say pantomimes are for children and the content should be edited to reflect this. The meanies apparently look too mean, witches far too pagan and the double entendres too sexual to be intellectually nourishing. Diluting it as such however, is to render it impotent. It

is supposed to confront us with our darker elements, recognize them and most importantly mock them.

Wikipedia.com has the following to add on the subject of pantomimes - "Another great UK panto tradition is the celebrity guest star. In practice, the 'celebrity' is usually somebody of doubtful value either as an actor or even as a publicity draw - an ex-soap star trying to shore up a slipping career, for instance."

It is Sir Howard Davies this Thursday, and Friday.

film

edited by Dani Ismail and Sarah Coughtrie

Without A Paddle

joeymellows wishes he was watching *Deliverance*. Yo got a purdy mouth, boy...**Director:** Steven Brill**Starring:** Seth Green, Matthew Lillard, Dax Shepherd, Burt Reynolds**Release Date:** 26th December**Running Time:** 95 mins

If films such as *Save The Last Dance*, *Dirty Dancing* and *Bridget Jones* have been labelled 'chick-flicks' might I suggest a new rival genre. I present to you the 'Dick-Flick'. Dick-flicks include such bonafide classics as the hilarious *American Pie* trilogy and the rip-roaring family fun of *Road Trip*. I was therefore very excited (and almost too excited, twice) to be going to see *Without A Paddle* - a film very much from the revered 'dick-flick' stable of film-making.

Before deciding whether you should go and see *Without A Paddle* you must first undertake a brief moment of self-analysis. In this time, important, testing ques-

tions need to be asked including: 'Did I enjoy *Dude Where's My Car?*'; 'Can I relate to a time when I got butt naked with two of my closest friends and then went trespassing?' and do I find lines such as, 'If you're gonna rape someone, rape Danno', funny? If the answer is yes to all these questions, please go and see *Without A Paddle*.

The official synopsis goes as follows: When three guys (Seth Green, Matthew Lillard and Dax Shepherd) set out to fulfill their boyhood dreams of finding lost ransom money somewhere in the Oregon wilderness, they take a canoe upriver and everything that can go wrong does. Hunted by two crazed backwoods farmers, they encounter a bear that eats their cell-phone, death defying rapids, tree hugging hippie chicks and an eccentric old mountain man (Burt Reynolds) who might lead them back to safety .. or shoot them.

Without A Paddle tries to be a comedy/adventure yarn very much based plot-wise on *Deliverance* from 1972. The laughs come fairly intermittently, however, and the film could be accused of trying to take itself a little too seriously considering its target genre and audience. Schmalzty lines such as 'Carry your friends wherever you go - close to your heart' had many of the audience visibly cringing in their seats and I for one was a little too late with the sick bag. As dick-flicks go this is certainly not going to give the heavyweight classics of the genre any real, hard, stiff competition, but taken for what it is *Without A Paddle* is a (fairly) harmless, mindless enjoyable romp - just don't expect to remember it in the morning.

**

In Your Local Blockbuster...

Oliver Stone Ultimate Collection

The full catalogue from the mostly brilliant, occasionally terrible director. *Natural Born Killers* should be pored over and adored, *JFK* should be watched in several sittings and you could always use *The Doors* disc to stop a cold beer can from marking your classy, minimalist Ikea coffee table. "HOW SEXY AM I NOW, HUH??!!!"

Lord of the Rings: Return of the King Extended Edition

Get your wanking hands ready.

The Ultimate Matrix Collection

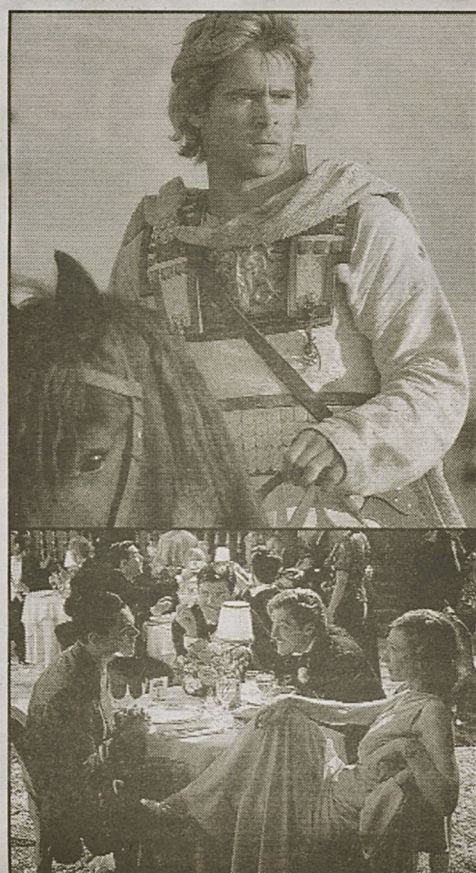
Why, if Neo is supposed to be going so fast, are all the matrix-bending scenes filmed in slow motion?

X Factor Revealed: The Greatest Auditions Ever

Ok, fine, I admit it. I quite fancy Tabby. The wifebeater and tie combo gets me going every time. If you have to buy this, at least have the decency to hide it.

The OC: Complete First Season Box Set

If you haven't caught an episode of this yet, you obviously don't get up before 2pm on a Sunday. While I respect that, you're missing Dawson's Creek with sex and cocaine. More addictive than either of the above.



Just because LOTR is finished doesn't mean Christmas is cancelled in Hollywood...

Alexander

Colin Farrell stars as the Macedonian conqueror, who has in his possession 90% of the known world by the time he was 25, which is on the "to do" list of about 75% of LSE students. Oliver "Natural Born Killers" Stone has more balls than Wolfgang Peterson, so doesn't mince around the homosexual sub-plot like *Troy* did.

The Aviator

Biopic of Howard Hughes, the legendary director of classics including the original *Scarface*, *Flying Leathernecks* and Martin Scorsese's favourite, *Hells Angels*. Leo Di Caprio stars as Hughes, alongside Cate Blanchett and Kate Beckinsale as his love interests Katherine Hepburn and Ava Gardner. Could be good, could be crap. Answers on a postcard.

Haven

Pretty boy Orlando Bloom stars in this, presumably to prevent the suicide of several hundred teenage girls used to getting a mincing fix around Christmas time. Apparently it's non-linear, like a poor man's *Pulp Fiction*. A good post Hogmanay hangover movie, perhaps.

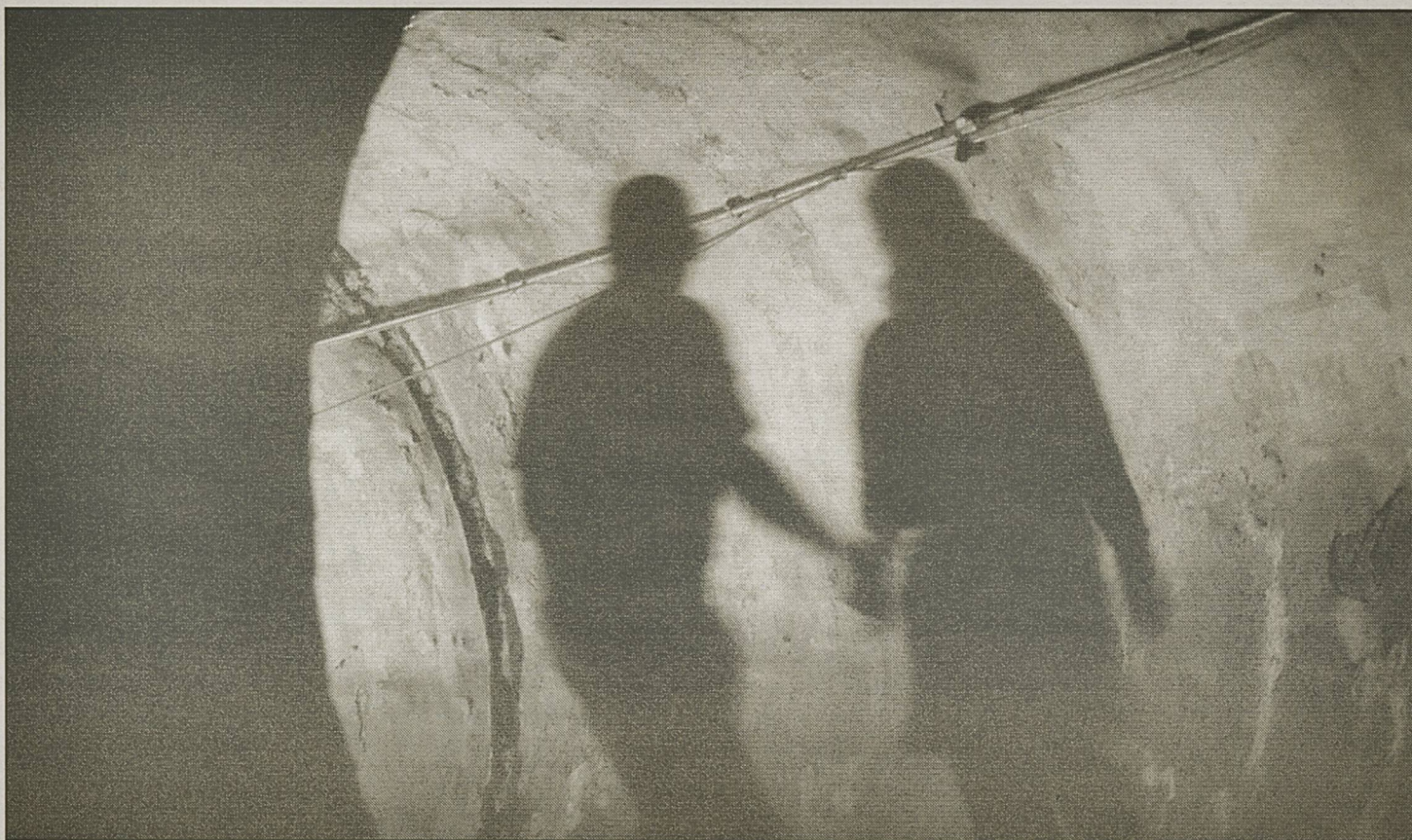
A Very Long Engagement

Made by *Amelie* director Jeune-Pierre Jeunette and starring Audrey Tautou as a woman whose husband went missing in the trenches of the Somme, this hopes to recreate the winning formula of last year. Will probably be another underground smash, especially since this has a darker, more adult slant than the endlessly upbeat *Amelie*.



Creep

misjavandeklomp minds the cr...ap



Stuck-up PR girl Kate (**Franka Potente**, *Lola Rennt*) is on her way to a party on the West End, where she figures **George Clooney** (Sir 'Not Appearing In This Film') will be like putty in her hands. Luckily, she doesn't manage to get a taxi, effectively turning this movie into a horror flick rather than adding to the abundance of romantic comedies. Waiting for the last train, dear

Kate falls asleep and wakes to find herself locked up inside the London Underground, where evil lurks at night...good thing evil lurking does seem to be mostly a night-time activity.

This film, presented under the dreadfully uninspired title 'Creep', can be aptly characterised as your typical low-budget B-

movie. It is, in short, a sick, twisted and poorly enacted version of *The Phantom of the Opera*.

First time feature writer/director **Chris Smith** explains his efforts: "With *Creep* I intend to take away the safety net, to explore our worst fears, beginning with the basics: the fear of being alone, being

Director: Christopher Smith
Starring: Franka Potente, Vas Blackwood, Paul Rattray
Running Time: 86 min
Release Date: 28 January 05

trapped, being in the dark, and then moving on to far less palatable areas: assault, torture and human experimentation. This will not be a film that allows you to relax at any point, safe in the knowledge that you can cope with what's to come. Instead you will always feel that the worst is ahead, but you will have no choice but to watch."

Indeed, except for one thing: what the hell is he talking about? *Creep* wants to be a movie about human emotion, but apparently Smith lacks the anticipatory skills to present them in an adequate fashion. He forces his characters to spout all sorts of nonsense, successfully alienating them from the actual events. Example? At a certain point Kate ends up in a very *Deer Hunter*-like situation (submerged cage and all); but instead of going completely nuts **De Niro**-style, she decides it's funny that one of her fellow prisoners carries the same name as **Mr. Clooney**. Need I say more?

Perhaps I'm not being fully appreciative of the B-film thing, and truth be told there are some good scares in this movie; even so, you B-film lovers out there can enjoy this one by yourself, I'll just stick to hating it. Desperately looking for a London Tube horror-flick? Try *Death Line* a.k.a. *Raw Meat*.

*

Vanity Fair

tagismail likes the pretty colours

Director: Mira Nair
Starring: Reese Witherspoon, Gabriel Byrne, Rhys Ifans, James Purefoy
Running Time: 137 min
Release Date: 14 Jan 2005

Vanity Fair is one of those books that I've never got around to reading, so I went to the screening with only a very rough idea as to what the story was about. I mention this because my opinion of the film is based purely on what I saw in the movie and not in any way about the representation of the book.

Now that that's out of the way, let's continue. The film was directed by Mira Nair, a director with a flair for the visual, which came across very well. The story is set largely in England but with a strong Indian influence due to the English presence in India in the nineteenth hundreds. This is aptly reflected in the costume and set design throughout the film. Vibrant rainbow colours permeate throughout; in the gorgeous frocks of 19th century England and even in the military costumes of the men, the scenes set in India take on a life of their own. The foliage and fauna isn't forgotten in all this, and one scene I found

particularly visually outstanding was set somewhere in England at a tea party of sorts. You've got the ladies bedecked in stunning dresses and the men wandering around either in their military uniforms or in 'tea-party' clothes. The whole set was one big rush of colours and I found myself taking in the scenery and losing sight of the plot.

This is where I think the movie fails. Thackeray's novel is some 700 pages long and, although I haven't read it, I felt that there was a lot of chopping and changing throughout the film. Understandably so, because when that must be condensed into a 2 hour long movie much will be left out, but it wasn't done very well. There were a lot of plot-lines that I would have liked to see developed, and at other points I felt we were being rushed through a particular plot in the story. Which is why, when asked about the film, I can talk about the colours (see above) but not so much about the story. I mean, the plot is pretty basic - **Reese Witherspoon** plays Becky Sharp - an orphan who, after coming of age, is employed as a governess and is determined to make something of herself, using her feminine wiles and calculating



mind to get what she wants. Your basic social climber, trying to nab herself a rich husband who's part of the elite inner circle. That's where it gets messy. She does well for herself, finds her man (James Purefoy - eye candy for the girls) and loves him and he her. But then, just when you start to like her and forgive her manipulative ways, she loses sight of what she already has in her constant need for more and manages to lose it all. Reese was ok, with a reasonable accent but perhaps a lack of charisma. I fell in love with both Purefoy and his character - Rawden Crawley, the loveable rogue who turns out

to be no match for his conniving wife. There were other noteworthy British actors (Rhys Ifans, Romola Garai, Gabriel Byrne for god's sake) but their characters weren't developed enough, which was disappointing.

Despite its weak points, it was an enjoyable movie, and I walked out wanting to read the book to find out what happened to all those loose ends.

Gone With The Wind (1939)

ionmartea searches beyond magic



Director: Victor Fleming (George Cukor, Sam Wood)
Starring: Vivien Leigh, Clark Gable, Olivia de Havilland, Leslie Howard
Running Time: 220 min
Showing: At the NFT at various times, from 3 Dec to 16 Dec

Voted recently the all-time most popular film in Britain in a research conducted by the British Film Institute, *Gone with the Wind* is definitely one of those films that have time as their best judge. The highest-grossing film of all times accounts for its achievement through its outstanding quality. It is a film that was not made in a rush, one which benefited from the work of one of the best people in their field at the time: Selznick, Fleming, Cukor, Gable, Leigh, Havilland, Steiner... all proving that a masterpiece needs both time and talent to achieve completion.

The first thing, which astonishes the viewer, is its sheer vastness. The large landscapes that seem to stretch to eternity are juxtaposed to some telling close-ups, allowing the audience to be absorbed in that era that was gone with the wind.

In a period in which Europe was preparing for war, Selznick was producing a lavish film, which tackled so many sensitive issues at the time, and yet without imposing any particular view. The best way to understand the impartiality is probably by quoting a Yankee woman from the novel, who after receiving an answer from Scarlett about where to find a good nanny for her children, ends up saying: 'I would never allow a black person to take care of my children'. Scarlett does nothing else but conclude that these Yankees are just ignorant, remembering the soft bosom of Mammy. The main characters are nothing

but great supporters of the humanity that lives in the heart of their slaves, as opposed to the liberators who would not bother a lot about the fate of a nation after it's sudden fall.

Regardless of its political difficulties, *Gone with the Wind* is a landmark in the history of film. The great performances are probably the main reason why people continue to adore the love story between the dashing Rhett Butler and the beautiful Scarlett O'Hara. **Clark Gable** has all the charisma and all the charms of Mitchell's character, raging from sheer passion to absolute destruction of the ego. As for **Vivien Leigh**, there is nothing to be reproached, apart from the fact that she is too beautiful for the characteristics given in the novel. She delivers a truly memorable performance, portraying so clearly the psychological struggle behind her choices. The supporting cast is applaudable: Olivia de Havilland, Leslie Howard, Hattie McDaniel, Thomas Mitchell, Barbara O'Neil give some of their most memorable performances.

Then there is the soundtrack. The main theme is a haunting piece, possibly Steiner's best achievement. The vibration of the sound connects naturally in the masterful cinematographic work of Ernest Haller.

Gone with the Wind is probably the definition of what Hollywood can do at its best. A truly magical piece that survives and lingers in our hearts like a newborn baby. And if you weren't around in 1939, then now is the best time to check out the digital restoration at the NFT, which promises to be a real treat for any serious film-lover.

I ♥ Huckabee's

daniismail struggles with understanding existentialism, and just not caring

It's a tough tagline to live up to, an 'existential comedy'. Having drawn in both old school actors and glossy front-page slut actors, it's a strange mix in which to design a credible 100 minutes of existential crises, the understanding of coincidence and the irrepressible, wanton abuse of the world's resources, with some sex thrown in for good measure. Which I have issues with to start with, as 15 year olds shouldn't be watching a boy and a woman, admittedly both in their prime, copulating like rapid bunnies over a tree log. But I suppose I can't exact my demands of what should and shouldn't be on TV onto obviously me-centric Hollywood directors who seek to bewilder and amaze the average cinema-goer.

Which gets me back on track. The film centres around **Jason Schwartzman** who has bumped into the same African man three times and wants to understand the coincidence. Yet another coincidence leads him to the office of the Jaffes, existential detectives whose expertise lies in solving problems of life. Or something like that. Along the way, we are also introduced to the fit **Mark Wahlberg**, a fire fighter with a conscience who cycles to fires. The one, the only, the sleazy **Jude Law** plays his type-cast role of slick exec-

utive, with **Naomi Watts** as his model girlfriend. They also, one way or another, require the help of the detectives.

While this was an obviously enjoyable film, with fun performances by most of the characters, there is something inherently flawed about the subject matter. What the hell is David O Russell on about? Is he trying to tell us that our superficial lives, ignorant of 'answers' to why we bump into random people oftener than chance allows, are leading us down a road of absolute blankness and trite triviality? Does he want us all to zip ourselves up in a coroner's bag and dissect everyone and everything that we think we know, just to discover that the search for answers is actually pointless? Is it just a load of random bullshit that he himself does not understand? Maybe the whole point of the film is to take it superficially. He must not expect us to understand it and try though we might, we might as well save ourselves the hassle and walk out thinking - "hey cool, everyone got weird happy endings, existentialism yeah!"

Who knows. It's just easier to be that superficial person, or I'll just think it over too much and end up hating it.

Director: David O Russell
Starring: Jason Schwartzman, Dustin Hoffman, Mark Wahlberg, Jude Law,
Certificate: 15
Release Date: Out Now!



literature

edited by Ion Martea

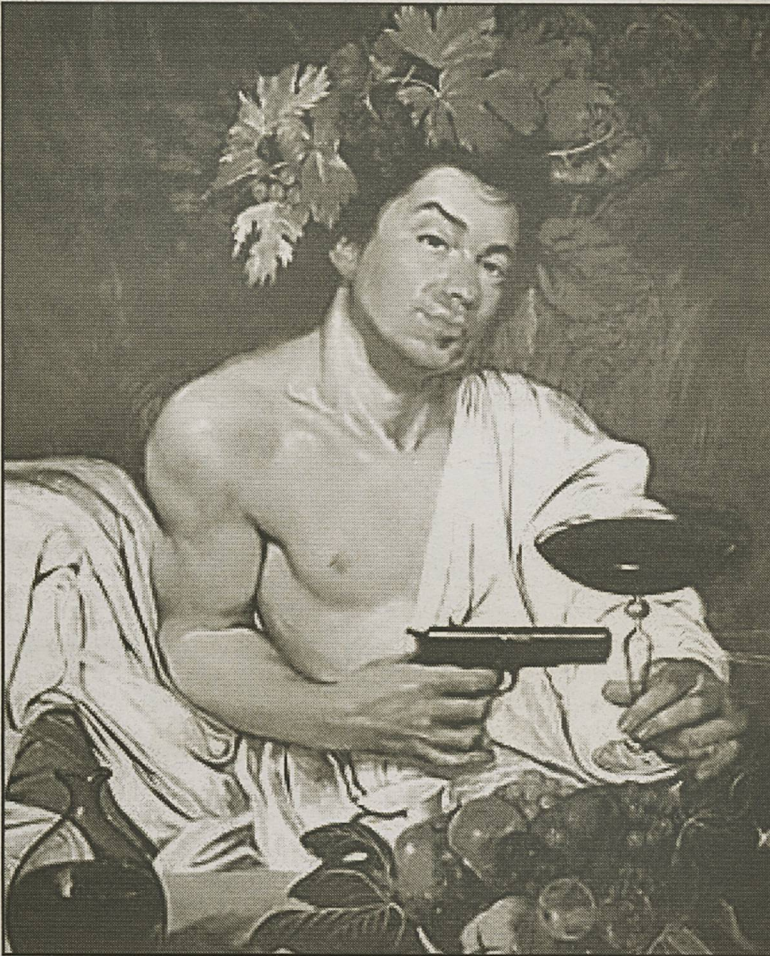
Barrel Special

ionmarteas dwells on drinking

Bacchus has been a writer's best friend from the beginning of times. Whether because it was cool, or because it was essential in bringing the muse to the creator, the tasty grape juice with aromatic flavour has accompanied the writing of some of the best works of literature, and also some of the most gut-wrenching works that we are unfortunate enough to have read. That funny buzz makes some invent things they were never capable of in their sober hours; others would have a most ingenious hallucination; and only a few writers would go to bed and have dreams they would forget the next morning, pissed off that nothing was written the previous day.

But things do get written in consequence. And, well, they may be wacky adaptations with bad rhyming and irregular rhythm, or some bizarre thoughts that none (not even the writer) are capable of understanding. Most certainly, everyone should be aware that no great work of art is being lost when binning these.

And then there are other times, when a poet's heart spills over the page, with no



Calvano is Bacchus... At least he's honest about it.

fear or inhibition, but with a most graphic exhibition of ego-centrism. A dense structure and shivering metaphors send the critics wondering about the meaning of this spillage, its original substance. The writer gets praised for his achievements

and encouraged to continue his sacred task.

The question is whether it's worth all the pain of heart or liver failure and pre-mature death? Is it worth trading life for art? Art, that may be lost in obscurity quicker than the decomposition of the body, will it bring anything to that inspired soul? Does drinking have any effect on the writing process beyond the well established friendship between the glass and the hand?

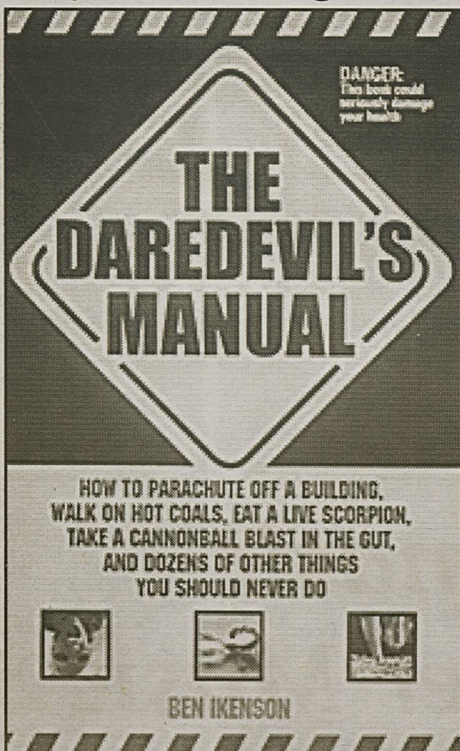
A writer evades to answer these, just when a new juxtaposition of words may bring a most orgasmic sensation. And then everything stops for seconds to come. Not even breath, nor thought are heard, but a pulsating pen on a piece of paper, or the annoying tapping of the keyboard. F**k art, and pride, and history, and fame, f**k life, when all gets down to this one moment of satisfaction. And then, relaxed, a writer takes his work, and strips it of his soul, leaving, outraged, drunk, passionate, and tired.

After all, we all need a good sleep to sober up.

The Daredevil's Manual

by Ben Ikenson

stacy-marieishmael gets adventurous



A disclaimer: this book is not for the squeamish.

A second disclaimer: this book is also not for the insane, the masochistic or the easily influenced.

If you've ever thought that the ability to balance 75 pint glasses on your chin could be useful at parties, or that the way to a girl's heart was through a flaming hoop, *The Daredevil's Manual* just might be the book for you. On the other hand, if you have no desire to discover the intricacies involved in hammering a nail into the face, Ikenson's homage to self-abuse might not be your cup of tea.

The stunts discussed in this book range from "eating fifty hot dogs in twelve minutes" to "parachuting off a building". As the book progresses, so does the degree of risk involved in the activities described. Each chapter ends with a graphic descrip-

tion of the perils inherent to the performance of such stunts: these range from indigestion to permanent disfigurement to death.

Exhaustively illustrated - I know exactly what to contort if I ever needed to enclose myself in a small box - and decidedly tongue in cheek, *The Daredevil's Manual* might be worth perusal if you'd rather be a Carnival side-show than an investment banker.

Interested in having your poems or short stories published in *The Beaver*? Send us an email at thebeaver.art@lse.ac.uk

Thought of the week...

If by Aleyard Hideling

If you can keep on drinking
when everyone around you
Are finishing theirs and vomiting it
on you.

If you can sing yourself
when all men shout at you
But make allowance for
their shouting too.

If you can wait and not be tired
by waiting,
For being served, don't worry
the impolite guys,
Or taking time, just give way
for someone waiting,
And yet don't look too nice,
nor talk too wise.

If you can dream - not of the cute
bartender;
If you can think - no essays
that are late.
If you can deal with Budweiser
and Fosters,
And treat both of these beers
just the same.

If you can bear to hear the chat-up line
you've spoken,
Twisted by others to show love's
just for fools,
Or watch the glasses that you paid for,
broken,
And stoop, and clean them up
with worn-out tools.

If you can make one heap of jackets
at one table,
And risk them all, and give them
no attention.
And you don't want to waste a bit of it,
a second,
And yet you still believe that health
is so important.

If you can force your heart and nerve,
and sinew,
To go to the toilets and never mind
the stinking;
And to stay on with no more money
for you,
Except the Will which says:
"Go on! Keep drinking!"

If you can get, in crowds, what others
tell you,
Or walk with Gin, and still
don't lose your Scotch.
If neither smoking, nor binge drinking
hurt you;
And all the women love you,
but not one too much.

If you can fill the unforgivable glass
With ten pounds worth of expensive
rums,
Yours is the Earth and everything
that's in it,
And - which is more - you'll be a Man
in Tuns!

music

edited by Ben Howarth and Matt Boys

The Beta Band

laurencekavanagh bids a fond farewell

In five year's time they'll probably return, charging £50 a ticket to cover their bad debts, but tonight they were magnificent. These were farewells you could shake your ass to. "Just remember: this is a celebration not a funeral, eh?" rallied Stephen Mason and we were whisked away on a whistle-stop tour through the history of one of the most sought after bands of the past decade.

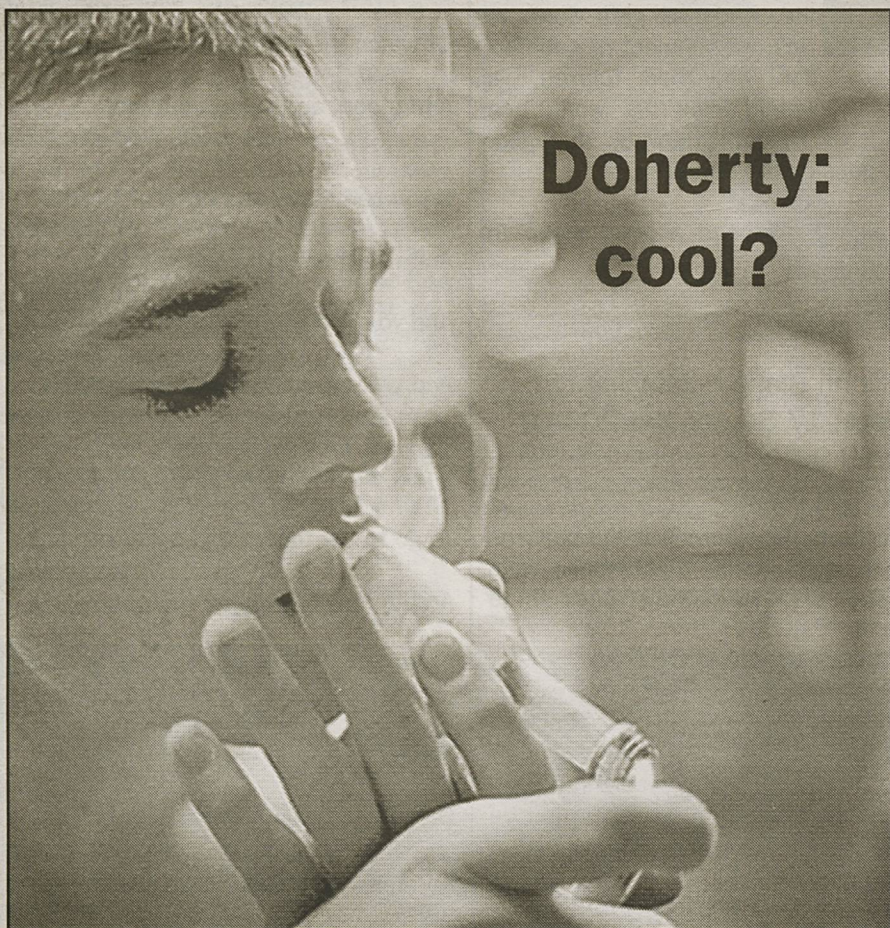
For those not familiar, the Concorde 2 is one of those venues which provides a real sense of intimacy with the performer. There is no hiding (except behind one of the bloody inconvenient pillars) and things do generally kick in after very short introductions. The Beta Band emerged in shirts and ties like four work experience boys in their late-20s, soon defying their costume to give a life-bursting performance.

At each interval they managed to pull another chestnut out of the bag - there were even a couple of selections from



'The Beta Band' LP (the one they told us all was rubbish). Each favourite was offered up to be ripped apart by the amassed mourners. For every song John McLean bounced his heart out behind his stacked equipment like a toddler on far too many E numbers. I was unceasingly surprised to realise how it was they actually made those sounds. Almost everything on offer was utterly engrossing in some aspect.

As the night progressed, so did the fury. A second drum kit was produced as a traditional Beta instrument exchange went on. The ties were lost and the shirts loosened as the band bled the last out of their catalogue. Finishing on a rip-roaring version of 'House Song', we bade our last goodbyes knowing that this had been a real life-enriching experience. Bowing out when you can still put on gigs like this must be tough, but on every note and at every beat there seemed to be some added incentive because everyone knew their time together was short.



**Doherty:
cool?**

A sober meditation on the NME 'Cool List'

By nastarantavakoli-far and aedanlake

"The Libertines are cool and that's a fact!" So we are told by the arbiters of taste at the NME. They claim that to be eligible for this list one must 'epitomise and embody everything cool'. This presumably means the inability to play their own songs in the case of joint 1st place 'icons' Pete Doherty and Carl Barat. In 2nd place is Mike Skinner who is only ever cool in the aftermath of a record release and whose inventive musical talent now stretches to actually singing on his records. The rest of the list is divided between the usual suspects and the bands of the moment, the former including the oh-so-tastefully dressed and eternally constipated (in both sound and facial expression) Gwen Stefani; everyone from Johnny Borell to Brandon Flowers present and correct in the latter. The inexplicable are also present; such as Meg White, who's not even the best drummer in The White Stripes, yet has her place in the great and the good of the past five minutes.

But really, WHO CARES? Just like when Beaver Music hasn't been sent any random records to puzzle over, the NME seem to need endless lists to justify their existence until the next big band with 'The' in their name, dying Converse trainers and dour 'nobody loves me' expressions come to 'save us from the shameful state of today's Pop Idol music scene'. While not making spurious claims that Doherty ever had dignity, such lists are an embarrassment to music, taking the inevitable debates from the dubious realm of musical quality to the outright ridiculous arena of so-called 'style'; and bringing the artists - regardless of any merit - down to the level of the pitiful hangers-on who feel they have a right to dictate to the rest of us what 'cool' is, and who qualifies for this. Now, with the moral high ground well and truly claimed, we're off to find some records to criticise . . .

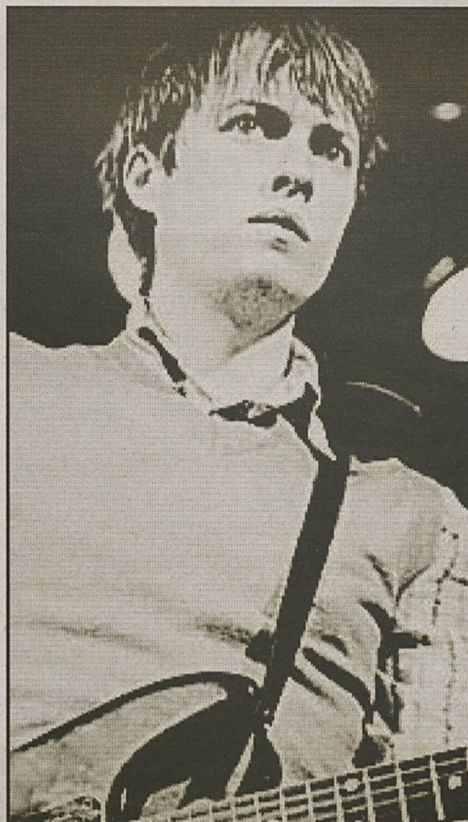
**Have a very LOUD Christmas!!
from all your friends at Beaver Music**

Sons & Daughters

sarahtaylor sees Glasgows latest exciting project

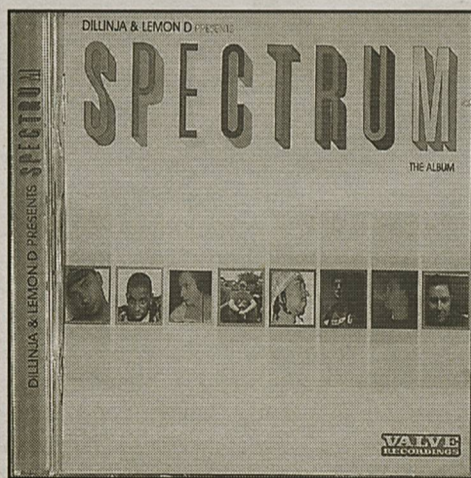
Glasgow has generated more than its fair share of genius over the years. Scotland's largest city has invented, discovered, written, sung and designed its way to greatness. All this despite heart disease, drug addiction and sectarianism. Only recently has the rest of the country woken up to the 'cultural renaissance' observed by the London-centric media in Glasgow's vibrant arts scene, but it's always been there. The current explosion of Glaswegian bands into the mainstream gives the impression that we've only just been hooked up to the mains and worked out how to plug in our guitars. At the same time, an underground scene continues, unperturbed by the fame and fortune sought by careerists like Snow Patrol. Widdly indie small fry like Ballboy churn out an album a year to complete disinterest beyond the central belt. Such a fate does not seem likely for Sons and Daughters. I don't wish to imply that the four-piece are populist crowd-pleasers with an eye on the singles chart and another on the album

sales. They just present a cooler package with rounded corners, contrasted with the frayed edges and kitchen table aesthetic of Ballboy and co. It isn't even very Glaswegian, truth be told; the bassist stared impassively into the middle-distance for the duration of the gig, and no bantering was to be heard from any other band members. Their sound owes more to the American mid-west than west central Scotland. It is an energetic mix of rock and country which encourages foot-tapping rather than bad dancing, as exemplified by Franz Ferdinand. I wouldn't have wanted to dance in front of the bassist (Ailidh Lennon), anyway, for fear of being frozen by a glance from above. They are fronted by Adele Bethal, the ex-Arab Strap lead singer who sings, claps and snaps her fingers with infectious enthusiasm. What a shame none of it rubbed off on the rhythm section. In spite of this the band works well together live, as well as on their debut EP Love The Cup, which I advise readers to ask Santa for.



ALBUMS

Dillinja & Lemon D present Spectrum



Jungle, as drum'n'bass was once known, was the UK's first undeniably homegrown urban black music, forging a strong identity in the early 90s from its nascent roots in the rave scene. Artists like Goldie and 4 Hero helped popularise the genre in the mid-90s, taking its complex polyrhythms and hi-speed breakbeats firmly into the mainstream, and though it may no longer be as popular in its own right as it once was, its worldwide influence has been enormous, and its sound has become part of the modern soundscape, infiltrating film soundtracks, background music and TV advertisements. Dillinja and Lemon D are two well-established, South London-based producers who have sifted through a raft of the demo tracks they have received from aspiring producers the world over to put

together 'Spectrum,' a two-CD set. Dillinja and Lemon D themselves aside, most of the names here will be unknown to all save the most devoted headz, but that shouldn't put off anyone interested in inquiring into the current state of the drum'n'bass scene, to which this makes an excellent introduction. Fleshing out the bare bones, the young guns here throw in all sorts of soul, funk and dub influences, crazed sounds and sampled snippets. As good as Spectrum might be, nothing beats feeling the bass ripple through your body in a packed club - if you're uninitiated, head south of the river one weekend and get to the main source.

(dominic al-badri)

System 7: Encantado



Based around the duo of Steve Hillage and Miquette Giraudy, System 7 have been well established in the psy-trance underground since their inception back in 1990. Prior to that, Hillage had a reputation as being something of a guitar whizz, though his work with much derided arch-hippies 'Gong' in the 70s coincided with that band's least interesting period. His re-emergence on the techno scene with System 7 came as something of a surprise, and because of his reputation as a hoary old prog-rockin' guitarist, System 7 have never really been given the due they deserve by the mainstream dance music press. One of the few techno units to have survived pretty much intact since the halcyon days of the UK's early techno scene, System 7 continue to churn out hugely engrossing slabs of psychedelic trance that manage to incorporate Hillage's guitar sounds (admitted-

ly usually heavily processed) while still appealing to hordes of tripped-out ravers around the world. Encantado is System 7's eighth album and sounds much like the rest (though benefiting from advances in production techniques), which is good or bad depending on your views on psy-trance as a whole. While undoubtedly appealing most if ripped to the gills on high-quality hallucinogens, Encantado doesn't fare too badly at home either, with the pulsating trance-techno rhythms, underpinned by huge bass grooves, creating a massive, warm bubble of sound in which to space out. Lead track "Planet 7" is the undoubted star, but the album is best enjoyed as a whole, with more than enough tricky sounds to warrant repeated listening.

(dominic al-badri)

SINGLES

Long-View : When You Sleep/Coming Down

In a way, it's a bit of a shame that this is a double A-side, as the songs here don't seem quite equal. 'When You Sleep' is reminiscent of Feeder's last album, downbeat rock with enough emotional punch to be interesting; sadly this is lacking from 'Coming Down', which is just a bit too depressing and doesn't seem to go anywhere. Still, worth a listen, and they're radio-friendly enough you should have plenty of opportunities to make your own minds up.

(aedanlake)

Kasabian: Cutt Off

Marvellous stuff. Talk of a scientist called Jon hooked on LSD, accompanied by Gallagher-esque vocals, xylophone and a powerful yet whimsical chorus. Kasabian are proving to be one of the few newly hyped bands worth listening to. "In New Music We Trust" indeed. Zane Lowe can still piss off, though.

(jondekeyser)

The 411-Teardrops

Third single from the London-based quartet, yet instead from going from strength to strength following from "On My Knees" and "Dumb", "Teardrops" is a disappointment. Without the sample of Portishead's 'Sour Times', this song would probably be even more forgettable than it already is.

(annngo)

The Mad Staring Eyes: Crazy

A new band with a distinctive sound of its own, that nevertheless invites (entirely valid) comparisons to both Bowie and The Fall, is a rare find indeed. Weird and unsettling, this is also compelling and at times funny, though the kind of laugh inspired by the lyrics is generally of the nervously-backing-away kind. There's something happening here, I like it and I want more... though I fear a little for my soul if my wish is granted.

(aedanlake)

Cass McCombs: Sacred Heart/Twins

Tender nothings from this American songster. One would gather from this that he buys fair trade products and holds doors open for old ladies before going home to tuck into some top grade narcotics. Filling an old musical mould, McCombs can hold his head high. We would do well to pay attention lest we miss him do so.

(laurencekavangh)

visual arts

edited by Caroline Bray

Art that really Rocks!

jandanieldormann and paulinesculli interview artist Bernard de Souza

Art Rocks**Venue:** Z Gallery, Truman Brewery, Brick Lane, London, E1 6QL**Open:** 12:00-21:00 daily**Cost:** Free

He is a Parisian artist, who has painted over 700 portraits of rock stars and twentieth century icons from Oscar Wilde to Ozzy Osbourne. At the preview of the Art Rocks exhibition in Brick Lane, which brings together fifty of his Rock & Roll portraits, Jan Daniel and Pauline caught an exclusive interview with the French master and his partner, Adina De Souza.

Jan Daniel: You must be a fan of Rock & Roll - who are your favourites?

Bernard: Rock & Roll is a part of our world - we're huge fans of The Beatles.

Jan Daniel: Where do you get your inspiration from?

Bernard: I research all the time. Inspiration can come from anywhere - even the face of someone in a restaurant. But it's rare, and when it comes it's like a grace.

Pauline: The theme of your work is the idolisation and perfection of modern

icons. Tell us more about the "Subjectivist" approach.

Adina: Bernard's subjectivism is a new form of expression. A portrait of a famous person is accessible to all, as the subject of the painting is easily recognisable and projected on to the viewer by cultural reference.

Jan Daniel: Your mixed media frames have a life of their own, how do you do it?

Bernard: Adina does the frames - she puts the finishing touches on all my paintings. Some frames are quite elaborate, and she uses a lot of gold and silver paint. In the painting of Keith Richards we even mounted a real guitar onto the frame.



Rolling Stones

Jan Daniel: But Bernard, some of your work features commercial logos and images - are you not concerned about trademarks and copyright law?

Bernard: In some way, I think it is a compliment. When someone makes a copy of your painting or image it means that you've been successful. It is also in a very subjective context - the most essential thing in art is interpretation - for example whenever you go to listen to an orchestra everyone will have a different interpretation. In the words of Arthur Rimbaud "I discolour my own world".

Pauline: Do you use a dynamic lighting scheme, for example in the Ozzy painting, to highlight the changing interpretation of modern icons? How do you interpret the

perfection of your own work?

Bernard: The lighting is random, and there for continuity. My work depicts the idolisation of perfection and hyper-realism. As a creator, I rise completely from the classical technique. There is a proverb that says to become a professor, you have to take lesson from the master, and if you do not rise above the master, then you have failed. There can be no mistakes - if a painting is not perfect, it is destroyed.

Pauline: What other techniques do you use? Tell us about the technical side of your work.

Bernard: I use an intermediary drying process, which means I tend to paint on very dry backgrounds. And I always use oil. I also use a projection technique for my colours. But I can't say any more - I've spent 40 years researching and mixing colours - it's a secret!

Pauline: Right. Well, thanks for giving us insights on your work Bernard.

Bernard: No, merci pour les questions intelligentes. A bientot!

Adina: Et bieu cordialement!

Tear Jerking Taylor-Wood

laurarose marvels at Sam Taylor-Wood's tale of strength told through tears and suspension

Sam Taylor-Wood: Crying Men, Self Portrait Suspended & Strings**Venue:** White Cube, Hoxton Square, N1 6PB**Dates:** October - December 2004**Open:** 10am - 6pm tue-sat

Fresh from New York, Sam Taylor-Wood brings her new solo collection *Crying Men and Self Portrait Suspended* home to the White Cube gallery in hip Hoxton Square, infamous for its drunken Friday revellers rather than its sober Saturday art lovers. Two years ago Jamie Oliver had all-but killed off Old Street's shabby chic. Now Taylor-Wood, alongside her husband (and White Cube owner) Jay Jopling, put it back on the BritArt map.

Crying Men is a sensitive exposé of the emotional vulnerability of twenty-eight actors from both sides of the Atlantic. The collection inventory reads like an Oscar night guest-list, combining Hollywood's old guard like Paul Newman and Dustin Hoffman with the fresh-faced British glitterati, Jude Law and Chiwetel Ejiofor (*Love Actually*).

Despite using high profile subjects each shot captures a different nuance of sadness and despair. The raw eyes of Hayden Christensen contrasting with Philip

Seymour-Hoffman's quiet contemplation and the shielded sorrow of the normally comedic Ben Stiller.

Defying his big-screen stereotype Laurence Fishburne cries frankly to camera, shrouded in black but lit by a beam of light which hangs behind him like a halo. Meanwhile Robert Downey Jr's portrait seems to lay bare the troubles of the past in a pose reminiscent of an Italian fresco. Rather than being emasculating these shots take a rare and powerful glimpse into the souls behind the red-carpet grins. Although perhaps at times these prints are just too pretty to be authentic expressions of sadness.

Taylor-Wood continues her use of religious imagery in *Self Portrait Suspended*, albeit with the irreverent assistance of a bondage expert. Together these skilful suspension techniques and the wonders of digital technology allow Taylor-Wood to hang apparently weightlessly against the background of her warehouse-style studio.

The series displayed 'Inside the White Cube' explores the strengths of the physical-self as opposed to the potency of the emotional-self tackled in *Crying Men*. From the slumped, lifeless image in *Self*

Portrait Suspended I, Taylor-Wood constructs more complex and demanding poses for herself throughout this collection. In particular, in *Self Portrait*



Sam Taylor-Wood

Suspended VI, she contorts her slender figure as if she is being invisibly crucified against this sterile backdrop.

Her fascination with the freedom of suspension again manifests itself in the short film *Strings* (2003). Here a fairly non-descript string quartet traverse Tchaikovsky's dark 'Andante me non Tanto' (*Quartet No.2 in F major, op.22*). Above their heads, and beyond their consciousness, a young male ballet dancer seems to conduct this oblivious foursome. Hung by fine wires he draws upon his physical prowess to somersault, twist and stretch his Athenian god's body in harmony with the music. Yet at its conclusion he is left swaying gently as if both physically and emotional drained.

The recurring themes of suffering and reaching our physical and emotional extremes seem poignant given that the artist has twice battled against cancer. However to see her work as merely a statement of personal melancholy ignores a more challenging and rewarding commentary about the untold strength within each of us, regardless of gender, and importance of free expression.

about

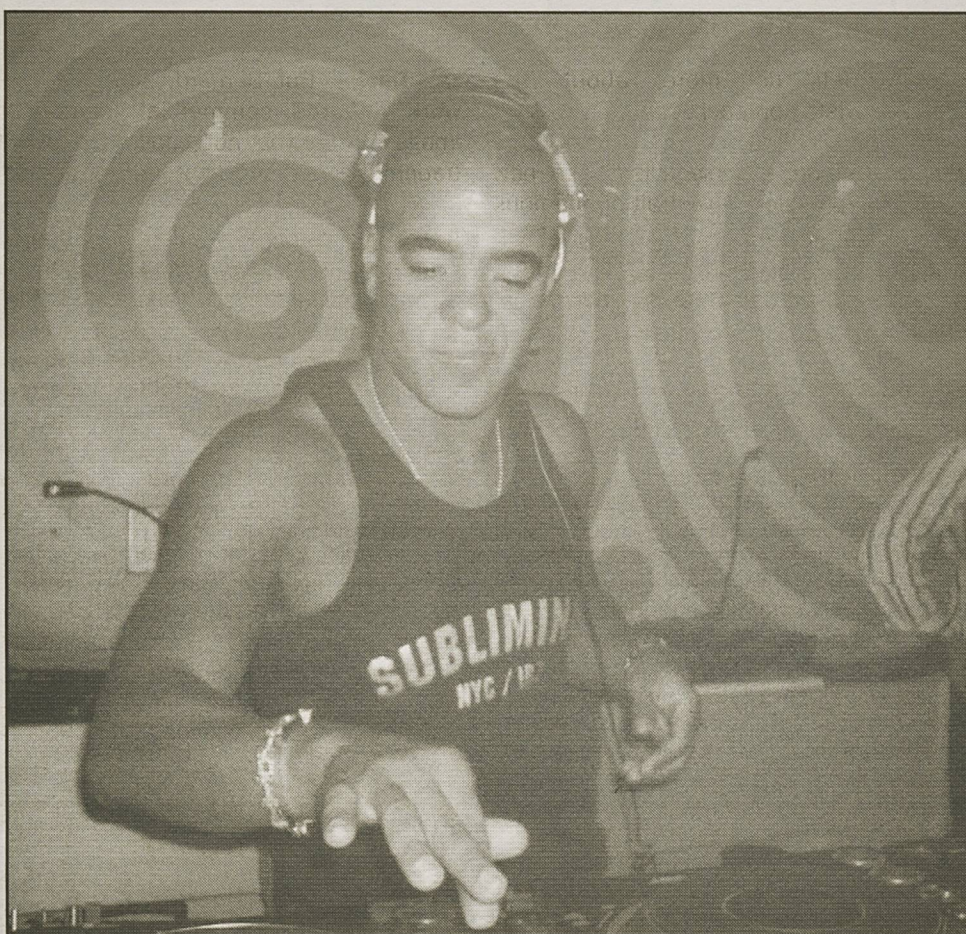
edited by Joanne Lancaster

New Year's Day @ Ministry of Sound

The Return of Subliminal Sessions after an awesome summer residency at Pacha Ibiza, which boasted guests such as P Diddy & heavy metal Rock god Tommy Lee Jones, (Drummer with the newly re-formed Motley Crue). Subliminal's head honcho Erick Morillo brings back the Subliminal heat to Ministry Of Sound..

The indefatigable international DJ Erick Morillo (one of only two Americans to be given a residency at Ministry of Sound) opens the New Year in large style with a bumper Subliminal Sessions one-off party at Ministry Of Sound erupting at 11pm Saturday January 1st 2005 .. meanwhile watch out for Erick's artist album "My World" featuring 'The Audio Bullys' out January 2005.

**ERICK MORILLO headlines the
SUBLIMINAL SESSIONS 8 Hour set
Ministry Of Sound
Saturday January 1st 2005.
All roads lead to MoS, 103
Gaunt St, SE1
Time: 11pm-7am
Admission is advance tickets £20 on
www.ticketweb.co.uk**



It's all about the ice (baby)

I wish I was the person who got into the outdoor-ice-rinks business a few years ago, because recently it's been booming. It all began five years ago with Somerset House and has (to work on a theme) snowballed ever since. Seemingly everyone has decided to cash in this year, from Kew Gardens and Hampton Court to Greenwich. So if you're going to go ice skating on just one outdoor rink this year, which one should you go for? About guides you through what's on offer...

Somerset House: Original and best?

It certainly has the advantage of location, on the Embankment about 5 minutes walk from Houghton Street. The ice rink at Somerset House is absolutely beautiful, set in an 18th century courtyard during the day it's pretty, at night when lit by flaming torches and Christmas tree lights it's amazing. The price is pretty amazing too: £9.50 for an hour during the day rising to £11 for an hour in the evening. Booking is recommended (www.somerset-house.org.uk/icerink)

Kew Gardens/ Hampton

Court/Greenwich: Decisions, decisions! All run by the same company, these offer the same service but in very different locations. You have a botanical garden, a royal palace and an old Naval College to choose from! Again, evening skating is the most atmospheric and does not cost more than it does during the day, £8 for concessions for an hour. Again, booking is advisable though not completely necessary (www.kewgardensicerink.com, www.hamptoncourticerink.com, www.greenwichicerink.com)

Broadgate: Winter in the City

Not exclusively a Christmas thing, Broadgate opens from October to April, seven days a week (excluding Christmas, Boxing Day and New Year's). If the idea of being packed in with millions of other people at one of the bigger rinks doesn't appeal, Broadgate is unlikely to be packed except on the first day of the school holidays or an especially sunny Saturday afternoon. Admittedly it is small, and you will be gawped at by men and women in suits on their way home from work or sitting in the bar which overlooks the rink, but I would recommend the Friday evening session (7pm to 9pm) for atmosphere and for space. You will get at least two hours with £6, depending on the session.

Enjoy!



Exclusive New Years Day Party giveaway!

1 pair of tickets to the winner

3 CDs to the Runners up of Subliminal Winter Sessions 2

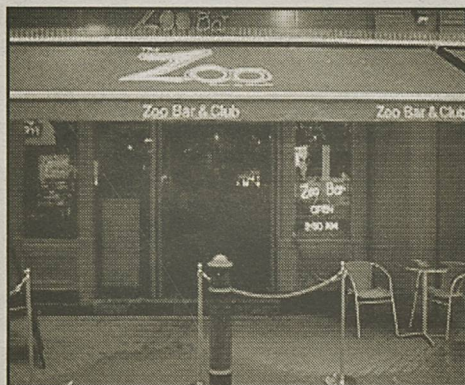
Email answers to the question:

How many Americans have held residencies at Ministry of Sound?

to thebeaver.art@lse.ac.uk

Where not to go!

babertzaka doesn't mince his words



One of life's greatest questions (or at least a student's life) seems to be 'Where should we go out?'

Now, I am a firm believer in trying out new places to eat, drink and go clubbing - but, in my experience, many people hesitate trying out new venues and prefer to go to tried and tested old hangouts.

However as was proven to myself not so long ago, trying out new places can lead to finding some amazing hangouts but it also inevitably means trying out some really really awful holes...

ZOO Bar (13-17 Bear Street, Leicester Square)

Where can I begin? I was out with a couple of friends on a Tuesday night. As usual the town was a bit dead, and then we happened upon the Zoo Bar (conveniently located just off Leicester Square) - from the outside it looked like a catch, it was packed to the rim with people, the music seemed great and the bar itself was tasteful. Entry is free most days (not Saturday and Sunday) before 10pm and £3 after.

Upon entering you soon realise that maybe the packed atmosphere wasn't such a good thing: it took us 15 minutes to reach the cloakroom (which was only 10m from the door). But still not yet perturbed we continued to the bar, drinks during happy hour are reasonably priced (all shooters and cocktails £2.50), but happy hour only lasts until 7pm, and the rest of the night the prices shoot up (cocktails at £4.75 and shooters at £3.95).

Still, despite the place being packed we

proceeded to the dance floor (seating area/ bar area/ entrance). The place was so crammed most of the night it was hard to move let alone dance, but still we didn't let this get us down.

Oh no! The real turning point was when we started properly paying attention to the other customers. Never before have I seen a more mixed up, messed up (and might I add god damn ugly!) bunch of people in my life! Within seconds of stepping onto the dance floor several sleazy old men pounced up to dance with the two girls I had come in with, one of whom didn't quite realise that when we said 'No we don't want an orgy' we were being very much serious...

So, as you can see, trying new places doesn't always work out for the best, but there's always a silver lining, with everyone being quite so detestably ugly it does wonders for the ego when you realise that you are by far the most attractive person in the bar- although unless you were planning on pulling a minger this probably won't be of much use!

Your Guide to What's On This Week

Entertainment

LSE SU Salsa Society

Weekly classes ranging from beginners, improvers, intermediate to advance. These stages are conducted every week throughout the year even during the holidays.
7.30pm - 9.30pm, SOUND, Leicester Sq

LSE SU Alternative Entertainments Society

We do juggling, balloon modelling, diabolo, poi, yo-yo, devil sticks, and manipulations with fire props. Also, new for this year: aerials and face painting. Contact Yasha at su.soc.altents@lse.ac.uk for more information
2pm - 3pm, Old Gym

University of London Japan Society

ULJS Christmas Party. Dress: Celebrity. Music: Hip Hop & RnB. Magical prizes from Santa.
Tickets on sale on Houghton Street (10am - 2pm). LSE Japan Society members: £5. Non-members: £7. On the door: £10
9pm till late, Rouge 144 Charing Cross Rd

LSE SU Jewish Society

chanukah party. Entry is £2 - all are welcome for doughnuts, drink and fun galore.
6.30pm, Room K05

LSE Christmas Concert

A seasonal programme, including Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto. Tickets on sale on Houghton Street from the LSESU Music Society (1pm - 2pm). On the evening of the concert, tickets will be available to be purchased at the door. For further information email events@lse.ac.uk or phone 020 7852 3623
7.15pm for 7.30pm, St Clement Danes Church, the Strand

LSE SU Socialist Worker Student Society

Gillo Pontecorvo's 'The Battle of Algiers' chronicles the Algerian struggle for independence from France during the 1950s. The film was banned in France for years, and was recently watched in the Pentagon, for how to fight a resistance.

LSE SU UNICEF Society Meeting

General meeting with update for term and plans for next term. If you are interested in joining or bringing ideas, then come along - there may be cake...
5pm - 6pm, Room S221

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Entertainment

LSE SU Arts Society

Les Miserables tickets on sale, reduced from £35 to £15; Stomp reduced from £40 to £10. Contact su.soc.arts@lse.ac.uk
2pm - 4pm, Room D109

LSE SU Live Music Society

Open Mic event. Students have the opportunity to form bands, perform in front of a live audience and listen to the best music LSE has to offer. Free entrance for members. Non-members: £1
E-mail Su.Soc.Livemusic@lse.ac.uk to play or for further details....
7.30pm - 1am, The Underground Bar

The Official LSE SU End-of-Term Christmas Party

In collaboration with the Brazilian, Columbian, Latin American, Mexican and Peruvian Societies. We have confirmed London's hottest Latin band: LATIN FIESTA. Tickets: £3 members, £4 non-members, Free with Gold Card
Info line: 02079557136 / su.ents@lse.ac.uk
Tickets: Houghton St and SU reception.

LSE SU Modern Dance Society

Free breakdancing session (open level).
1pm - 3pm, Room G1

Careers

LSE SU Law Society

Deloitte, the UK's fastest growing Professional Services firm invite you to a talk at their offices. As part of their commitment to those of you who wish to use your Law degree outside of the field, Deloitte invite you to participate to a discussion on how your legal skills can be applied in the non-law sector. Please sign up early, sending your name and email address to su.soc.law@lse.ac.uk with Deloitte talk as the subject heading.
5pm, Deloitte offices

Political

Grimshaw International Relations Club

Speaker: Craig Murray, former British Ambassador to Uzbekistan
Chair: Professor Margot Light, LSE IR Department
Craig Murray was recently suspended as ambassador by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It is suspected that his outspokenness about human rights abuses and the use by the UK of intelligence obtained under torture by Uzbek authorities, as well as his criticism of the close relationship between the United States and the Karimov regime led to this.
1.15pm, Old Theatre

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Entertainment

LSE SU Film Society

Eight Crazy Nights, a no-holds-barred, musical comedy starring Adam Sandler
Free for members. Non-members: £1
7pm, New Theatre

LSE SU Drama Society

Christmas Panto: Beauty and the Breasts!
A lively, fun packed production in the traditional panto genre marginally re-worked for the, ahem, more adult audience. With guest star Howard Davies as our very special Dame, we can offer you more drama, cross dressing, scandal, intrigue and action than Soho, FTSE 100

or even the House of Lords. To reserve a ticket in advance please e-mail the producer on j.r.macartney@lse.ac.uk. Alternatively tickets will be on sale on Houghton Street soon, but get in there early to avoid disappointment

LSE SU Modern Dance Society

Hip Hop session (open level).
6.30pm - 8pm, Old Gym

LSE SU Alternative Entertainments Society

Open practise session.
1pm - 2pm, Old Gym

Political

LSE SU Attac Society & Development Society

Financing development: towards a global taxation?
Speaker: Mr Jacques Cossart
An expert on global tax and who was part of the committee for the Landau report to the UN in September.
Chair: Mr John Christensen
Head of the Tax Justice Network which also campaigns on the Millenium Development Goals.
7pm, Room D402

LSE SU UNICEF Society

"Childhood Under Threat"
Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF, will be launching UNICEF's Flagship Report - "The State of the World's Children 2005" with an open forum discussion for LSE students.
9am - 10am, Vera Anstey Suite, Old Building

Christian Union

Weekly Main Meeting
7pm, Room G1
Prayer Meeting
5.30pm - 6.30pm, chaplaincy, Room G9

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Entertainment

LSE SU Modern Dance Society

Ballet (open level)
4.30-5.45pm, Room G108

LSE SU Modern Dance Society

Contemporary/Jazz (open level)
5.50-7pm, Room G108

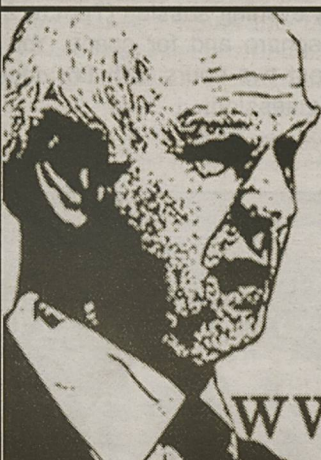
LSE SU Salsa Society

Salsa classes
8pm - 10pm, Ministry of Salsa, Elephant and Castle

Political

LSE SU Conservative Association

Planning meeting for a Rally For The Troops for next term. The event will be non-partisan, featuring all parties, and will include those from all coalition countries. For more information e-mail: su.soc.conservative@lse.ac.uk

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The Interview
Howard Davies
live @ 4:30 - 5:30
On Tues 7th
only on
www.pulsefm.co.uk

CHRISTMAS GOES LATINO
The official LSE SU Christmas Party

In collaboration with the
Brazilian, Columbian, Latin American,
Mexican and Peruvian Societies

Wednesday 8th of December @ The Quad
Can you feel the **LATIN** fever?

contact: su.societies@lse.ac.uk

The Future's Bright for the LSE Darts Team

Jonathan
"Belfast"
Bartley



Warwick.....6
LSE Superdarts.....4
Warwick University

A momentous day in sporting history has occurred- the LSE darts team's first match, against Warwick. It very nearly didn't happen, as failed attempts to meet at Victoria coach station nearly saw us stranded 100 miles away from the game. Disaster, however, was averted, and we arrived late at Warwick's union.

The format was best of 10, 8 singles and 2 doubles. One point to be made is "how hard is it to distinguish right from left?", as they struggled to turn the board lights

on. "It's the second one from the left!" It certainly made us slightly more confident. Morale boosted, Loffman nominated himself first.

Matt, the Mugabe-eque dictator of our society, is a very good darts player, having taken legs off Phil "The Power" Taylor and Heather Mills-McCartney. He proceeded to dominate the opposing captain (known as "Hannibal" - the kidney eating type, not the A-Team), with a 2-0 victory and some fantastic darts,

including a 100 checkout.

Match 2 saw Gaurav, making his debut for the team, put up a brave fight against their second best player. Much like a gypsy keying a car, "G-Unit's" strength is in his scoring, but as in all sports reports "brave" means "he lost". Ed, our dual sports superstar from England's frontier territory (Essex) then maintained his perfect singles record (2/2) with a 2-1 comeback win.

It was my turn next, and I threw

away a 1-0 lead to lose 2-1. They went and bought a special dart board that has thin wires to minimise bounce outs, YET I STILL HAD A BOUNCE OUT ON MY LAST DOUBLE! what the fuck?!? Also, the guy who I lost to was awarded their "player of the match", despite the fact he couldn't hit a double for shit. We then went 3-1 down when debutant #2 Edwin (who allegedly has a 250 Gigabyte porn collection) lost to someone who could score, but couldn't finish (perhaps the ideal situation for his partner), and Emily (whom it would be unfair to describe as a "token female", regardless of how accurate it may be) couldn't snap the losing streak. 4-2 down, our future was looking about as bright as someone pissing on an electric fence.

Snook got it back to 4-3 with some bizarrely consistent darts (on the basis that he can see only slightly better than Stevie Wonder), and a chance for a singles comeback as unlikely as Harold Shipman opening up a new practise in Hyde fell to Jon

"That Prick" Peters. Peters failed to live up to one of his nicknames ("The White Yakabu"), but did live up to another ("That Prick"), and lost the final singles rubber to leave us 5-3 down with 2 doubles matches to go. Loffman and Gaurav were first up, a pairing as deadly as Ian Huntley and Maxine Carr, and more efficient at destroying Man Utd shirts. We again found Matt in magnificent form, and their victory left the final doubles pairing of Ed and I the chance to draw the match 5-5. We didn't.

Hindsight shows 7.3% cider that looks like it came out of your arse is not conducive to good finishing. As such, we lost the match 6-4, and left Warwick with thoughts of vengeance and "I hope I'm not stuck in Coventry overnight". A rematch is planned, but it was a fairly successful match against a more experienced club. Unlike that of the Iraqi aid worker, the future for the darts team looks bright.

Champagne Hockey? Unlikely from Frodo's Bunch

Spok



RUMS.....4
LSE Hockey 1sts.....2
Barnes Bridge, Who knows?

LSE Old Boys.....Too many
LSE Young'uns.....Too few
Memory Lane

The day began like any other Wednesday... Wake-up, shower, have breakfast, wonder if Hayden really is a fag, start thinking about the game. With the season fast approaching its conclusion and the champagne hockey one

would expect from such a venerated establishment as the LSE hockey 1s still confined to the cellar, one could anticipate an encounter full of fighting-spirit and panache. Frodo summed up the mood in typical fashion by re-sending last week's email, again exclaiming 'fellas, this could be the match to shape our season'. Unfortunately it probably was.

With our forwards, Mowgli and Yasser-Abdul-Jafar, slowly getting into the game, the ball was finding our opponents D with surprising regularity and an opening looked likely. Finally the equaliser came. In what can only be described as a truly priapic moment the ball was played to the far post and Mustafa, exhibiting the cunning only acquired through four years intensive training with the Taliban's finest, stealthily stole in with a reverse-hook finish past the keeper. 1-1.

Sadly this was to be as good as it got. Jacko was directing his efforts at delegating to others the duty of marking his opposite

man, whom free from the attentions of our midfield and defence made easy work of adding his name to the score sheet, twice. An attempted come-back was thwarted when claims for a flick, more obvious than FT Boy's predilection towards men, was turned down. Mowgli had burst uncharacteristically into the D with only the keeper to prevent him firing wide, when a defender, obviously incensed by the man-child's sudden emergence from uselessness, threw his stick at the Mowgli and the ball (speculation has since arisen that this was in retaliation to Baller's earlier attempt to amputate an opponents limb, using his newly acquired golfing apparatus). The rational response would be to award a stroke, but the umpire's cowardly reaction was to hurl abuse at Jacko and allow play to continue, virtually condemning the 1s to another defeat. However, the team didn't give up and through the commendable efforts of FT Boy, Porter and F#cknut, to mention but a few,

Frodo was able to pick up a consolatory goal before Sharon allowed the opposition to have the last laugh. Final score: 4-2.

The experience of travelling to the provincial outpost of Barnes Bridge only to be humbled by a group of plebeian degenerates served to dampen our spirits somewhat and the hockey team's presence in the Tuns was a muted one. Tesh's northern 'charm' wasn't fully appreciated earning him dick of the day while Frodo's solid on-pitch presence resulted in a well earned MOM accolade.

On a lighter note, Sunday saw the return of some familiar faces, true hockey legends including Rolfie, Sharky, BB Dancer and to a lesser extent Rasta, as the first team took on the dilapidated outfit that calls themselves the LSE Old Boys. Jacko had returned from the marble halls of East Grinstead (where apparently they have fashioned an orbital-bust of his likeness from an old silver door-knob) with renewed vigour following his successful sleep-over.

The optimism was contagious, fuelled by the sight of pre-match binge drinking and protruding pot-bellies from our opponents we took to our task with high expectations. Depressingly we were humiliated on the pitch by some great goals and some flowing hockey that the diagrammatic illustrations in Tesh's textbook guide: Hockey Tactician could never hope to capture. Sadly our cause was not furthered by another comical performance from our 'keeper' Sharon and Frodo's inability to navigate the vast expanse between the Shire and Crystal Palace.

A special mention must go to Annabelle's Jefferson, who was guilty of committing the unforgivable faux-pas of failing to invite the whole of men's hockey to the tree-hugging, vegetarian, whale-saving recycle-fest that was his thanks-giving lunch. Or for at least voluntarily inviting Tesh as our sole representative. Shameful...

Gimperial Defeated by brilliance of LSE Netball 4ths

Ems
Rixon



Gimperial.....19
LSE Netball 4ths.....23
Pre-Barrel location so now unknown.

This week saw the 4ths return to dynamic form with a decisive victory over Gimperial 3rd team. After the

shame of our defeat at the hands of our own 5ths a victory was in order to lift our spirits and our position in the league.

With no subs, Ems with a shaky ankle and Yulena recovering from a mumps jab we made our way over to south ken in trepidation. Remembering the science geekiness and the fact that they are unaccustomed to sunlight did make us more confident. We made a good start with some lovely goals but for the 1st quarter things were pretty even and the gimps matched us goal for goal. However by the 2nd quarter we were starting to show our stuff and quickly pulled into the league. Despite an ankle injury

captain Ems was leading by example and dodging with such speed and aggression even our scary South African coach would be proud. Asha and Cat were working as a fabulous team at centre and WA and Philipa and Yulena were sending in some gorgeous goals. I made possibly my most dramatic fall of the season practically diving onto the court but managed to avoid serious injury to anything other than my dignity.

At half time Ems retreated to the sidelines to give imperial some verbal abuse and Brioney stepped into WD playing at her usual high standard and only occasionally throwing the ball at

the other team in a tantrum. The 3rd quarter was shoddy to say the least and we could see our captain having a strop off side. Our passing was sloppy and Yulena commented that out everyone run at the ball in a bundle tactic was not entirely effective.

By the final quarter we had regained our style and composure. The work in the circle was seamless and we were intercepting their passes all over the court. Jordina played her best ever match as keeper and we all saw her jump for the ball normally an unknown occurrence!

Despite the umpire trying to give imperial an extra few goals she had conjured out of thin air

we were clearly dominating the game. The final score was 19-23 and Asha was deservedly named player of the match by the down-cast gimps. All that was left to do was decide on the details of our sparkly barrel costumes and tell as many people as possible that this week we didn't lose!



Snakebite, Strippers and Extreme Sloppiness -

The AU Barrel 2004 sees Howard Davies succumb to The Wheel. Crispy Ducks, Chippendales, Miss Worlds and the Vikings all get completely c*nted.



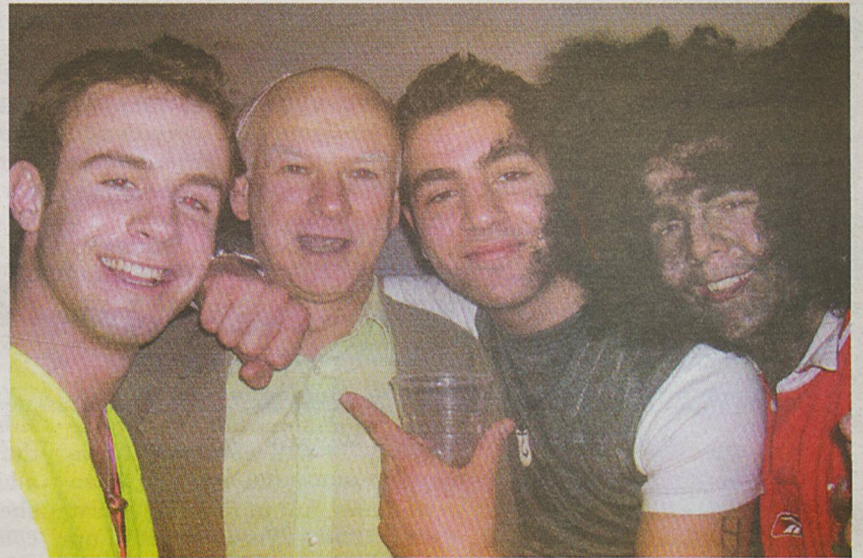
New evidence has emerged of military atrocities in Iraq. LSE Rugby blamed.



Netball Fairies brought some glitter and glamour to the sloppy Underground.



The girls watched with interest as Miss Brazilian showed everyone how she earned her name.



Howard Davies proudly shows off his 'snakebite tongue'.



Thanks to the Third Team Chippendales, sales of baby oil in WC2 shot up 87% before the Barrel.



10 Crispy Ducks and 1 Midget Fancier - the Fifth Team.



The Wheel.



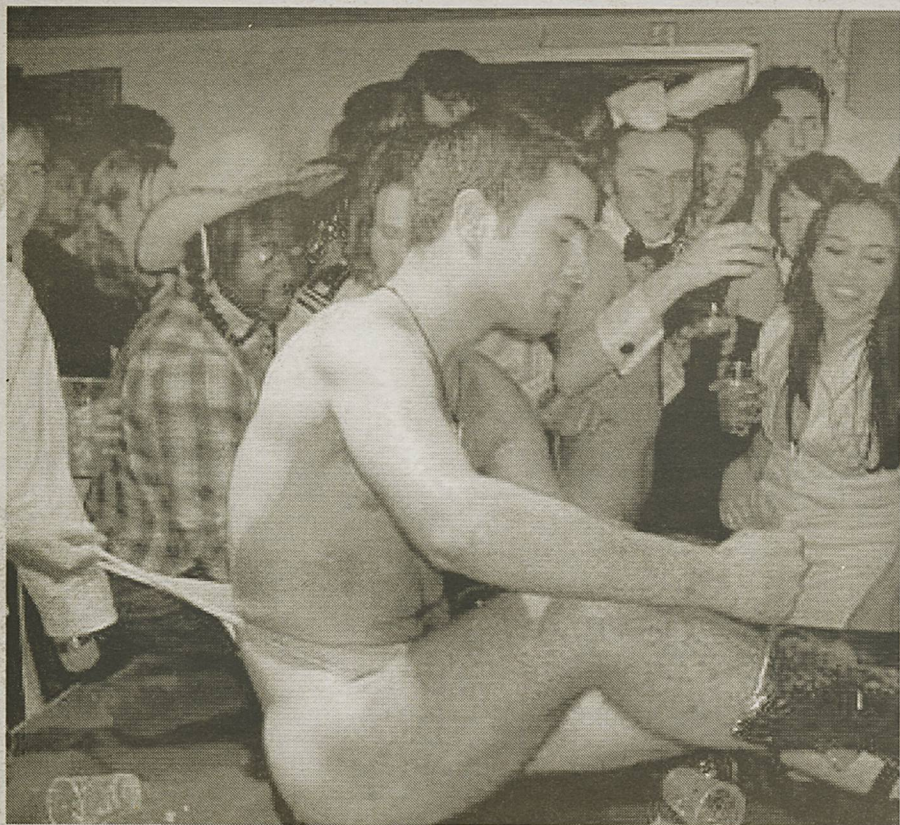
Two Queens.



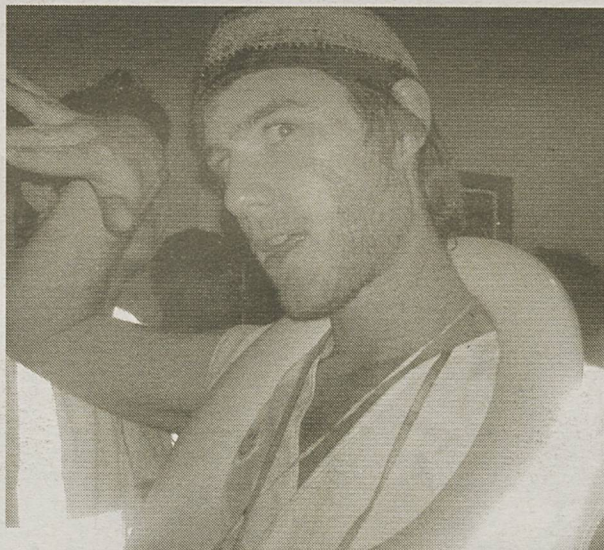
The Sixths reach for the lasers - safe as f***.

There's only one Barrel 2004!

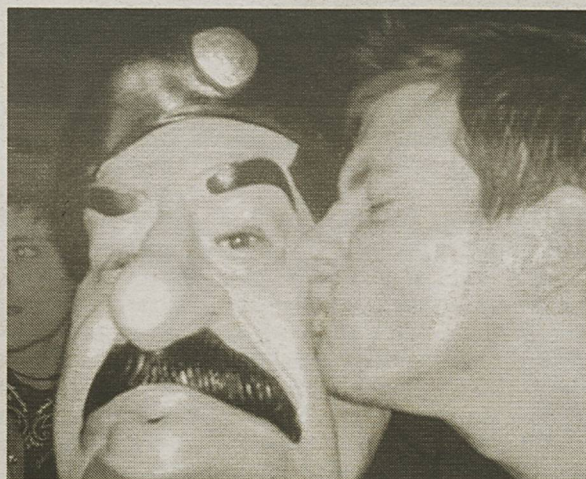
Following 2,500 pints of Snakebite, there were sexual shennanigans aplenty, Rustam stripping and Taffy being sick. Again.



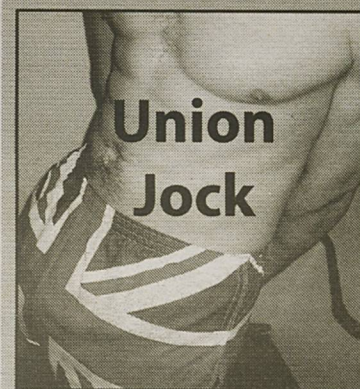
Dom 'Nice Arse' Rustam shows why he was labelled "most disappointing shag in LSE". Note Cowgirl in background, later seen sucking some a Welsh leek.



Matt finds that once you pop, you just can't stop.



Saddam's terrible human rights record meant he felt right at home at the Barrel.



The Barrel 2004 saw plenty of fairies present both in costume and in sexual preference. For the record Jock was not too impressed in having to dodge fucking fairy wings whilst carrying four pints of snakebite. More pleasing was the c**t-skimming piece of fabric as sported by Miss 'Rich Gull now added to her collection' Aerobics and the AU's own Ents Officer Nurse Whitcomb.

The Barrel is always looked upon by Jock as a chance to dip his winkle in the sea of frisky young AU females, and this year did not disappoint him.

The squash courts were being used by a frisky young cowgirl. Unfortunately her partner in crime, non-AU gatecrasher Shrunken Hill was unable to 'perform'. Her sexual voracity not being fully satisfied, she proceeded from shagging cowboys to going down on the clowns. And who better than Tiffy to step up to the challenge (cue Circus theme tune). At first, many AU specimens eagerly awaited their turn. However, on witnessing her enthusiasm for deep-throating, the queue quickly diminished.

Instead many footballers and rugby boys decided homoeroticism was order of the day. Spin the bottle gave Moriarty-Lewis many moments to spread the love amongst the Gun Club and the always willing Daily Star Boy (as Jock predicted last week). As is now customary for the FC's Rusty Virgin, as soon as a Maroon 5 song came on, the clothes came off - on the pool table, with around 30 people watching. The Third Team greased themselves up and came as the skinniest Chippendales Jock has ever seen. However one Chippendale treated Miss Ireland to a quick knee-trembler in the Tuns toilets, making it two years in a row he's got his end away at the Barrel. At least he didn't use the library this time.

Lacking in size apparently is Gun Club Captain Browne, described by one fairy as having "The smallest penis I've ever seen", perhaps that explains his love for his other muscles. Likewise, the streaker was lacking in both "girth and length" according to one onlooker, and with the heat of the underground bar, he couldn't even blame the cold. Rumours abound that "Cannot Get It Upsher" became the first streaker in the illustrious history of the Barrel not to pull after parading his wares around Houghton Street.

Happy Christmas you c**s. Contact Jock on thebeaver.sports@lse.ac.uk

Did you know?

This year's barrel saw eighteen barrels of alcohol finished by 2pm, smashing the previous record of thirteen.

The sneaky Economics department rescheduled their lectures to avoid the Barrel Run. Spoilsports.

Pirate wishes to let the girl he abandoned outside the Old Building after pulling her know that he's actually a very considerate lover and would like to make it up to her.

A certain cowgirl brought a bit of the Wild West to the Tuns, handing out sexual favours like they were going out of fashion. Craig Harris went floppy though.

Barrel Stats:

- 18 barrels drained
- 1,754 plastic glasses used
- 11.30am first vomit - (Adam 'Dirt' Stocker of the 5ths)
- 7 acts of girl on girl kissing
- 5 acts of guy on guy kissing
- At least 4 confirmed shags
- 2 bottles of 'Liquid Gold' poppers sniffed.
- 17 bags of feathers used
- 1 'disappointingly small' stripper (D.Rustam)
- 2 rugby girls falling over in the middle of Shaftsbury Ave
- 17 fines dished out by the Wheel
- 1 very sloppy, smelly but superb Barrel 2004.



Ellie's beer goggles later proved useful as she later treated herself to a 'Crispy Duck'.



General Secretary Will McFarlane, wearing a kilt, shows that he's not true to his Scottish roots.



Girls, be warned. Rohypnol is a dangerous substance.



For Welsh Zac, it doesn't matter if you're black or white. Or male or female. He'll pull you all.



No jug spilling here, unfortunately.

Thanks to Barrel photographers Lucinda Tse, Jaimin and Jen Bush. You're all stars...



What's happening here?
US atrocities in Iraq?
Nah, just the Barrel.

Turn inside for some
Barrel photo action!

Football Sixths Advance the Fall of Communism

The Russell Square Bolsheviks are sent packing by a 14 goal show from Roast's Capitalist Army

Nathan Muruganandan



LSE Footy 6ths.....14

SSEES Commies.....3

Fortress Berrylands, Surrey



Bruised, battered, demoralised and studying Eastern European studies the LSE 6s inflicted further punishment and psychological damage upon the commies of SSEES. After expecting a tough match akin to 1-1 draw earlier in the season, the 6s turned on the style and gave a performance worthy of Ruud Guillit's 'sexy football' era. The poise and brilliance of the football played was remarkable considering the 6's came into the match after an unlucky loss and without many regulars. Captain Matt 'Spitroast' Bawden called upon his wildcards in Jan, a democratic-loving Pole from

Boston, and his little brother Toby who at 14, must be applauded for his efforts to get pass the Crush bouncers and down 6 pints of Snakebite the night before. The team already Warsaw-bound for the end of term dinner, aimed to inflict preliminary damage upon our eastern European neighbours.

After a dour first ten minutes, the 6ths got into their stride and opened their account with a "polished"

(note JB!) finish from Nathan Muruganandan. The onslaught begun in earnest, as the inter-continental connection of Alex Petrov and Sebastian Agustino started to shift into gear. Petrov opened his account with a breath-taking top-corner strike, would finish the game with 5 goals. Whilst the burly Bulgarian bullied and harassed the defence, Seb provided the class and guile with two excellent finishes (a la

Phillipe Albert against Man U). The sublime Spaniard continued to run riot and his corner lead to a headed goal from captain marvel Bawden. The already makeshift back four was further changed as Fynn Prager drifted off the field complaining of a sore arse!!! However, the ever-dependable Richard Morrow stepped in to fill the void. Scintillating wing play by new boy Jan on the left and Peter Liu on the right contributed to a well-deserved 9-1 lead at the break.

Conceding early in the second half proved to be a blessing in disguise as the 6s answered back by launching attack after attack upon the beleaguered SSEES defence. Spitroast the younger was admirably causing trouble whilst goalkeeping supremo

Matt Drela was given a starring role in central midfield. Goals continued to flow in with Seb and Nathan completing respective four-goal and hat-trick hauls, however, the match quickly deteriorated towards the end. SEES managed to grab another as the 6ths took their foot off the pedal but the match had ended as a contest long before. A monumental victory before the Christmas break should hopefully give the team renewed impetus to ascend the league table come the New Year. Before that though, the legendary 6's are on their way towards the unheralded grounds of Warsaw, where beautiful women, coke (a cola!) and cabbage lurk in equal quantities.



Rowing Stick Their Oars In. Unsuccessfully.

James Eyton takes time off from fox hunting to take part in the Allom Cup.

Andy Lomax



Last year the legendary AU Barrel was the day before the Allom Cup, the only race that the LSERC enters in the Michaelmas Term. After the bitter disappointment of being beaten in the first round of every race entered other than the mixed eights, we had a sense that this year we would turn things around. Saturday 27th November 2004, the stage was set. We had a strong 8+ who have been training hard all term, now it was time to dominate the poly and medic scum. However, due to a timing problem with two races the cox of the 8+ had to be replaced at the last minute. This flustered the crew somewhat, who became nervous

and began to row poorly. They were beaten by 2 lengths against a crew who they should have spanked quite easily. It is still early days, and the crew has yet to show its full potential.

1st 8+: Rav Chowdhary, Robert Brackenbury, Joe Falter, Tobias Lundberg, Frederik Nellemann,

Guy Collender, James Eyton, Richard Page

The most successful crew at the Allom Cup this year, semi-finalists, was the Novice Men. Despite their wishes for me to stop there I'm afraid I must carry on. In the first race timing was a problem for the LSE and their opposition were beating them off the start. However, as the cox carved the boat straight across the river and almost into some scullers, things began to look up. Half way down the course the opposition's steering got so bad that they were disqualified - so through to the quarter

finals. They had to immediately row back to the start for their next race. However, since races were running late, when they got there they were told to wait around for what could have been up to 55 minutes. Ten minutes later they are told that the King's Novice 8+

had scratched...now semi-finalists. The next race was a different story, and they were beaten by 3 lengths by a crew that had a few rowers in there that were probably better than Rav, our Captain. Novices my ass.

The eight ladies that rowed for the women's novice team at the Allom Cup Race made quite a valiant effort but succumbed to the Imperial Medic Monsters. A little more strength was all that was needed although spirits were high and adrenaline was pumping for teammates: Sarah Symons, Emilie Boillat, Stacey Malo, Anne-Marie Christoffersen-Deb, Sarah Hansen, Veronika Thiel, Ellen Shen, and Bianca Lansdown, coxed by Rav Chowdhary. For a team that previously had never even rowed together, they had excellent synchrony. A little more practice on the water will have this team steaming past all of the UL teams by next term.

